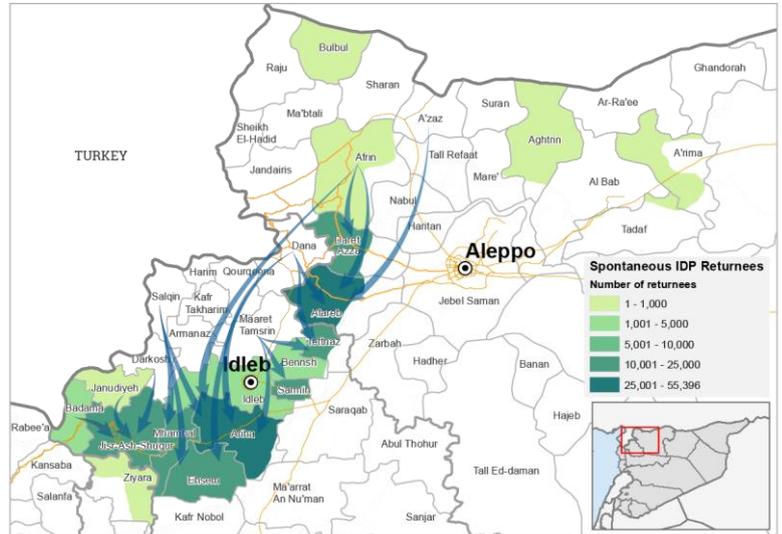


### HIGHLIGHTS

- The UN Security Council Resolution enabling cross-border UN assistance from Turkey into Syria was renewed on 11 July, keeping the Bab Al-Hawa border crossing open for another 12 months. The Bab Al-Salam crossing was removed.
- Four COVID-19 cases have been identified in northwest Syria. Contact tracing has been activated and efforts continue to mitigate the spread of cases and raise awareness about COVID-19 risks and precautions.
- Vulnerability is rising as people in northwest Syria increasingly struggle to meet their own needs. Within one month and largely due to the devaluation of the Syrian Pound, the cost of the survival minimum expenditure basket (SMEB) increased by 68 percent.
- Increasing protection issues are being reported, due to explosive hazards and tensions between armed groups, as well as gender-based violence such as early marriages, short-term marriages, forced abortions and domestic violence.



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

**4.1 M**

People in northwest Syria

**2.8 M**

People in need of assistance

**2.7 M**

People are internally displaced

**76%**

Of the overall population are women and children

### SITUATION OVERVIEW

People living in northwest Syria continue to face dire living conditions. Existing struggles arising from the impacts of displacements, military operations, security hazards and the protracted conflict are increasingly compounded by the destabilisation of the Syrian Pound (SYP) and the COVID-19 pandemic. In an area where some 2.8 million people already rely on humanitarian assistance to meet basic needs such as food, water, shelter, healthcare and education, the volatility of the economy is further undermining people's resilience, potentially impacting all 4.1 million people living in the northwest.

Four cases of COVID-19 have been identified in northwest Syria, with the first positive result recorded in Bab Al-Hawa on 9 July. Of the four cases, two are in the Idlib area and two in northern Aleppo governorate, and all four patients are health professionals. Contact tracing was activated upon the return of the first positive result from the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test on 9 July. People who had encountered these patients in recent weeks are being advised to isolate themselves and be alert to potential symptoms, while all contacts exhibiting symptoms are being tested for COVID-19. As of 12 July, more than 2,500 samples had been PCR tested for COVID-19. Humanitarian and health partners are continuing their efforts to mitigate against the spread of the pandemic. Precautions against a potential spread of the virus have been scaled up in response to the identified cases, including restrictions on movements, gatherings and commercial activities as well as in-person education services. These measures are crucial to contain transmissions of COVID-19, though they may intensify humanitarian need through their impacts on local markets, income-generating opportunities and vital services while complicating humanitarian response. At least seven hospitals in the Idlib area reportedly suspended routine clinical work and surgeries for at least one week on 10 July, in an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in medical settings. 159

hospitals and primary health centres (PHC) have been equipped with COVID-19 triage systems, and five community-based treatment centres (CCTC) have been operationalised to treat patients with mild-to-moderate cases of COVID-19. Humanitarian actors continue to adapt how they work in order to assist people in need while minimising transmission risks for themselves and local communities, suspending services only where no safe solution is available.

Low levels of hostilities continue to be reported in northwest Syria. No airstrikes have been reported since the last situation report on 26 June, and shelling has primarily affected communities in the vicinity of the frontlines south of the M4 highway, in southern Idleb, northern Hama and northern Latakia governorates. The overall security situation remains concerning, including in areas away from the frontlines, as tensions and clashes involving non-state armed groups (NSAGs) encroach on civilian lives. Escalations in clashes between NSAGs have been reported in recent weeks, including in Idleb city and its western countryside where inter-NSAG violence since mid-June resulted in movement restrictions, the temporary closure of some roads, and civilian casualties. The safety of civilians in northwest Syria is further undermined by the enduring prevalence of explosive hazards. At least six improvised explosive device (IED) and explosive remnant of war (ERW) incidents were reported in the last two weeks, killing at least four people, including two children, and injuring at least one child and one woman, according to local sources. Several other IEDs were reportedly discovered and neutralised during the same period.

Since 26 June, the value of the SYP in informal markets in northwest Syria has fluctuated between around 2,300 SYP/USD and 2,600 SYP/USD. While lower than the historical high of 3,200 SYP/USD reached on 8 June, this is nevertheless some 315 percent weaker than a year earlier, and nearly half its value at the beginning of May 2020, when the exchange rate exceeded 1,300 SYP/USD for the first time ever. This rapid devaluation of the SYP and wide fluctuation range underscores the precarious situation faced by people in northwest Syria, whose purchasing power had rapidly eroded and who are no longer able to reliably depend on the value of their assets or confidently undertake financial commitments such as loans or service contracts. Across the Idleb and Afrin and A'zaz to Jarablus areas of northwest Syria, Turkish Lira and USD are being used as alternative currencies to mitigate against market volatility. People without adequate access to these currencies remain more exposed to market shocks, and may face higher prices for the same goods and services due to exchange rate disparities – further marginalising the already poor and vulnerable members of society.

According to market monitoring by an NGO partner, the cost of the survival minimum expenditure basket (SMEB) was 224,385 SYP in June 2020, some 68 percent higher than one month earlier. This comes after the cost of the SMEB in northwest Syria already doubled from 67,599 SYP in May 2019 to 135,280 SYP in May 2020. Market shortages of key supplies including food resulting from the economic downturn is having a devastating impact on people already struggling to live. As of May, nearly three in every 10 children in northwest Syria under the age of five was suffering from stunting due to chronic malnutrition. Humanitarian activities are also being impeded, as increased prices and reduced availability of goods in local markets diminish partners' capacity to procure supplies, while increased fuel costs inhibit distributions and programme delivery, including for key activities such as water trucking.

The impacts of the economic downturn compound those of displacements, which continue to be a key driver of humanitarian needs. Some 2.7 million people are displaced in northwest Syria, of whom some 780,000 people were displaced in the three months since early December 2019. According to a UN partner, some 204,000 spontaneous returns were recorded in northwest Syria since January 2020, including nearly 26,000 people who returned to their areas of origin in June. Most of these returns were to areas around the M4 and west of the M5 in the southern and eastern Idleb area. Longer term needs of the civilian population continue to grow, including for health, nutrition and education services, even as more acute humanitarian needs persist and are at risk of increasing as deterioration of the SYP diminishes people's ability to meet their own needs. As the weather gets hotter, needs related to coping with the heat and exposure to the sun are increasing, such as for weather-appropriate shelter, access to water, suitable food storage solutions, and protection from animals such as scorpions and snakes, which emerge during this season. On 6 July, local sources reported more than 90 incidents of food poisoning in an informal IDP camp in Haranbush in Idleb governorate, allegedly due to inadequate food storage solutions.

Protection issues are reportedly on the rise as the situation for people in northwest Syria grows more desperate, with increasing psychosocial stress, poverty and lack of employment opportunities compounded by the effects of COVID-19 related limitations. Significant increases in different types of gender-based violence (GBV) are being reported, particularly incidences of domestic violence such as marital rape, physical and emotional violence and denial of resources, with girls and women with disabilities and pregnant women especially vulnerable. As the economic downturn increasingly impedes the ability of households to meet their basic needs, financially motivated negative coping mechanisms are increasingly being adopted, including child labour, forced prostitution, forced abortions and early and forced marriages. The GBV sub-cluster is also reporting families marrying off their daughters repeatedly for short periods of time in exchange for money.

In the first six months of 2020, 8,365 trucks of UN humanitarian assistance were delivered through these crossings, providing food security and livelihoods (FSL), non-food items (NFI), water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), shelter, health, education and nutrition assistance to support people in northwest Syria. On 11 July, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2533, extending cross-border UN assistance from Turkey to northwest Syria through the Bab Al-Hawa border crossing for another 12 months, and ensuring that humanitarian support can continue to reach millions of people living in parts of the northwest accessible via this crossing. UNSCR 2533 retains only one of two crossings authorised under the preceding UNSCR 2504, which expired on 10 July. The Bab Al-Salam border crossing is now closed for UN transshipments. This comes after 397 trucks of UN humanitarian assistance entered northwest Syria via Bab Al-Salam in June 2020 – the highest number to traverse this crossing in a single month since the start of the cross-border mechanism in 2014.

## FUNDING

The first standard allocation of the Syria Cross-border Humanitarian Fund (SCHF) has been completed for a final amount of US\$ 81.5 million. 100 projects were approved, and most have started. The importance of responding to the critical needs of people in northwest Syria has increased since the launch of the allocation, due to factors including the economic downturn. In terms of funding, this is the largest allocation organised since the inception of the Fund, and was enabled by generous contributions from 15 donors. An unprecedented mobilisation of stakeholders, especially partners and cluster coordination teams, enabled the rapid completion of this allocation. In parallel, the SCHF completed the reserve allocation for COVID-19 preparedness and response for US\$ 19.2 million, bringing the total amount allocated for COVID-19 since the pandemic was declared in March to approximately US\$ 23 million.

Since the beginning of 2020, the SCHF has allocated US\$ 163 million to support the humanitarian response in northwest Syria, complementary to other bilateral and multilateral funding. As of 10 July, the 2020 Syria Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) remains underfunded, with only 31 percent of the total requirement funded halfway through the plan's timeframe. While the plan remains underfunded, there has been a two percent increase since June, and pledges announced during the Brussels IV conference at the end of June illustrate donors' continued commitment to supporting the Syria response. This is further demonstrated by the record contribution to the SCHF this year.

To support resource mobilisation efforts, partners and agencies are required to ensure information on secured funding is appropriately reflected in the Financial Tracking Service (FTS). This will enable an accurate overview to be maintained of the funding situation for the humanitarian response in northwest Syria.

## HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE



### Camp Coordination and Camp Management

#### Needs:

- A main priority need for new arrivals in May was cash/voucher assistance (36 percent), a significant increase from 11 percent a month earlier, as indicated in the CCCM Cluster's monthly displacement updates. This is attributed to the devaluation of the Syrian Pound, which has exacerbated economic problems in northwest Syria.
- In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, expanding and establishing camps is essential to decongest overcrowded sites while ensuring that services are available in the new locations. Establishing and reinforcing camp management is also required. The CCCM Cluster's multisectoral service monitoring factsheet for May indicates that out of 907 sites hosting more than 1.2 million displaced people, camp management is not available in 515 sites.
- Most of the displaced families hosted in three reception centres have been there for more than six months, with no resettlement possibilities due to lack of adequate shelter options. Facilitating the relocation of displaced people from overcrowded reception centres to sites where physical distancing and hygiene practices are feasible is a priority.

#### Response:

- In response to a recent increase in fire incidents, the CCCM Cluster held a coordination meeting on 25 June focused on better understanding the causes of the incidents, increasing community awareness about fire risks, identifying needs and gaps in the firefighting system, and developing firefighting plans as part of contingency planning.
- Updated information from the IDP Sites Integrated Monitoring Matrix (ISIMM) database for May was shared with cluster members. The CCCM Cluster closely monitors 990 IDP sites hosting some 1.4 million displaced people, of whom 80 percent are women and children and some 20,000 people are reported to be persons with specific needs. More details about the IDP sites in northwest Syria are available via the dashboard.

- As part of the CCCM Cluster's monthly displacement tracking in May 2020, 74,894 displaced people were reported to have returned to their community of origin during May, with Ariha, Ehsem and Atareb recorded as the top three returnee destinations. In May, the CCCM Cluster tracked 41,328 recent displacements, noting that people may have been displaced multiple times and that the reasons for movement may vary.
- As of 30 June, three functioning reception centres were hosting 3,724 displaced people, including with the provision of food, shelter and WASH services.
- The Land Identification Taskforce has continued to prioritise the establishment and expansion of IDP sites, which are essential activities to decongest overcrowded sites that face heightened risks due to COVID-19. As of 12 May, the Taskforce had assessed a total of 301 sites with an approximate area of 8 million square metres since starting this exercise in December 2019, including identified and verified sites as well as sites currently under proposal.
- The CCCM Cluster continued to monitor and report on multiple incidents in IDP sites as part of the coordination response. Notably, in an incident report update on 30 June, the CCCM Cluster reported that floods and windstorms that started on 19 June in 34 IDP sites in Idleb governorate directly impacted 7,401 people, completely destroyed around 562 tents and partially damaged 405 tents. The urgent needs resulting from this were reported as being tents, NFI kits and infrastructure.

### Gaps & Constraints:

- Continuous displacement has led to a decrease in areas available to accommodate the newly displaced population. Although IDP sites are usually a last resort option, there are currently 990 IDP sites listed in the CCCM Cluster's database, hosting over 1.4 million displaced people. The vast majority of these are self-settled sites.
- Based on the findings of the CCCM Cluster's multisectoral factsheet in May that evaluated 907 IDP sites, while 91 percent of displaced people had access to potable water, an urgent need was identified for water storage capacity in 865 sites (based on 20 litres required per individual for 72 hours).
- A massive data cleaning process and verification is required for the information provided by different members.

## Early Recovery

### Needs:

- According to the monthly mobility and needs monitoring report of a UN partner, deterioration in the economic situation was the main reason for displacements during June, while sociocultural ties were the most important reason underlying arrival to current locations. 65 percent of displaced people in Dana in Idleb governorate reported that they were primarily motivated by better access to livelihood opportunities. Most returnees had previously been displaced in Dana sub-district and the highest priority needs for returnees were reported to be livelihoods.
- According to the most recent socioeconomic overview report of a UN partner, based on a nationwide demographic household survey conducted in January 2020,
  - One third of households reported private business as their primary livelihood activity. In northwest Syria, daily labour (32 percent) was the most common livelihood activity, followed by private sector employment, which does not include small businesses (31 percent) and public sector employment (12 percent).
  - Household income is lowest in northwest Syria, where average income is 16 percent lower than the national average. Female-headed households report an average income 33 percent lower than the national average, making them exceptionally susceptible to economic shocks.
  - Households reported an average monthly income of 113,503 SYP. 61 percent of households reported that their income was insufficient to meet needs. Crucially, households that depend primarily on daily wage work (19 percent of total households and 32 percent of households in northwest Syria) on average report an income of 83,041 SYP, which is much lower than both the median and mean income.
  - The most important household barrier to employment or diversifying income was a lack of employment opportunities, as reported by 66 percent of households, followed by a lack of financing (54 percent), lack of skills (40 percent) and security situation (19 percent). From a regional perspective, the security situation and lack of employment opportunities are more frequently reported as an obstacle in northwest Syria. Lack of skills is an obstacle that is also more commonly reported by female-headed households (51 percent).
  - 60 percent of households in northwest Syria reported that their income was insufficient to meet their needs. These respondents were subsequently asked about other forms of income they relied upon to compensate for income gaps. 79 percent reported borrowing money or buying on credit and 43 percent reported spending savings, which can negatively impact the ability to deal with future shocks due to the reduction of resources. 24 percent reported selling household goods/assets and 12 percent reported selling productive assets/means of transport, which directly reduces the future productivity of households, including that of human capital formation. Three percent reported children in the household working, thus also affecting future productivity.

- In north-west Syria, 81 percent of males between the ages of 17 and 64 worked over the final quarter of 2019, while only nine percent of females worked over the same period. This is the lowest in work rates for both males and females nationwide.
- The most common reason for not working was due to disability (32 percent). For men, being a student was the most reported reason, while women mostly cited pregnancy or childcare responsibilities. 17 percent of women who had not been working reported that they did not have the correct skills to match market demand, compared to 4 percent of men. Some 10 percent of women reported that they were not allowed to work, compared to just one percent of men.
- In a February 2020 market network analysis report by an NGO partner, 41 percent of key informants reported that members of their communities travel to access markets. 48 percent reported that their community members travel to purchase fuel, 43 percent reported travel for bulk foods, 38 percent for hygiene items and 33 percent for fresh foods. Among communities where travel was reported, members travelled the longest distances (on average) to access bulk foods. More variety, better quality and cheaper prices were the most commonly reported reasons for why individuals travel outside their own communities to purchase each item type. The most commonly reported unavailable market types within assessed communities were fuel markets.
- The ERL Cluster has been consulting with its partners to better understand the impact of the worsening economic crisis on ERL operations, the mitigation and countermeasures adopted by ERL partners to date, and the emerging needs partners are witnessing as a consequence of the economic situation. Key feedback on impact and risks affecting the population and markets include:
  - Sharp decrease in people's purchasing power. This has consequent negative impact on shops and businesses (compounding impacts of COVID-19-related restrictions). The number of people in need of assistance is rising, creating new gaps in the humanitarian response.
  - Individuals have become more reluctant to borrow cash due to fears over volatility of the exchange rate and their potential inability to repay loans. More requests for livelihoods projects such as cash-for-work and other job creation interventions.
  - Rising tensions between individuals with regards to accessing livelihoods opportunities and jobs.
  - Possible rise in criminal activities due to further worsening of living conditions.
  - High volatility of the exchange rate means all market transactions entail high risk.
  - Higher production and service costs are negatively impacting the availability of materials on the market.
  - Traders' expectations about potential extra purchasing value of their goods in the immediate future are causing a slowdown of trade dynamics.

#### Response:

- 24 ERL Cluster members responded in May, with 12 ERL members reaching 82,783 people in 11 Aleppo sub-districts and 19 ERL partners reaching 406,440 people in eight Idlib sub-districts.
- Rehabilitation of access to basic utilities (electricity, gas, water and sewage) interventions reached 95,708 households, mostly in Jandairis in Aleppo governorate and Dana, Ariha and Mhambal in Idlib governorate.
- 283 m<sup>3</sup> of debris and waste was removed, mostly in Afrin in Aleppo governorate.
- 1,376 people were employed through the creation of short-term work opportunities, in light rehabilitation works of road and drainage systems or in COVID-19 awareness raising campaigns.
- 360 households were provided basic housing repair support through the construction of semi-permanent shelter structures, mostly in Aghtrin in Aleppo governorate.
- 35 people were supported by entrepreneurial activities, mostly women and youth supported to start a business or service, or farmers provided with micro-loans.
- 1,090 people benefited from vocational and skills trainings. Beneficiaries were mostly women, and trainings were mainly for entrepreneurial skills and light rehabilitation works, mechanics and industrial skills.
- 118 people with disabilities benefitted from activities such as vocational training, short-term work opportunities and cash-for-work activities (COVID-19 personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks, and spray manufacturing).
- Rehabilitation of 45 kilometres of road and six drainage systems in Dana in Idlib governorate and A'zaz in northern Aleppo governorate remain ongoing.
- Recommendations were provided to ERL partners for mitigating the risk of COVID-19 transmissions while implementing ERL activities.
- A specific guidance note on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the COVID-19 response, in ERL activities and in general was developed by an ERL Cluster partner and shared with other ERL partners.

#### Gaps & Constraints:

- ERL partners in northwest Syria are funded to approximately four percent of the total requirement set out in the 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). This estimation is based on June 2020 FTS data.

- To reduce the negative impact on the affected population (displaced and host communities, returnees) and on markets caused by the various challenges in northwest Syria, increased funding is required for the following:
  - Support to businesses in both urban and rural environments
    - Start-up support through grants or micro-credit assistance;
    - Support for micro-businesses and businesses to contain the impact of the COVID-19 and the ongoing economic crisis on their activities.
  - Creation of short-term work opportunities, particularly through scaling up the cash-for-work modality – potentially linked to rehabilitation works improving access to services.
  - Rehabilitation/restoration of access to basic utilities, local economic infrastructure and other social infrastructures, including:
    - Electricity (provision of electricity through solar panel installation, etc.);
    - Access ways/roads to markets for farmers, shopkeepers and business owners, to cultivatable lands, and to and from IDPs camps;
    - Markets;
    - Water systems (water pipes, pumping stations, groundwater tanks to ease stress on overburdened services);
    - Rehabilitation of sewage channels and drainage systems to ease stress on overburdened services.
  - Restoration of essential services and basic infrastructure to prioritise activities that would support the preventive and curative health response to COVID-19, including rehabilitation of health centres and facilities, retrofitting of designated quarantine facilities, equipping of isolation centres, waste management, restoration of water and sanitation services and provision of energy to these facilities, in close coordination with other sectors and local governance structures.
  - Collecting daily solid waste in urban areas and inside camps, providing cleaning machines or garbage collections vehicles to local councils, removal of demolitions from roads and sidewalks, and cleaning of main and secondary roads and social infrastructure by removing rubble and garbage.  
Market-based modalities assistance to vulnerable households, including assisting vulnerable households with transportation to and from markets and health facilities.

## Education

### Needs:

- Due to the large influx of displaced families, many schools were converted to temporary shelters, preventing them from being used for educational purposes. 23,419 people reside in 277 schools in Afrin, Al Bab and A'zaz districts in Aleppo governorate and Ariha, Harim, Idleb and Jisr-Ash-Shugur districts in Idleb governorate.
- Education activities have been continuously suspended due to insecurity as well as schools being used as shelter. Only five schools remain functional in Ariha sub-district as a result, with overcrowded classrooms due to displacement from nearby locations.
- More than 300 schools are out of operation, impacting 117,000 children and more than 5,000 teachers:
  - 135 schools in Ma'arrat An Nu'man and neighbouring communities, impacting 48,649 children and 2,704 teachers;
  - 23 schools in the communities of Ariha, impacting 5,681 children and 384 teachers;
  - 41 schools in the communities of Saraqab, impacting 4,901 children and 615 teachers.
- Schools in northwest Syria reopened on 6 June after being closed for nearly three months; since 14 March in the Idleb area and since 16 March in northern Aleppo governorate. The summer semester is planned to continue until mid-August. To mitigate against the risk of COVID-19 transmissions, measures are reportedly in place to avoid large congregations of students and to ensure physical distancing in classes, while classroom hours have been halved.
- Examinations for grades 9 to 12 began on 4 July and will continue until 21 July in the Idleb area and northern Aleppo.
- To address needs, the objectives of the Education sector are:
  - Supporting the implementation of grade 9 and 12 exams in northwest Syria;
  - Providing education personnel and teacher incentives and training;
  - Providing learning materials for children and teachers;
  - Provision of non-formal education and summer school for out-of-school children (in classroom or remote/distance);
  - Continuing to support the safe reopening of schools (reparation/extension of classrooms and school furniture, WASH, hygiene promotion and supplies, school disinfection, etc.);
  - Using a blended approach for students' learning process, combining face-to-face education with distance learning.
- COVID-19 prevention needs:
  - Cleaning of education facilities that are accessible to children and/or adults again;
  - Clean WASH facilities in schools (in coordination with the WASH cluster);
  - Hygiene and basic health sensitisation at home, printed and/or through social media in coordination with Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) efforts;

- Continued physical re-planning of school infrastructure, especially in camps, taking into consideration adequate physical distancing and to prevent large gatherings of children;
- Maintain adjusted modalities for education services (classes etc.) to incorporate physical distancing and prevent large gatherings.
- Continuation of learning:
  - Childcare arrangements for children whose parents are healthcare workers (in coordination with the Child Protection sub-cluster);
  - Adaptation of existing curricula and implementation through printed materials and/or social media and self-learning programmes;
  - Assessment of students', parents' and teachers' access to affordable internet connectivity and internet-enabled devices. Consider paper-based individual home learning assignments based on current curricula as alternative;
  - Hold meetings virtually to consult with school governance bodies (PTAs, SMCs) on the proposed approach;
  - Provision of Education materials and supplies to children affected by COVID-19, to enable them to continue education through distance learning;
  - Provision of exercise sheets to all students, regardless of whether they have access to online platforms.

#### Response:

- The Education Cluster reached at least 298,065 school-age displaced children with education assistance as of 7 July. Children are being reached with diverse packages of education services including psychosocial support (PSS), psychological first aid (PFA), formal and non-formal education activities, home schooling, student bags and textbooks to minimise disruption to children's learning.
  - 11,682 children supported with PSS and PFA in Idleb, Maaret Tamsrin, Harim, Dana, Atareb, Qourqeena, Daret Azza and Bennsh;
  - 23,638 children supported with formal and non-formal education in Idleb, Harim, Dana, Atareb, Salqin, Maaret Tamsrin and Qourqeena; including children with disabilities;
  - 43,200 children supported with recreational kits, school bags, student kits and textbooks in Idleb and Aleppo.
  - 4,150 children supported for their mid-year exams;
  - 173 children provided with medicine to treat headlice, in coordination with the Health Cluster;
  - 1,106 children supported with home-based education based on a self-learning programme, in Marat Tamsrin, Daret Azza, Ariha and Haritan sub-districts;
  - 4,000 out-of-school children provided with life skills, recreation and PSS education activities;
  - At least 69,388 children benefited from distance learning in Idleb and Aleppo governorates as an alternative way to continue education during the COVID-19 pandemic;
  - In Idleb and Dana sub-districts, 111,480 students and 654 teachers have been provided with awareness raising on COVID-19 and received information, education and communication (IEC) and sterilisation materials;
  - 21,779 students, teachers and parents sensitised on prevention of COVID-19;
  - 228,878 children from displaced and host communities received textbooks in Idleb and Aleppo governorates;
  - 565 teachers and education personnel provided with teachers' incentives
  - 63 teachers and education personnel were trained on literacy, numeracy and PSS and referral mechanisms;
  - 227 families have been provided with tents by Education partners to support the relocation of displaced people sheltering in schools, in order to enable the resumption of learning activities in the affected areas;
  - At least 13,806 children in schools and temporary learning spaces benefited from sterilisation of education facilities as mitigation against the spread of COVID-19.

#### Gaps & Constraints:

- Increase in child labour is among the main challenges, as this will cause children to drop out of school. Mitigation is mainly linked to livelihood and food support for families, as well as increasing support of education activities for affected children (stationery, transportation, etc.).
- With the increase of fuel prices, the sustained provision and storage of fuel used for heating and sometimes electricity at schools may become challenging, including from a security perspective. Possible mitigation measures include increasing the number of guards in schools and increasing security measures such as fences.
- Children and their caregivers need more supportive programmes that create new livelihood opportunities, cash and/or in-kind support for children, etc.
- Increased fighting in northwest Syria is affecting the safety of children, security and education service delivery.
- Lack of funds inhibits the ability of Education Cluster members to provide quality education support, particularly in conjunction with security situations in which children are constantly on the move.
- Education services need to be relocated to follow displaced populations and be established in locations where displaced people settle. Lost or destroyed educational materials need to be replaced.

- The education system in areas receiving newly displaced families were already overstretched prior to the latest displacement. The needs for receiving the newly displaced people in the existing education services risk inflaming inter/intra-community tensions.
- Students and teachers lack basic education supplies, and school furniture and WASH facilities are insufficient.
- Many learning facilities have no basic safety equipment/systems in place despite ongoing safety and security concerns.
- Students and education personnel are not receiving the psychosocial support, knowledge and skills needed for a safe and productive learning environment.
- Suspension of schools due to COVID-19 impacted on the quality of children's education.
- Use of schools by as shelters for displaced people continues to have a negative impact on children's access to education services.
- Crossing frontlines to sit for exams exposes children to protection risks.

## Food Security and Livelihoods

### Needs:

- Emergency food assistance is needed for recently displaced people during the first two to four weeks of displacement, through cooked meals and ready-to-eat (RTE) rations. After the first-line emergency response, displaced people need to be integrated into the monthly regular food assistance.
- After the initial wave of displacement, livelihood initiatives are key to support affected local communities and households to recover agricultural production, sustain small-scale food production, maintain productive assets and create income-generating activities to prevent negative coping mechanisms.
- There is need for provision of animal feed to limit sales of livestock by displaced and impoverished households. Due to transport cost, feed distributions are expensive and hence extremely limited in scope. Voucher schemes for provision of animal feed by local suppliers are cost-efficient and sustainable. The main current needs for livestock are dry storage fodder warehouses, water for the animals and three main vaccinations, against Pasteurella, Enterotoxaemia, Peste des Petits Ruminats (PPR).
- Protection of livestock against epidemic diseases and improved local availability of quality animal feed increases the production of animal source foods for humans in northwest Syria, such as dairy products, eggs and meat. Support for animal production significantly contributes towards protecting human health and reducing vulnerability to COVID-19.

# 139,000

people in need of food assistance who remain unreachable

### Response:

- 13 FSL Cluster partners delivered emergency food assistance to some 309,327 recently displaced people and returnees between 8 June and 8 July:
  - Six FSL Cluster members distributed 27,189 Emergency Food Baskets to reach 135,947 people;
  - Eight FSL Cluster members distributed 32,061 ready-to-eat (RTE) rations to 160,306 people;
  - One FSL Cluster members distributed US\$ 536,400 multipurpose cash grants (MPCG) to 4,470 people;
  - Three FSL Cluster members distributed 8,604 cooked meals to 8,604 people.
- The Cluster lead agency has prepositioned sufficient food to meet the needs of more than 1.3 million people for more than two months. The Cluster lead agency has more than 237,000 RTEs ready to respond to some 1.2 million people, with stocks strategically positioned in different warehouses managed by partners in northwest Syria.
- The FSL Cluster released the bread and bakery dashboard, which includes actual figures for May 2020 and plans for July, August and September 2020, as well as the number of partners currently working, or planning to work, in bread and bakery activities. In addition to the price per tonne of flour and per kilogramme of bread in northwest Syria, the three main points are:
  - In May, some 960,000 people benefited from bread assistance programmes by FSL partners across 16 sub-districts in northwest Syria. Some 50 percent of beneficiaries were in Dana and Maaret Tamsrin sub-districts.
  - Although bread production is in most sub-districts, population needs in some areas remain unmet due to uneven production capacity across bakeries. More than one third of the surveyed bakeries are no longer operational.
  - The prices of flour and bread have fluctuated both in Idlib and northern Aleppo governorates: the subsidised price of one kilogramme of bread ranged between 212 SYP and 650 SYP in the Aleppo area, and between 225 SYP and 430 SYP in the Idlib area. The unsubsidised bread price ranged from 450 SYP to 650 SYP in the Idlib area and 350 SYP to 1,075 SYP in northern Aleppo.
- The FSL Cluster received an additional US\$ 2 million from the SCHF to support bread-related activities.
- PPR is globally the most dangerous infection of sheep and goats. The northwest Syria PPR vaccination campaign, implemented by three partners between early May and the end of June, covered up to 950,000 sheep and goats in all accessible parts of northwest Syria. This includes an additional 200,000 sheep & goats that arrived in northwest Syria from southern Idlib governorate and from northern Hama governorate in May and early June 2020.

- In June, FAO shipped 400 feed roller mills to Harim, Al Bab, Jarablus and A'zaz districts in northwest Syria. The equipment was distributed to 400 farmer groups (4,000 households) that are currently being trained and supported to use feed roller mills for producing animal feed on their farms. By producing their own animal feed, livestock owners no longer need to rely on purchasing expensive, low-quality commercial livestock feed.

#### Gaps & Constraints:

- A gap of 139,000 people remain unreached by food assistance, with 309,000 out of 448,000 people targeted for food assistance reached between 8 June and 8 July.
- There is a need to enhance the complementarity between food assistance and livelihood, in addition, to support the livelihood including the income generation activities.
- The harvesting season of wheat and barley started in the first week of June and is nearing completion.
- Several fire incidents were reported in northwest Syria in recent weeks. These had minor impact on arable lands in the northwest. As of mid-June 2020, nearly 48 hectares planted with wheat and barley were burnt, while fires were neutralised in more than 200 hectares of agricultural fields. 90 percent of these lands were harvested at the time of the fires. Preventive measures and firefighting points established and implemented by farmers, NGOs, civil defence teams and other stakeholders played an important role in preventing major damage.
- Related to COVID-19:
  - Five FSL Cluster members reported having postponed training activities; around 1,596 people are planned to be trained (150 people, 32 agriculture engineers, 1,014 people and local councils, 200 people and 200 people from five projects).
  - More funds are needed to cover unexpected costs due to COVID-19 mitigation measures being applied by FSL Cluster members, such as door-to-door distribution, addition of soap to food baskets, etc.

## Health

#### Needs:

- The Health Cluster emphasises the need to ensure that essential health services, medicines and consumables continue to be available and accessible for vulnerable people in northwest Syria, including in the event of movement restrictions.
- Due to ongoing increase in leishmaniasis cases reported in northwest Syria, there is a need to scale-up the response and support for health partners in the area on prevention and response to leishmaniasis.
- For COVID-19, there remains a need to secure personal protective equipment (PPE) and hygiene items for community health workers (CHW) and volunteer teams. Hygiene items such as soap will be distributed during COVID-19 awareness sessions. The risk of contamination during door-to-door awareness raising activities is high.

#### Response:

- To counter leishmaniasis, some 145,000 pieces of insecticide-treated bed nets were provided to health implementing partners, for distribution to displaced and host communities in northwest Syria. Some 8,050 vials of Glucantime were provided last week to eight health partners involved in leishmaniasis control programmes in northwest Syria.
- Key referral hospitals in northwest Syria continue to provide life-saving health services, facilitated by UNSCR 2504. In June, some 29,174 beneficiaries received secondary and tertiary healthcare services, of which 488 were normal deliveries provided by skilled health personnel at the hospital level. 1,304 trauma and surgical consultations and interventions were provided, of which 109 were major surgeries.
- The 91 Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) centres are still functioning, with 2,501 sessions conducted by 131 EPI teams within the last two weeks. An average of 19 sessions per team per month conducted in June for a targeted 13,262 one-year-old children.
- In June, a refresher training was attended by 281 EPI staff members (176 males and 105 females). The remaining staff will be trained in July.
- As of end-June, nine training sessions on Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP) were conducted, attended by 163 primary health centre (PHC) doctors serving in 102 health facilities in northwest Syria.
- WHO sent nine truckloads of medical supplies to northwest Syria to ensure the availability of essential medicines and supplies for 615,000 beneficiaries, non-communicable disease (NCD) care for three months for 160,000 beneficiaries, insulin for 14,200 insulin-dependent diabetic patients for one month, and supplies for 3,400 trauma and surgical interventions.
- For COVID-19:
  - Four COVID-19 cases have been identified in northwest Syria as of 12 July, with two cases in Idlib governorate and two cases in northern Aleppo governorate. Contact tracing was activated following the first positive result from the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test. People who had encountered these patients in the last two weeks are being advised to isolate themselves and be alert to potential symptoms, while all contacts exhibiting symptoms

are being tested for COVID-19. Health partners are working to interrupt transmission of the identified virus cluster, including reducing secondary infections among close contacts and healthcare workers, preventing transmission amplification events and preventing community spread.

- To expand testing capacity, the Cluster lead agency is procuring two more PCR machines. These are expected to arrive by mid-July, in addition to laboratory supplies (DNA extraction kits).
- Three senior laboratory staff from the Assistance Coordination Unit (ACU) Early Warning Alert and Response Network (EWARN) will be trained in the use of PCR machines and testing COVID-19 samples in Ankara, under a training-of-training programme coordinated with the Ministry of Health of Turkey. This will be followed by a roll-out training in northwest Syria for up to 15 laboratory staff.
- To improve planning and coordination of local and global procurement related to the COVID-19 response, an online needs assessment tool is available for partners to reflect current stock, pipeline and needs for PPEs and infection prevention and control (IPC) kits.
- An orientation on International Health Regulations 2005 (IHR 2005) for COVID-19 was provided to Health Cluster partners. This followed previous orientation sessions organised for the COVID-19 Health Task Force by the Health Cluster lead agency.
- On mental health aspects of COVID-19, a volunteer psychiatrist based in the United Kingdom is offering online training for eight Syrian psychiatrists and six resident psychiatrists in northwest Syria.

### Gaps & Constraints:

- The children's mental health programme and the suicide prevention/self-harm programme has not yet materialised due to funding gaps and the prioritisation of urgent life-saving services related to the security situation and population movements. These programmes are nevertheless crucial for displaced people and host communities, particularly given an increase of suicide cases in northwest Syria.
- There is some delay in the procurement of additional medical treatment for leishmaniasis.
- For COVID-19:
  - There is a significant gap resulting from past closures of some sentinel sites which are still unfunctional. The main reasons for these closures is due to the deterioration of the security situation since December 2019 and the increased risk of being affected by hostilities.
  - Not all the Points of Entries (PoE) are functional in line with the northwest Syria COVID-19 preparedness and response plan (PRP). Only seven of the 13 cross-border/crossline PoEs are operational. It is vital that all PoEs are on-boarded to avoid importation COVID-19 into northwest Syria.
  - The COVID-19 Community Treatment Centres (CCTC) planned in northwest Syria are facing delays, for reasons including funding, location issues and the availability of qualified human resources.

## Nutrition

### Needs:

- In June 2020, the proxy prevalence of acute malnutrition across northwest Syria based on community-based nutrition surveillance was 2 percent among children aged 6 to 59 months and 8 percent in pregnant and lactating women (PLW).
- The proxy prevalence of acute malnutrition was higher in Idleb compared to Aleppo among children aged 6 to 59 months (3 percent vs. 1 percent) and PLW (13 percent vs. 3 percent).
- The proxy prevalence of chronic malnutrition (stunting) among children aged 6 to 59 months across northwest Syria was 30 percent, higher among boys (32 percent) than girls (29 percent), according to the May surveillance report.
- In Idleb, proxy prevalence of acute malnutrition was generally higher among the displaced population than host communities, for both children aged 6 to 59 months (5 percent vs. 3 percent) and PLW (16 percent vs. 12 percent).
- The prevalence of acute malnutrition among children aged 6 to 59 months increased from 1 percent in April 2019 to 2 percent in June 2020. Similarly, the prevalence of chronic malnutrition (stunting) increased from 19 percent to 30 percent during the same period.
- Exclusive breastfeeding was found to be 37 percent, minimum dietary diversity 57 percent, and minimum acceptable diet (MAD) was 41 percent.
- The prevalence of acute malnutrition in children aged 6 to 59 months remains relatively low, while the high prevalence of stunting in children aged 6 to 59 months and acute malnutrition in PLW are of concern.
- The proxy prevalence of acute malnutrition among PLW in the following locations of Idleb governorate were found to be of primary concern, due to prevalence of at least 10 percent: Aqrabat (30 percent), Qah (28 percent), Qourqeena (26 percent), Sarmada (25 percent), Janudiyeh (18 percent), and Ma'arrat Tamasrin (17 percent).

# 823,447

children below age 5 and pregnant and lactating mothers reached with life-saving nutrition services

- The Nutrition Cluster estimates the burden of acute malnutrition in the accessible locations of northwest Syria to be 103,905 PLW and 26,720 children aged 6 to 59 months – 3,127 cases of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) and 23,593 cases of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM).
- The poor nutrition situation is largely attributed to continued exposure of children and PLW to unsafe living conditions, diseases (including impacts of COVID-19), suboptimal infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices, high maternal malnutrition, economic downturn, low purchasing power, poverty, food insecurity, family separations, poor care practices, early marriages, destruction of infrastructure causing limited access to health services, and inadequate sanitation and water supply.

#### Response:

- Since the start of the year, 823,447 children aged 6 to 59 months and PLW were reached with life-saving nutrition services covering 513 communities and 40 sub-districts in the Idlib area and northern Aleppo governorate.
- The number of children aged 6 to 59 months and PLW reached to date represents nearly 51 percent of the population in need, with a 9 percent increase in coverage since the last situation update.
- Specialised nutritious supplements (Ready-to-Use Foods (RUF), Lipid-based Nutrient Supplements (LNS), High Energy Biscuits (HEB) and micronutrient supplements) reached:
  - 371,952 children aged 6 to 59 months, representing 40 percent of those in need;
  - 169,862 PLW, representing nearly 40 percent of those in need.
- 25 Nutrition Cluster partners provide life-saving nutrition services through 120 Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) and mobile teams, 10 stabilisation centres and 165 Outpatient Therapeutic Programmes (OTP) and 23 Targeted Supplementary Feeding Programmes (TSFP).
- Nutrition Cluster partners provided the following services:
  - 107,092 displaced children aged 6 to 59 months and PLW received HEB for prevention of acute malnutrition;
  - 337,813 PLW and children aged 6 to 59 months received micronutrient supplementation;
  - 72,870 children aged 6 to 36 months received LNS for prevention of acute and chronic malnutrition;
  - 281,633 mothers and caregivers were reached with infant feeding and caring practices messages and counselling.
- Of the 823,447 PLW and children aged 6 to 59 months screened for acute malnutrition:
  - 3,181 cases of severe acute malnutrition and 9,721 cases of moderate acute malnutrition were identified among displaced children aged 6 to 59 months and referred for appropriate treatment;
  - 11,137 acutely malnourished PLW were identified and referred for appropriate treatment.
- Nutrition Cluster partners provided the following COVID-19 related services:
  - 32,809 mothers and caregivers received information and prevention measures related to COVID-19;
  - 14,806 mothers and caregivers were counselled on breastfeeding in context of COVID-19;
  - 6,650 beneficiaries received masks and IEC materials related to COVID-19 (posters, WhatsApp videos, etc.);
  - 298 staff of partners trained on COVID-19 IPC measures;
  - 254 staff of partners trained on programmatic adaptations in the context of COVID-19 (Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM), IYCF-E, surveillance, etc.);
  - 554 staff of partners received PPE tools (masks, gloves, hand sanitisers, etc.).
- Nutrition Cluster partners are implementing the recommended adaptations for COVID-19, including continuity of life-saving nutrition services, integration of infection prevention and control (IPC) measures in all platforms to mitigate against transmissions of COVID-19, enhanced communication on IYCF-E in the context of COVID-19, simplified protocol for treatment of acute malnutrition, surveillance, and supply pre-positioning to avoid stockouts.
- Nutrition Cluster COVID-19 Taskforce meetings are conducted fortnightly to review emerging global evidence and recommendations, and to discuss northwest Syria experiences and questions raised by partners in relation to the operational guidance. The Cluster also conducts Nutrition Cluster coordination meetings fortnightly.
- The Nutrition Cluster Strategic Review Committee (SRC) completed a technical review of the projects submitted for the first SCHF standard allocation for 2020 and shared its recommendations with the SCHF.

#### Gaps & Constraints:

- Key challenges encountered by Nutrition Cluster members in adjusting their operations for COVID-19 according to the Cluster guidance include lack of personal protective equipment (PPE), lack of infrared forehead digital thermometers to facilitate isolation at facilities, inadequate WASH services and mobility restrictions.
- Several Nutrition Cluster members procured light PPE for their non-health staff who are involved in routine mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) screening to ensure continuity of this activity, as it informs the nutrition situation and impact of COVID-19 on children and PLW. The procured quantities remain insufficient due to funding constraints.
- The low proportions of people reached with services for treatment of MAM (16 percent), prevention of acute and chronic malnutrition (57 percent) and micronutrient supplementation (37 percent) are indicative of limited funding, access constraints and supply shortages, especially Ready-to-Use Supplementary Food (RUSF) for MAM prevention and treatment.

- The COVID-19 outbreak and continued economic downturn will cause further deterioration of the nutrition situation during the second half of 2020, as result of dysfunctional markets, limited livelihood opportunities, inflation, low purchasing power, increasing food insecurity and disruption of access to health and WASH services.
- Limited implementation of an integrated approach which is crucial for addressing the underlying drivers of acute and chronic malnutrition.

## Protection

### Needs:

- Human rights violations and abuses are increasingly reported by Protection partners. These include forced eviction of displaced persons from residential and commercial property.
- Civilians in northwest Syria continue to face risks related to explosive hazards, such as improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and unexploded ordnances (UXOs). This is especially the case for individuals moving back to areas where active fighting occurred in January and February.
- Members of the gender-based violence (GBV) sub-cluster continue to report a significant increase in different types of GBV, mainly domestic violence (marital rape, physical and emotional violence, and denial of resources and services). This has been exacerbated by psychosocial stress as well as poverty and lack of employment, in addition to extended lockdown/stay-at-home measures. Women and girls with disabilities as well as pregnant women are reported to be among the most at risk of domestic violence during this period.
- Reports are received of increased adoption of negative coping mechanisms including early/forced marriage and forced prostitution. GBV sub-cluster partners continue to report families marrying off daughters repeatedly for short periods of time in exchange for money. Consequently, adolescent girls (aged 18 to 19 years) are left on their own with young children.
- Partners continue to receive reports on the use of violence to force pregnant women to abort their pregnancies, reportedly to avoid the additional financial burden. An increase in divorces happening for the same reason is also reported, leading to an increase in female headed households.
- The reporting period has been characterised by persisting child protection concerns, aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic and related mitigation measures.
- The impact of the SYP devaluation exacerbates an already dire humanitarian situation for children in northwest Syria. This is resulting in a steep increase in child labour, including in its worst forms. Reports from the field confirm increase in the numbers of children in the street until very late at night begging or hoping for casual labour.
- Despite limitations in an increasingly restrictive operational environment and suspension of Child Friendly Spaces (CFSs), child protection partners have strived to deliver, while incorporating where possible COVID-19 prevention messages and messages on childcare in times of isolation and unpredictability. Child protection partners continue to adapt core activities, such as psychosocial support (PSS) activities and parenting programmes.

### Response:

- From 22 June to 5 July, four Protection Cluster members provided general protection emergency response services for civilians displaced mainly from Idlib and Aleppo. Cluster members provided 15,611 protection interventions to displaced persons and affected host community members in 14 communities within seven sub-districts in Idlib governorate reaching 7,838 individuals (2,455 girls, 649 boys, 4,428 women and 306 men). The main services provided were:
  - Psychological first aid (PFA) and psychosocial support (PSS);
  - Information sharing about other services;
  - Dignity kits distribution;
  - Risk education.
- Protection Cluster members also referred individuals to other basic services, notably health and shelter, and provided individual protection assistance (cash grants for protection outcomes). These emergency response activities are in addition to activities included in the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and those reported through the 4Ws.
- Since December 2019, GBV sub-cluster members have distributed 113,622 dignity kits. Beneficiary feedback shows that the kits were critical for women and girls to respond to their increased need for personal hygiene products during the COVID-19 pandemic and reported satisfaction with measures taken by the GBV sub-cluster during distributions to mitigate against COVID-19 transmissions.
- During the reporting period, 1,178 individuals (525 girls, 572 boys, 33 women and 48 men) were reached with child protection emergency interventions.
- 591 children (268 girls and 323 boys) were reached with psychosocial support kits, while 373 children (178 girls and 195 boys) received psychosocial support (structured and sustained) in Aqrabat in Idlib governorate.
- 206 caregivers and children (77 girls, 48 boys, 33 women and 48 men) were reached through awareness raising on child protection issues, including prevention from separation, in Aqrabat in Idlib governorate.

- Child Protection case management including family tracing continues to be provided, with the necessary precautions against COVID-19 in place.

#### Gaps & Constraints:

- Access to services for people who moved back to areas in the vicinity of the M4 and M5 highway in northwest Syria remains limited due to several factors, including heavy damage to civilian infrastructure in arrival areas and suspension or relocation of humanitarian services due to the unstable security situation.
- Increased basic needs across the population due to the currency devaluation and economic downturn increases the risk of adoption of negative coping mechanisms, while acceptance of protection interventions may also reduce as the affected population prioritises addressing their basic needs.
- Activities that continued with COVID-19 countermeasures included specialised services such as case management for high-risk and individual cases and referrals for child protection, GBV and mine action, individual protection assistance and physical rehabilitation. Where feasible, PSS, legal awareness and counselling on housing, land and property (HLP) rights and civil documentation have also continued (in centres, via outreach, and in camps).

## Shelter / Non-Food Items

#### Needs:

- According to a UN partner, 44 percent of displaced people use tents as shelter, some 5 percent stay in substandard shelter (most of which are unfinished buildings), and 1 percent of displaced people have resorted to public buildings such as schools as their only shelter option. Shelter Cluster members are providing shelter solutions for people living in schools mainly through the provision of emergency shelters in new camps.
- A multi-sector needs assessment was conducted in June by an NGO partner to capture the situation of displaced people in 53 camps in Jisr-Ash-Shugur district in Idlib governorate. 501 key informants and displaced people were interviewed. Most people living in the assessed locations were displaced from rural Latakia governorate, Jisr-Ash-Shugur city, Ariha, As-Suqaylabiyah and Al-Ma'ra, while others were originally from locations such as Idlib city, Hama, rural Damascus and Latakia city.
  - The most pressing needs identified by the household respondents were food (48 percent), NFI (percent), shelter (10 percent), income (10 percent), health (8 percent) and WASH (4 percent).
  - All people in the assessed camps were living in tents; 89 percent in standard tents and 2 percent in self-made tents. 90 percent of tents were used by only one family, while the remaining tents are shared.
  - 46 percent of shelters are not protective of weather conditions. 37 percent of respondents indicated insufficient space between shelters, while 13 percent mentioned overcrowding and 5 percent highlighted insufficient shelter. There is significant need for tent replacements. Some people need new tents as they are currently sharing tents with other families, and several families are paying rent for the use of their tents. Most tents require insulation, and roads urgently need graveling and lighting.
  - In terms of the most needed NFIs, 14 percent of respondents indicated fuel as the greatest need. 13 percent need shoes, 13 percent need kitchen kits, 13 percent need blankets and bedding, and 9 percent need stoves. Clothes are among the key needs highlighted in this assessment. Up to 40 percent of respondents confirmed preferring cash assistance to secure their needs.

#### Response:

- SNFI Cluster members continue to actively respond to the needs of the recently displaced population and people in protracted displacement. Some 201,649 people in displaced and host communities were assisted with NFI and/or shelter in May.
- In May, 146,649 people received NFI assistance in the form of NFI kits, kitchen sets, mattresses and blankets, as well as winter and other supplementary items. Shelter needs of some 55,000 people were addressed with activities including emergency and shelter rehabilitation.
- 580,050 people were reached in 2020 with shelter assistance, including rehabilitation of infrastructure (197,665 people), provision of emergency shelter (282,627 people), shelter rehabilitation and transitional shelters (69,395 people), and seasonal shelter assistance (30,363 people).
- 1,021,534 people were reached in 2020 with NFI assistance such as seasonal and/or supplementary items (335,593 people) and core NFI distributions (685,941 people).
- The SNFI Cluster is actively coordinating with the Health and WASH Clusters to respond to the needs of the displaced population in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The SNFI Cluster is working to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 during distributions, to improve the conditions of inadequate shelters and decongest overcrowded collective shelters. The population of collective centres has fallen to a third of the population in March. The SNFI Cluster ensured that proposals for the first SCHF standard allocations for 2020 proposals are in line with Cluster guidelines on COVID-19.

SNFI Cluster members continue to provide awareness-raising sessions at the individual level or in small groups. The Cluster is participating in the inter-sector tracking of the PPE gap, with surveys conducted to monitor gaps reported by Cluster members. Some Cluster members have been able to provide protective equipment to their staff.

- As part of the COVID-19 preparedness and response plan for northwest Syria and in collaboration with SNFI Cluster members, 316 tents were provided to be used as triage stations at health facilities in northwest Syria. The SNFI Cluster has also developed and widely shared its recommendations to mitigate the risks related to the COVID-19 outbreak for shelter and NFI activities. The recommendations have been updated and translated into Arabic.
- The SNFI Cluster continues to support partners with site-planning expertise in order to enhance shelter solutions in northwest Syria, collaborating with organisations to review plans and share recommendations prior to implementing modifications. Organisations that have already benefited from the site planning review currently have 15 projects in various stages of construction. These projects comprise one new IDP settlement and 14 camp extensions, with the camp extensions providing shelter for 5,100 displaced people.
- On 30 June, a special advisory group meeting was held with 15 Cluster members to discuss recent outbreaks of fires in northwest Syria, flood prevention measures, the expiration of UNSCR 2504 and effective coordination when incidents occur. The SAG is now working on developing a guideline of flood classifications and effects on IDP sites that will be shared with Cluster members. This is intended to mitigate flood risks, especially in self-settled sites and camps. The Cluster coordination team is updating the NFI technical guidelines prior to sharing it with the SAG ahead of publication.

#### Gaps & Constraints:

- Difficulties finding a place to rent. Whilst the availability of houses and apartments for rent has improved over the past month, displaced persons reported that the spike in the market has meant that many cannot afford rent. The price of rent is often indexed to the USD, therefore prices in SYP have significantly increased as a consequence of the currency devaluation, putting people at risk of eviction.
- Improving infrastructure in camps and IDPs sites is essential to avoid future floods that happen regularly. These activities include drainage system upgrades and rehabilitating the infrastructure.
- In case of new emergencies resulting from deteriorating security situations, preparedness and response plans require securing additional funds. Cluster members have only secured funds for 24,150 tents (44 percent funded) and 69,000 NFI kits (15 percent funded). The SNFI Cluster calls for additional funds to cover the remaining gaps in tents and NFIs.
- Shelter inadequacies require significant capacity and budget to address, specifically to respond to the inadequacies in collective shelters. As the situation in northwest Syria remains volatile and accessible areas are shrinking, thousands of families continue to seek safe and adequate shelters in the northwest.
- COVID-19 created additional burdens on Cluster members in order to mitigate the risk of transmission. Application of appropriate risk mitigation measures requires additional time, staff, effort and cost.

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

#### Needs:

- The increasing demand for soap in the local market is leading to an increase in the prices of the soap and cloth detergent purchased by NGOs ordering large quantities. Reports indicate that these prices have almost doubled, while the price for the local population reportedly remains unchanged.
- Soap usually is manufactured in winter, dried in spring and sold in summer. As such, the available quantities are limited with regards to production. Existing stocks of soap are large and are currently believed to be adequate.
- Prices in the local markets in general are increasing as a consequence of the devaluation of the SYP against the USD. The diminishing value of the SYP is decreasing the purchase power of local communities, forcing households to reprioritise their needs. As a result, under the same conditions, reliance on humanitarian aid will increase across all sectors in the medium and long term. WASH partner organisations are less susceptible to the fluctuating SYP value as grants are provided in USD.
- Comprehensive life-saving WASH services are still needed across all WASH services and supplies in northwest Syria, including hygiene kits, jerry cans and water storage capacity.
- There is a need to increase the operational support to existing piped water systems to handle additional population in communities and in surrounding informal/formal settlements and camps.
- Access to safe water and sanitation services is required in areas to which people are returning after displacement.
- The possibility of renewed escalation in hostilities requires a contingency plan to support the WASH needs of the potentially displaced population.

#### Response:

- In its overall response, the WASH Cluster has provided safe water supply for over 2.2 million people (infrastructure and water trucking), solid waste management support for some 1 million people, and access to sanitation for 422,563 people (infrastructure and latrines). The Cluster has also reached more than 1.4 million people with hygiene kits.
- The ongoing emergency WASH response has reached 1.3 million recently displaced people in 1,176 locations through 29 Cluster members. 82 percent of the locations responded to are camps, 13 percent are communities, 2 percent are collective centres and 3 percent are other locations.
  - 529,453 people received and continue to receive water via water trucking;
  - 631,722 people received solid waste management services;
  - 250,158 people received new latrines (most of the existing public/community latrines are overcrowded due to an inadequate number of latrines);
  - 512,755 people benefited from hygiene kits (102,551 family hygiene kits intended for five people per kit);
  - 345,491 people benefited from water purifying agents (Aqua tablets);
  - 456,740 people benefited from the distribution of jerry cans (91,348 jerry cans distributed, two 10 litre jerry cans per household).
- Cluster members continue to scale up the response for people displaced between December 2019 and early March 2020, including with COVID-19 mitigation activities.
  - 83,784 people are expected to receive water trucking, based on Cluster members' plans for displaced people;
  - 88,405 people are expected to receive solid waste management services, especially in locations with large populations of displaced people. This will benefit both displaced and host communities (50 percent host community, 50 percent IDPs);
  - 54,568 people will benefit from new latrines currently under construction;
  - 163,600 people will benefit from the available hygiene kits (32,720 actual family hygiene kits);
  - 125,784 people will benefit from available jerry cans (25,156 jerry cans available, each household usually receives two 10 litre jerry cans).
- WASH projects were allocated some US\$ 10.2 million in the first SCHF standard allocation, and are expected to commence in mid-July.
- For COVID-19:
  - According to updates from 24 WASH partners in 110 locations to the WASH COVID-19 reporting matrix, 89 percent have changed their response due to COVID-19, 80 percent have increased the amount of water supplied, 83 percent have adapted hygiene promoted activities, 59 percent have increased the amount of soap distributed, and 15 percent have increased the amount of laundry detergent distributed.
  - Collaboration between the WASH and FSL Cluster lead agencies continues with actual/planned distribution of 720,000 food parcels in northwest Syria from April to June. This includes adding bar soap to 720,000 food parcels and pasting stickers with COVID-19 prevention measures on 420,000 of these.
  - The WASH Cluster lead agency will purchase 1,056,000 soap bars over the next six months, to be delivered to the COVID-19 Awareness Team (CAT) through a WASH partner. Activities related to this batch of soap will be implemented on the ground by a group of 1,600 Community Health Workers (CHW).

### Gaps & Constraints:

- The WASH cluster is working with the CCCM and Shelter clusters to ensure joint planning and installation of new camps with requisite WASH services. The immediate gaps in 21 sub-districts for some 172,000 displaced people are:
  - 142,747 displaced people lack water trucking (many more displaced people share existing water supply of host communities and other displaced people);
  - 137,434 people need public latrines rehabilitation or construction;
  - 172,157 people need recurrent solid waste management;
  - 170,620 people need hygiene kits.
- No major challenges have been reported with regards to transshipments, and hygiene kit quotas are being met in the cross-border shipments.
- Volatility and devaluation of the SYP, which impacts local communities and alters their priorities. Humanitarian partners are not as susceptible to this volatility, as grants are provided in USD. Under these conditions, reliance on humanitarian aid will increase across all sectors in the medium and long term.

## Logistics

### Needs:

- Organisations responding to the needs of the affected population in northwest Syria require a reliable and consistent transshipment service that facilitates the delivery of life-saving cargo from Turkey into the region.
- To manage the threat of COVID-19, coordination and timely information sharing with partners will be critical to assist with partner operational decision-making and to ensure bottlenecks and the duplication of efforts are avoided.

- Ensuring the safety and health of staff working at the transshipment points by following WHO guidelines on mitigating COVID-19 risks at transshipment points.
- Partners including international and local NGOs, donors and other stakeholders are expressing a need to establish a procurement working group.

**Response:**

- In June, the Logistics Cluster coordinated the transshipment of 1,579 Syrian trucks: 1,182 through Bab Al-Hawa and 396 through Bab Al-Salam, facilitating the delivery of 33,981 metric tonnes of Food Security, Shelter, WASH, Health, Education and Nutrition sector items.
- The Logistics Cluster is monitoring customs regulations, with particular focus on COVID-19 related items and sharing lists of prohibited and restricted items for import as and when changes occur.
- In accordance with WHO guidelines and local health authorities, the Logistics Cluster has enacted measures at the transshipment hubs to mitigate the risks of COVID-19 to teams on the ground, including new handwashing facilities for drivers and workers, promoting physical distancing, raising awareness through visibility items and a staff rotation system.
- Workshops on safe use and disposal of PPE and how to keep safe and protected against COVID-19 at the transshipment hubs were provided.
- To promote physical distancing, the Logistics Cluster has developed procedures for coordination meetings to continue to be held online. In addition, regular communication of logistics information and updates continues to be provided through a dedicated mailing list.

**Constraints:**

- Increased lead time for in-transit goods and uncertainty over the availability of medical supplies at local and international markets.

## GENERAL COORDINATION

On 9 July, the Humanitarian Liaison Group (HLG) held its regular monthly meeting to discuss the strategic aspects of the humanitarian response in northwest Syria. At the technical level, the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) meeting was held on 7 July. The ICCG meets at least once a month, with additional meetings organised as necessary. To examine developments impacting on humanitarian access, the Access Working Group (AWG) met on 8 July. The COVID-19 Health Task Force for northwest Syria continues to meet on a regular basis. Several other inter-sector meetings were held since the last situation report to discuss issues such as the economic downturn in northwest Syria.

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