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SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

Recent Developments in Northwest Syria
Situation Report No. 5 - As of 8 January 2020

HIGHLIGHTS

- Since 1 December 2019, more than 312,000 people fled from their homes, mainly from southern Idlib governorate, moving further north away from the hostilities. Ma‘arrat An Nu‘man and its countryside are reportedly depopulated, while thousands of people from Saraqib and its eastern countryside fled in anticipation of hostilities extending to their area.

- Most of the recently displaced people moved to urban centres and IDP camps in northwestern Idlib. Tens of thousands have reportedly moved to areas such as Afrin and A’zaz in northern Aleppo governorate seeking safety and access to services.

- An unstable security situation prevails with daily reports of bombardments, affecting civilian infrastructure, such as schools and IDP camps.

- Displacement during winter is further exacerbating the vulnerability of those affected. Many who fled are in urgent need of humanitarian support, particularly shelter, food, health, non-food and winterization assistance.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Hostilities in northwest Syria continue to have devastating consequences for the civilians. Due to the escalation of violence in December - particularly in southern parts of Idlib - more than 312,000 people were displaced in northwest Syria, 80 percent of whom are women and children. Many had to flee their homes within the space of hours without any belongings while others managed take with them what they needed to survive, believing that they would not be coming back. The majority of those newly displaced have stayed within the Idlib area, moving to either urban centres such as Idlib city or Ariha or to areas that already have significant IDP populations such as Dana, Maaret Tamsrin and Atareb. Some 30,000 of newly displaced individuals chose to move to areas in northern Aleppo governorate to seek safety and to reach services. Given the possibility of further intensification of hostilities, many civilians, particularly those who live in areas close to the frontlines in Idlib area, are worried that hostilities may affect their communities next and are likely to move on a short notice.

Yet, those who fled their homes in southern Idlib due to hostilities continue to be deeply affected by the violence. On 1 January, local sources reported that shelling hit a residential area in Sarmin, including a school which was partially used as an IDP shelter, killing nine people, including five children and a pregnant teacher. On 5 January, local sources reported that airstrikes in Ariha, a town that has received thousands of new IDPs in December, resulted in the death of at least 11 people, including several children.

While the most essential needs following the displacement focus on life-saving assistance such as food support and shelter, the humanitarian needs across sectors are growing exponentially at arrival locations putting another layer of strain on the provision of humanitarian assistance and on host communities. Four million people live in northwest Syria, of which 2.8 are
estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance. Women and children are estimated to make up for the 76 percent of this population, made vulnerable by eight years of crisis, violence, economic downturn and multiple displacements.

Commensurate with the needs of both the newly displaced and host populations, the humanitarian actors continue to scale up their response, particularly in areas that have recently received IDPs. Humanitarian organizations that had suspended their operations in southern Idlib due to hostilities are now relocating their services to northern parts of Idlib to the extent possible. Moreover, those humanitarian actors who were already operating in these areas are expanding their programming to reach newly displaced people.

However, the rapid displacement as well as the previously existing needs on the ground mean more resources are needed to support all those in need in northern Syria. The current crisis compounds an already dire humanitarian situation in northwest Syria where an estimated 400,000 people have been displaced between May and August 2019. The main needs of the most recently displaced individuals, as reported by the CCCM, are non-food items, shelter, food and cash assistance. Currently, almost half of those newly displaced are living with host families and rented houses while 33 percent are living in camps or individual tents. In particular, the winter weather is adding another layer of urgency to the situation with flooding frequently affecting camps and informal settlements and many families seeking shelter in unfinished buildings.

With the displacement movement slowing, the needs of newly displaced and host communities across all sectors will emerge more on clearly beyond the emergency assistance, such as health services for chronic illnesses and maternal care. Additional education assistance for tens of thousands of newly displaced children who could not attend school for the most part of the semester, if not for several years, will be needed to support these children.

FUNDING

The US$12 million emergency reserve allocation for the Syria Cross-border Humanitarian Fund (SCHF) is moving forward. A total of 19 projects have been submitted in the following clusters: Food Security and Livelihoods, Health, Nutrition, Protection, Shelter / Non-Food items and Water Sanitation and Hygiene. Review and finalization of projects is ongoing, and the process should be completed by no later than 9 January and allow for immediate implementation and scale-up of critical activities. More details on the allocation strategy are available here.

Noting that further efforts are needed to support the response, partners are strongly encouraged to fill in the cluster response tools to clearly identifying the ongoing response and the critical gaps. This information is essential for resource mobilization efforts in support of the emergency response.

Given the scale of the current displacement and the existing vulnerabilities of both the displaced and host communities, the humanitarian needs in northwest Syria are immense. Therefore, funding beyond the SCHF reserve allocation will be needed to support all the people in need.

Information sharing on reprogramming is also critical to best organize the response. Partners are strongly encouraged to share with their clusters how the escalation of violence has impacted their programme or if current programs have been redirected towards emergency activities. For SCHF funded projects, partners should contact info-schf@un.org to report any issues related to project implementation, with copy to the relevant cluster. The CERF underfunded allocation strategy is being developed in conjunction and will be finalized by 22 January.

All humanitarian partners, including donors and recipient agencies, are encouraged to inform OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS - http://fts.unocha.org) of cash and in-kind contributions by e-mailing: fts@un.org

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Camp Coordination and Camp Management

Needs:

- CCCM in coordination with 6 active members have developed 14 proposals in 14 different locations for camp extension/establishment purposes, to shelter some 3,827 families among the most vulnerable newly displaced. There is an urgent need for funds to implement the 14 proposed projects.

312,000
People displaced in northwest Syria since 1 December 2019
Marat Al-Ekhwan Reception Center now has a population (2,156 people) that exceeds the camp’s capacity (1,800 individual). There is an urgent need to expand the camp to provide a temporary accommodation for additional 500 families.

The need to establish new reception center/s based on the valid contingency plan.

Response:

CCCM in coordination with S-NFI Cluster provided technical support in studying and reviewing 8 proposals submitted by 5 NGOs, to shelter newly displaced people in NW Syria using CCCM & SNFI contingency stock. 6 proposals recommended to shelter 3,334 families.

CCCM in cooperation with partners keep sharing (Snapshot) to monitor the number of the IDPs based on their current locations, and where community-based needs have been identified.

CCCM is providing technical support for the NGOs to speed up site selection process according to the international standards.

CCCM is monitoring tents contingency stocks prepositioned in Syria, or stocked in Turkey or in the pipelines.

Gaps & Constraints:

There are 2,156 individuals in Marat Al-Ekhwan RC. The reception centres maximum capacity is 1,800 people. As such, there is no remaining space for other displaced people.

Delay and/or conflict in information provided by many members across borders requires data cleaning, and verification before circulating and before the preparation of rapid response plan.

Physical accessibility is limited due to bad weather.

Education

Needs:

As of 07 January 2020, and due to the recent escalation in Maaret An Nu’man and Saraqab education activities remain suspended, impacting the learning of 33,817 school age children in impacted areas. Out of the 135 schools, there are 110 schools that are closed, impacting over 2,000 education personnel. The suspension of education activities is particularly worrying as by January 14, mid-year examinations are due. Furthermore, the ongoing winter season continues to impact regular attendance of children, especially in the camps where it has been reported that there has been a 30% decrease in attendance.

To address the immediate needs, the education sector aims to:

- Support about 35,000 learners to sit for the mid-year examinations through provision of additional learning spaces, catch-up classes and supporting the recruitment of school staff for facilitation.
- Establish and furnish temporary learning spaces (tents or caravans) to decrease over crowdedness and enable access in all affected areas.
- Provide Psychosocial support (PSS) and Psychosocial First Aid (PFA) activities in coordination with the Child Protection Sub Cluster.
- Distribute teaching and learning materials, textbooks and students bags for children and teachers to enable education activities.
- Recruit and train about 1955 teachers and education personnel in impacted areas.
- Provide heating in schools for 1,778 classrooms to benefit about 44,000 children as part of winterization efforts.
- Provide school-based hygiene materials (including medicine for head lice) for 1415 children in 13 schools, located in Aleppo and Idlib governorates in coordination with the Health cluster.

Response:

During the reporting period, the Education sector continued to strengthen its inter-sectoral linkages with the child protection sub cluster to reach a cumulative total of 8,553 school aged children. The sector continues to scale up its coverage and the education response increased from 15 percent to 18 percent of total number of children with diverse packages of education services including PSS, PFA, formal and non-formal education activities, home schooling, student bags, textbooks and distribution of winter clothes to ensure minimum disruption to children’s learning in the below districts:

- 5831 children supported with PSS and PFA in Idlib, Maaret Tamsrin, Harim, Dana and Atareb, Qourqueena, Daret Azza and Bennsh
- 500 children supported with Home School Education in Ariha.
- 5046 children supported with formal and non-formal education in Idlib, Harim, Dana and Atareb, Salqin, Maaret Tamsrin, Qourqueena
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500 children supported with winter clothes in Maaret Tamsrin.
500 children supported with students’ bags, student kit and textbooks in Ariha.
20 children with disabilities supported with formal, non-formal education, students’ bags, student kit and textbooks in Ariha.
Only 173 children out of 1415 provided with medicine for lice in coordination with Health cluster.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Despite significant efforts, as of 7 January 2020, the Education sector has reached only 18 percent (cumulative) of the displaced school aged children in 6 districts. The lack of funds received by the sector (only 18% funded), coupled with the unfolding security situation where children are constantly on the move makes it challenging to provide quality education support.
- Despite ongoing winterization efforts, there is still a key funding gap for winterization interventions to ensure that schools are appropriately heated to allow children to continue their education.
- Additionally, the already overstretched education system that suffers from overcrowded classrooms (60-80 students per class) in the displaced areas continues to limit absorption capacity for new comers. While the sector has been establishing learning spaces to address this, it continues to be a challenge.
- Out of 8,894,705 USD only 1,644,580 USD (18%) is funded. Therefore, the current funding gap is 7,250.125 USD.

Food Security

Needs:

- The number of newly displaced people from Ma’arrat An Nu’man, Kafr Nobol, Heish, Ehsem, Saraqab, and Khan Shaykun to Atareb, Daret Azza, Dana, Ariha, Idleb, Saraqab has increased to 367,000 people at end December 2019.
- The recently displaced people need emergency food assistance, through cooked meals, ready-to-Eat rations (RTEs), during the first 2-4 weeks of displacement. After the frontline emergency response, the displaced people shall be integrated in the monthly regular food assistance.
- After the initial displacement waves, lifesaving livelihood initiatives are also needed to support the affected communities and households in increasing agricultural production, sustain small scale food production, protection of productive assets, and restoring or creating income-generating activities to prevent negative or irreversible coping mechanisms.
- 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 involving local suppliers are cost-efficient and much more sustainable.

Response:

- The Food Security Cluster supports the frontline emergency response through the coordination with partners by online group, the emergency tracker tool (database), communication by phones and the organization of ad hoc cluster Strategic Advisory Group and cluster meetings.
- The frontline response is provided to the displaced people with the distribution of ready to eat rations, which are tailored to standard household of 5 members, the provision of cooked meals and emergency multi-purpose cash grants (MPCG) with an amount of 120 – 130 USD for each household to cover the immediate food needs.
- The Food Security Cluster members have scaled up the emergency response from 1 December 2019, till 8 January 2020, with different transfer modalities to enable food access to the newly displaced people:
  - 10 FSL members distributed 7,500 Emergency Food Basket (one-off) to 38,436 beneficiaries;
  - 12 FSL members distributed 36,445 RTEs to assist 208,600 beneficiaries;
  - 4 FSL members distributed 1,235,470 USD MPCGs to assist 55,680 beneficiaries;
  - 6 FSL members distributed 8,810 Cooked Meals to assist 43,850 beneficiaries.
- From 9 January 2020, Food Security Cluster members will provide further assistance to the newly IDPs according to the following plan:
  - 7,550 households with USD 906,000 cash;
  - 4,000 households with USD 240,000 cash for food;
  - 20,050 households with 3 million cooked meals;
  - 13,750 households with 13,750 emergency food baskets;
  - 34,460 households with 34,460 ready-to-eat rations.
- The food security cluster co-lead agency has prepositioned 116,000 RTEs for emergency response in NWS to meet the food needs of 580,000 people, in addition to the stock of food rations for regular assistance.

Gaps & Constraints:
Despite the huge efforts from the Food Security Cluster members, the number of newly displaced people continues to increase, with implications on food assistance needs. The latest estimation points out a gap in food assistance for 94,000 individuals that are not yet assisted by partners. The Food Security Cluster calls for additional support to meet the food needs of 94,000 newly displaced people by delivering frontline response (cash, cooked meals, ready to eat rations) for the next weeks till the situation on the ground will calm down.

The main identified constraints regard security, transportation, access to safe locations, and harsh winter season that sharpen the urgent needs of the newly displaced people.

Health

Needs:

- The most critical needs due to the latest escalation and waves of displacement is shelter and NFI. Newly displaced people reside in mosques and schools in Idleb city. The Atma camps cannot absorb any further people; newcomers share tents with relatives.
- Although public services have broken down, some 109 health centers remain functional. Access to safe water is a major challenge and the lack of proper sanitation increases the risk of communicable diseases.
- Displacement towards the north of Idleb is placing a huge burden on health care facilities, since new arrivals suffer from higher rates of communicable diseases. Between 15 and 31 December 2019, a total of 15,671 new cases of influenza-like illnesses and 8,338 new cases of acute diarrhea were confirmed.
- Further support to mobile clinics is needed, particularly in terms of treatment of chronic disease.

Response:

- In December, cluster members have scaled up health services in a number of communities in northwest Syria, such as Sarmada, Termanin, and Atareb in Idleb and Aleppo governorates. These are sub-districts that lately have received the highest number of displaced people, according to the CCCM Cluster.
- Termanin witnessed the most significant burden, as 3 new IDP shelters were established to host the displaced population coming from southern Idleb. A referral pathway was established between Rehana IDP shelter and Termanin PHC with support from a cluster member’s referral network to transfer patients from Rehana and other IDP shelters to Termanin PHC. The referral vehicles transfer some 15-20 IDP patients at a time to Termanin PHC to receive health services in pediatric, internal medicine and gynecology clinics.
- In Atareb and Sarmada, health facilities have reached their full capacity due to the large number of displaced people.
- Al Salam MCH in Idleb city extended Out Patient Department duty hours to receive more patients; all of them newly displaced.
- The number of consultations in Atmeh PHCs have increased significantly. Primary data shows that approx..15% of patients in Atmeh PHCs are newly displaced. Additional general practitioners are to join the medical team.
- At least one partner has prepared a new pharmaceutical and consumable distribution plan based on its contingency stock, in the case of medicine shortages.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Main gaps are specialist clinics for chronic diseases, MHPSS and infant care issues.
- Security concerns continue to affect service delivery and continuity. The security situation and potential further escalation is likely to lead to increased numbers of displaced people relying on humanitarian services. Further scale-up of health services might therefore be needed.
- Increased numbers of staff and medicine supply may be needed to respond to the increased demand for health services.
- Personnel protection equipment must be secured for hospitals that receive large number of severe-acute respiratory infections, in Dana and Idleb sub-districts.

Nutrition

Needs:

- There is a need to scale up the nutrition response to reach all displaced mothers and children within the accessible geographic areas, where displaced people are settling.
- Nutrition cluster remains underfunded with less than 60% of its annual financial requirements.

Response:

- 22,696 Children under the age of 5 years, pregnant and lactating mothers
Overall life-saving nutrition services reached 22,696 children and mothers in 87 communities in 25 sub-districts in Idlib through 58 RRTs and mobile teams by 17 partners

6,965 children and mothers received high energy biscuits for the prevention of acute malnutrition among displaced mothers and children. 6,801 pregnant and lactating mothers received micro-nutrient supplementation while additional 15,292 children 6-59 months of age received high calories lipid-based nutrition supplements for prevention of acute malnutrition.

Of the mothers and children reached, 118 cases of severe acute malnutrition and 467 cases of moderate acute malnutrition were identified and referred to the appropriate treatment sites, 927 mothers were also found to be acutely malnourished and received the appropriate treatment. Some 10,197 mothers and care givers were reached with infant feeding and caring practices messages and counselling

The nutrition cluster shows continued increase in the cases of acute malnutrition among displaced mothers and children. Malnutrition cases are doubled among children under the age of 5 years and the proxy acute malnutrition rates among mothers increased by 3.6% only in 16 days as indicated by community nutrition surveillance data, which might highlight increased morbidities among mothers and children. Rapid response teams reported that among the reached children 1% were separated and referred to the appropriate protection services, furthermore 1% of children were associated with disabilities.

Gaps & Constraints:

The Nutrition cluster is only able to reach around 54% of the accessible total displaced mothers and children due to security and need to increase the numbers of rapid response teams.

Protection

Needs:

The protection environment in northwest Syria continues to be characterized by ongoing conflict and civilians’ direct exposure to hostilities, which exacerbate physical safety risks and high levels of trauma and distress and contribute to forced displacement and restrictions to freedom of movement.

With ongoing displacement, the lack of shelter options and the sub-standard living conditions in areas of displacement, protections risks, specifically related to GBV, child protection, and exposure to explosive hazards have increased. Overcrowding in the IDP sites and makeshift shelters, in addition to a lack of WASH facilities will put women and girls at particular risk for GBV.

Concerns severely restrict civilians’ freedom of movement, and access for displaced people from Idleb to North of Aleppo for physical safety and shelter remains restricted

Main needs identified amongst new displaced people from Ma’arrat An Nu’man as identified by protection actors are shelter, tents, heating, food, drinking water, elderly diaper, baby formula, medications and medical services.

The latest escalation of violence, especially in northwest Syria especially in Ma’arrat An-Nu’man and Saraqab, according to CCCM Cluster reports resulted displacement of at least 146,462 children who continue to be extraordinarily affected by the ongoing emergency.

Violations of child rights continue to occur, with concerns increasing particularly for unaccompanied and separated children due to displacement, death of caregivers and disrupted transportation. This is also causing psychological distress for children and their caregivers.

Multi-sectoral coordination between child protection teams, education and basic needs distribution teams remains highly needed to adequately respond to and mitigate child protection concerns.

Child labour and child begging cases are reported to have increased after one month of the displacement because of lack of basic services, while children also drop out of schools.

Lack of information desks at IDP reception centers hampers access to services and assistance. Information desks are required to provide information and protection services to newly arriving displaced people.

Civil status documentation is reported to in certain instances pose a barrier to accessing basic services and humanitarian assistance. A lack of documentation should not exclude people from assistance, especially during the current situation of severe displacement and emergency affecting large numbers of individuals.

Humanitarian organisations are reminded to avoid random and rushed distributions (material relief assistance) and to set up clear and practical vulnerability criteria, aiming to ensure the most vulnerable individuals and families are identified and have access to humanitarian assistance and services.

Response:

From 3 January 2020 until 7 January 2020, 8 Protection Cluster members provided emergency response services for civilians recently displaced from Southern Idleb due to the ongoing hostilities. Cluster members provided 10,742 protection interventions to displaced people’s needs and affected host community members in 34 communities within
17 sub-districts in Idleb and Aleppo reaching 5,133 individuals (1,783 girls, 1,487 boys, 1,291 women, and 572 men). The main services protection actors provided are as follows:

- Psychological First Aid and Psychosocial Support
- Information about other services
- Dignity kits distribution
- Risk education

- Cluster members also referred individuals to other basic services, notably to health and shelter. In addition to Individual Protection Assistance.
- GBV actors continued to distribute dignity kits reaching 5,650 women and girls of reproductive age (through 9 GBV SC members) since the beginning of December 2019.
- The provision of dignity kits was accompanied by referral to urgent services (medical and legal), PFA, Individual Protection Assistance, as well as information about available services, emphasizing that these services should be free of charge to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse.
- 48 unaccompanied and separated children were identified since the 15th of December 2019. All these separation cases happened when moving from Ma'arrat An Nu'man to the North of Idleb. In this period all cases identified under these circumstances have been reunified with their caregivers.
- Child protection sub-cluster members distributed 2,005 winterization kits for children, 1,149 blankets, 113,350 bracelets for children and adults to prevent child separation and 158 recreational kits to conduct activities to 14,220 children through child protection mobile teams and static centers.

Gaps & Constraints:

- A concern continues to exist for segments of the population who experience barriers in accessing existing humanitarian assistance and who generally lack specialized and focused response services. Older people, people with disabilities, adolescent boys and girls, unaccompanied and separated children, female-headed households, and other individuals with specific legal and/or protection needs are among those groups who experience barriers in accessing existing humanitarian assistance and who generally lack specialized and focused response services.
- These barriers are often exacerbated during displacement, as emergency responses focus on rapid distributions, which often exclude individuals and households who are either not as visible, or not perceived as in need.
- Donor flexibility is urgently needed in relation to usage of allocated funding and/or redirection of funds for the new emergency in order to avoid long-term consequences to displaced people, especially children and their caregivers.
- Similarly, some donors are urgently requested to adjust procedures imposed on humanitarian organizations to minimize requesting of identification or other civil status documents from the affected population as this poses a barrier to accessing assistance and services potentially leading to life-threatening and rights violating situations.
- Multiple cluster members in Saraqab, Armanaz and Ariha reported the temporary closure of protection static and mobile service points, with services suspended due to active conflict and shelling, as well as a shortage of funding. These suspensions include partners implementing specialized and non-specialized protection services.
- Multi-sectoral coordination between child protection teams, education and basic needs distribution teams is highly needed to respond to the children protection concerns.
- The basic needs of displaced children and their caregivers are reportedly not consistently covered and child protection case management emergency funds targeting children are insufficient. This results in elevated risks of multiple protection concerns such as child recruitment, child marriage, and worst forms of child labor. This is likely to be predominant in most displaced people crowded locations such as in Dana sub-district of Harim district, Atareb sub-district of Jebel Saman district and Idlib district.
- Inclusion of child protection specialized field staff in rapid response teams, while assessing or distributing supplies to displaced population, would avoid an incomplete response to the specific needs of children and their caregivers and would make sure that these teams can identify and refer child protection cases correctly.
- GBV actors continue to report a number of GBV related risks prompted by the lack of WASH facilities, overcrowding leading to lack of privacy, a lack of lighting, as well as a lack of gender segregated latrines and WASH facilities mostly in unofficial sites established by IDPs.
- Pregnant women were identified as most at risk and in need of medical support.

Shelter / Non-Food Item (NFI) Cluster

Needs:

- Shelter / Non-Food Items (SNFI) Cluster members have identified 46,000 people in need of NFI and/or shelter assistance. The subdistricts with the largest number of people in need are: Dana, Maaret Tamsrin, Atareb, Ariha, Salqin and Idlib.
Seventeen SNFI clusters members requested NFI, plastic sheeting and tents from the contingency stock, indicating that many partners have depleted their stock, and require the contingency stock to respond. As of 8 January, approved request to release 7,863 NFI kits, 1,223 tents and 3,900 plastic sheeting to 16 partners.

Thousands of families are seeking shelter solutions across a wide geographic area. The cold winter weather and consecutive days of rain are exacerbating the situation for the affected population.

Response:
- Cluster members have already assisted 59,000 people with NFI, 17,000 with shelter and 5,000 with Cash. The response is ongoing.
- The Cluster members plan to assist 70,000 additional people with NFI and 14,000 with shelters in the coming week.
- The SNFI cluster worked closely with the cash working group and SCHF to fund five cluster members to strengthen the NFI/winter response. Those five partners have the capacity to support 100,000 new vulnerable IDPs with USD120 cash to respond to their immediate needs.
- Five other partners are starting new SCHF funded projects to rehabilitate damaged/unfinished buildings for 96,000 individuals.
- CCCM and SNFI Clusters are working with their members to identify lands suitable to extend camps.

Gaps & Constraints:
- Housing, land and property rights will remain a critical issue for legal access to land for people to settle.
- SNFI Cluster has requested funding to replenish the stock with 6,000 NFI kits and 30,000 plastic sheeting (about to be approved).
- With the large number of newly displaced people, the SNFI Cluster has increased its winterization target, from 853,000 people in need to 1 million. USD 5.2 million is needed to reach that target.
- Shelter remains the main gap. USD 7 Million are needed to continue upgrading damaged/unfinished shelters where new IDPs are seeking refuge.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Needs:
- WASH cluster members reported high needs with regards to life-saving WASH supplies and services for about 367,000 displaced people to Raju, Matabli, Sharan, Jandairis, Darete Ezza, Zarahb, Souran, Mare, Akhtarin, Jebel Saman, Afrin, Atareb, A'zaz and Jarabulus districts of Aleppo governorate and Dana, Qurqena, Badama, Bensh, Tamsrin, Armanaz, Kafir Takharim, Janudiyeh, Ariha, Idleb, Jisr Ash Shugur and Harim districts of Idlib governorate. Displaced people need WASH services including domestic water, solid waste management, community latrines and wastewater management. The need for desludging of septic tanks, water purification, supply of hygiene kits and jerry cans has proportionately increased.
- In both formal and informal camps, there is a huge need to increase water supply and manage drinking water safety, to mitigate against diarrheal and other communicable diseases. Inadequate desludging and solid waste management with the ongoing rain has increased the chances of contamination of water sources.
- The need for desludging of septic tanks and pit latrines is increased with rain and subsequent flooding in several locations. With increasing IDPs the need for solid waste management has also increased.
- Since the displacement is ongoing and displaced population are prioritizing communities to settle in, 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.
- It is unlikely that new IDPs will return to their areas of origin near future. Therefore, there is a need to include them in the ongoing sustained emergency programs to ensure their continued access to all WASH services.

Response:
- The ongoing WASH response has reached to 80,000 recently displaced people in 183 locations through 20 Cluster members (52% of the locations responded to are camps, 36% in communities and 12% in collective centers).
- The water supply arrangements through existing pipe water systems and water trucking were able to respond to the increased number of displaced people. However, the water supply per capita has reduced in the locations that received new IDPs, especially where the member organization do not have the flexible funding.
- Cluster members are preparing to increase the response to meet at least the need of newly displaced people in their areas of operation in anticipation of availability of additional funding and supplies. The available supplies and services
such as: water distribution via water trucking, provision of hygiene kits, construction and maintenance of latrines, provision of Jerry cans is currently limited.

- SCHF has launched an emergency response allocation of USD2.4M to respond to urgent WASH needs and the cluster lead agency has separately secured USD1.52M from its own internal funds to support WASH supplies and services to over 100,000 displaced people for three months.

**Gaps & Constraints:**

- Inadequate space in existing shelters complicates the response, as recently displaced people keep moving from one location to another. The recently displaced people are looking for potential shelters with existing services or where it is promising to receive services from the humanitarian agencies.
- Challenges in access to many locations especially camps due to muddy roads because of rains and security risks due to ongoing military operations, which is preventing the service providers from entering the camps and targeted locations. Activities such as water trucking, desludging, provision of hygiene items and Solid waste collection are either delayed or stopped. Some WASH cluster members reported that they had to use motorcycles to deliver some WASH items to people in camps.
- Fuel prices remain a constraint for many organizations as the prices of service delivery is constantly increasing. It has been reported by WASH cluster members that several vendors stopped service provision, until the contractual arrangements around the prices are revisited and increased.
- This is also constrained by the unequipped private sector that find it difficult to increase the supply overnight in sporadic locations.
- To ensure a timely and effective WASH response to the increasing needs and to mitigate against the potential outbreak of communicable diseases, additional financial resources are urgently required for the aforementioned activities.
- While the funding gap in HRP 2019 remained about US$25 M for NW Syria, this recent wave of IDPs in formal/informal camps and settlements adds to further constraints, as these displaced people are fully dependent on humanitarian assistance. WASH cluster estimates an additional need for US$8.5 M to support this wave of displacement with an additional 250,000 people.

### Logistics

**Response:**

- The Logistics Cluster has increased its daily trucks capacity at both hubs for a second time: from 60 to 100+ trucks at Bab-al-Hawa and from 12 to 20+ trucks at Bab-al-Salam.

### GENERAL COORDINATION

On 7 January, a meeting of the Inter-Cluster Coordination was convened to discuss the response, gaps and needs to scale up the response in northwest Syria. Common advocacy messages have been elaborated. Cluster members are working in alignment with their internal emergency coordination mechanisms. The clusters are coordinating their response leveraging a variety of modalities to support the people in need.

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