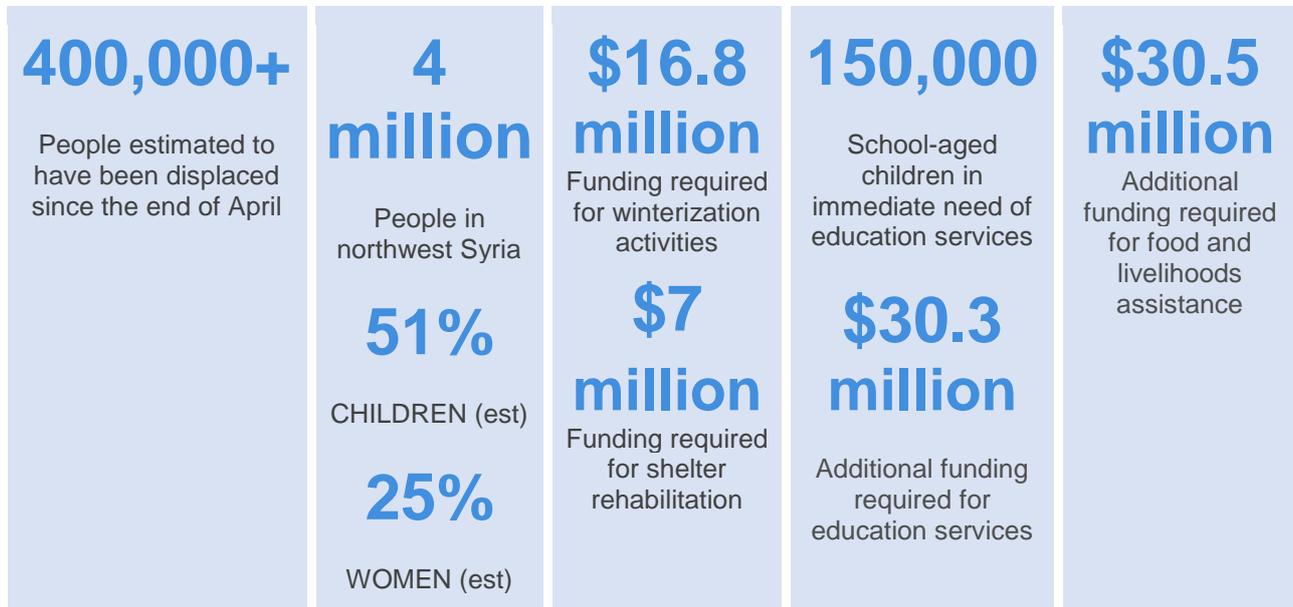


HIGHLIGHTS

- The humanitarian situation remains alarming across northwest Syria where the effects of conflict continue to have a devastating impact on the lives of an estimated four million people.
- Hundreds of civilians have been killed or injured due to airstrikes and shelling since late April. In this period, more than 400,000 people from northern Hama and southern Idlib governorates fled their homes to escape from violence and to access essential services to survive.
- While the humanitarian response is ongoing to address the pressing needs of the newly displaced individuals as well as host communities, additional funding is urgently required to maintain and scale-up humanitarian response in the coming weeks and months.



SITUATION OVERVIEW

Hostilities in northwest Syria continue to have a devastating effect on civilians as well as on humanitarian needs and partners' ability to deliver. The fighting between Government of Syria (GoS) forces and their allies and non-state armed groups (NSAGs) across Idlib, northern Hama and western Aleppo governorates, as well as frequent security incidents across northern Aleppo governorate, are taking a heavy toll on an estimated four million people. It is estimated that 76% of this population is women and children. While airstrikes having a significant impact on civilians decreased following the announcement of a ceasefire on 31 August, local sources continue to report isolated airstrikes and sporadic shelling along the frontlines in southern Idlib governorate. Although this brief lull in airstrikes brought a much-needed respite for civilians, the severity of the humanitarian situation in northwest Syria continues to be alarming.

Since the end of April, hundreds of thousands of civilians – including entire communities – have left their homes to flee from the violence and moved to areas further north in search of safety and for access to essential services. From 1 May to 4 September, more than 400,000 people have been forced to flee violence from northern Hama and southern Idlib governorates. Many of these families have been displaced multiple times before, depleting any existing resources that they may have had, rendering them extremely vulnerable. Moreover, displacement patterns indicate that the majority of the newly displaced people have moved to areas that are already densely-populated by people displaced into these areas

earlier and are themselves in urgent need. This puts additional pressure on the current humanitarian response that is already overstretched. Both the host communities and the newly displaced individuals are in need of urgent assistance. Moreover, some families reportedly had returned to areas in southern Idlib governorate following the decrease in airstrikes. This is in particular to areas where the civilian infrastructure has been heavily damaged, and where many humanitarian actors have been forced to suspend operations.

While the humanitarian community continues to respond, gaps in the response as well as new challenges remain to be addressed. Winter is rapidly approaching, and winterization requirements are becoming more and more pressing as women, children and men who live in open air or in makeshift settlements will be at greater risk as the weather gets colder. At the beginning of the school year, due to start on 21 September after a delay of three weeks, it is estimated that half of the schools in NSAG-held areas in Idlib governorate have been either damaged or destroyed during the fighting or are being used as shelter for IDPs. Areas where the majority of the civilians have moved to are witnessing a shortage of space in schools, equipment and teachers, as the capacity of available schools has been greatly exceeded.

While active fighting between GoS and NSAGs does not affect northern Aleppo governorate, frequent security incidents reported in recent weeks negatively impact civilians and the operating environment for humanitarian partners and their ability to deliver. On 13 September, a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) exploded in Afrin city center, severely injuring 13 civilians, including two children. On 15 September, a VBIED exploded at the gates of a hospital in Ar-Ra'ee town in northeastern Aleppo governorate, resulting in the death of 12 people and putting the hospital out of service for at least a week. On 16 September, armed clashes between two groups in Al-Bab city in northern Aleppo governorate spilled over to a hospital where the wounded individuals had been taken. As NSAG forces attempted to arrest some of the wounded individuals, weapons were fired in the premises of the hospital. Such incidents, particularly those taking place in public spaces, such as hospitals, not only endanger the lives of civilians but also hamper the provision of basic services.

FUNDING

Emergency response to the deteriorating humanitarian situation has been predominantly based on existing financial resources. While the humanitarian community scaled up its response within existing programs to provide humanitarian assistance to all those in need in northwest Syria, newly displaced individuals and host communities alike, these resources are rapidly depleting. To maintain the levels of humanitarian response and to further plan for increasing needs that, more funding is urgently needed. For instance, an estimated USD 30.5 million is required to continue providing food assistance and livelihoods support for the next three to six months. To address winterization and shelter rehabilitation needs, an additional funding of USD 23.8 million is required. With the start of the academic year, an additional funding of \$30.3 million will be needed to provide education services to newly displaced children, including children from host communities.

The Syria Cross-border Humanitarian Fund (SCHF) second reserve allocation is currently ongoing. 37 projects are under different stages of review for an estimated total of USD 23.8 million. The clusters and sectors that were prioritized for this allocation include health, water and sanitation, shelter/non-food items (NFI), camp coordination and camp management (CCCM) and coordination/common services. The projects under this allocation will respond to immediate emergency requirements of people affected by the violence that have either been recently displaced in areas with the highest severity or remained in heavily affected frontline areas. The prioritization was based on a rapid needs assessment and intersectoral consultations. Furthermore, re-programming of projects that were being implemented by humanitarian actors in areas that are no longer accessible is ongoing with a view to make those resources and services available for the emergency response.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AND COORDINATION

The Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG), responsible for the technical coordination of humanitarian response from Turkey into northwest Syria, is updating its response plan for the current situation. The document now outlines plans to provide assistance for 1,070,000 people over the next four months¹. This includes some 676,000 people currently estimated to be living in areas that may fall under increased conflict – areas to the south and east of the M4 and M5 highways. It also includes an estimated 400,000 people who have been displaced due to conflict since the end of April 2019. Preliminary funding gaps for this plan total \$231 million, with final amendments of the cost estimate pending. This includes funding for urgent priorities such as winterization and shelter. The group, in conjunction with other coordination bodies and relevant entities, is also looking into addressing challenges in the availability of land for people to stay, which is a critical issue with

¹ Some sectors have indicated different time frames according to their program type.

regards to shelter solutions. It is likely that severe challenges will remain in implementing the plan at the scale required, given the severe limitations of operating in situations of open conflict, the displacement of humanitarian staff themselves, land issues, challenges with logistics, humanitarian access challenges, and other issues.



Education

Needs:

- The Education Cluster estimates that 150,000 school-aged children are in immediate need of education services. The formal school year is set to start on 21 September and hundreds of thousands of children are at risk of staying out of school. One NGO estimates that only half of the existing 1,200 schools are functional, which can provide education to less than half of the 650,000 school-aged children.
- Displaced and host community children are in need of education services including access to formal education and non-formal education services such as remedial education, catch-up classes, self-learning programs, recreational activities, and provision of learning supplies.
- In arrival locations, absorption capacity is overstretched for both IDP and host communities, and Temporary Learning Spaces are needed to provide access to education in the many camps in Dana district in Idlib governorate to accommodate newly-arrived crisis-affected children in the area. With the start of the school year in September, the burden on the formal and non-formal education facilities will be extreme.
- Attacks on education continue to risk the safety of children and to cause excessive psychological trauma, which hinder children's ability to learn. On 31 August, a school was hit directly and was put out of service in Ma'arrat An Nu'man. The school was evacuated before the incident in line with safety plans, which may have saved the lives of children and school staff.
- Regarding information gaps, the exact number is needed of children with a breakdown of age or grades, number of teachers in the IDP and host community, number of functional schools and learning centers and their capacity.

150,000

School-aged children in immediate need of education services

\$30.3 million

Additional funding required

Response:

- Education Cluster members supported the education of 14,107 children (7,727 females) in camps and host communities with the provision of non-formal education such as self-learning programs, catch-up classes and remedial education in Darkosh, Kafr Nobol, Maaret Tamsrin, Idlib, Dana sub-districts in Idlib governorate. However, the response is limited due to lack of funding.
- Members continue carrying out outreach and awareness raising activities in Dana and other locations to enroll affected children in non-formal education in their learning centres. Nevertheless, the scope of the response is expected to grow as the beginning of the school year approaches.
- The Cluster is monitoring the situation on the ground continuously through its online real-time reporting mechanism.

Gaps & Constraints:

- To date, a total of 94 schools have been used as shelters by IDPs due to ongoing violence in Idlib.
- Incidents involving education facilities continue in northwest Syria, resulting in loss of life and destruction of learning facilities. The Cluster has been informed that 60 schools have been damaged or otherwise affected as a result of airstrikes and shelling since late April in southern Idlib and northern Hama governorates. In the second half of July, attacks on two schools resulted in the loss of life of two adults and one child and injured eight children.
- 15 cluster members reported suspension of their education interventions due to lack of safety and security, affecting approximately 14,311 children and 824 teachers in the sub-districts of Ma'arrat An Nu'man, Ehsem, Ariha, Saraqab of Idlib and Madiq Castle of Hama.
- Key priorities include provision of a holistic education service to deliver non-formal and formal education with a view to respond to the critical learning needs of girls and boy (5-17 years), including children with disabilities as the new school year begins 21 September 2019. The package of prioritized activities will be limited to provision of protected learning spaces (including repairs of existing school infrastructure and providing heating fuel and winterization kits for winter months), textbooks and learning materials, and stipends for teachers and education personnel both in camps and host communities. Addressing this critical gap will help support the referral of out-of-school children and those at risk of dropping out of formal schools.
- The activities aim to respond to education and psychosocial needs of 150,000 of the most recent IDP children and 6,000 education personnel for the next 9 months. This will require \$30.3 million to implement. Locations in northwestern Syria that have increasingly higher population densities, including camps and informal settlements (due to past and

current IDP flows), will be prioritized in an effort to accommodate the additional students and to keep the quality of education services stable for attending students.

- The goal is to place the recently displaced children back to school, provide them with psychosocial support for their psychological well-being, and make sure the locations receiving the highest population influxes can absorb additional students without hampering the quality of education.

Food Security

Needs:

- Provision of first line response through emergency food assistance, Ready-to-Eat rations (RTE) (canned food), cooked meals, cash support for the first two to four weeks for displaced households.
- Integration of vulnerable and food insecure households into targeted monthly food assistance once the displaced households are settled and assessed.
- Provision of appropriate lifesaving livelihoods supports to affected communities and households by increasing agricultural production, support to small scale food production, protection of productive assets, and restoring or creating income-generating activities to prevent negative or irreversible coping mechanisms need to be considered after initial displacement waves and to support host communities.
- Provision of animal feed to limit unsustainable 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.

**\$30.5
million**

Additional funding
required for food and
livelihoods assistance

Response:

- The Food Security Cluster continues to coordinate the emergency response through an online group, an online emergency tracker tool and ad hoc cluster meetings.
- Since the beginning of May, Cluster members are providing emergency food assistance to newly displaced households, including those most recently displaced from Khan Shaykun to Ma'arrat Tamsrin, and re-programming their interventions.
- First line response is provided through the distribution of ready to eat rations (RTEs), dry rations of mainly canned food sufficient on average for one week for a family of 5, repeated as per needs, and the provision of cooked meals and distribution of emergency multi-purpose cash grants (MPCG) of 120 – 130 USD per household that includes coverage of food needs.
- In coordination with the Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster (CCCM), the Food Security Cluster has coordinated food assistance response to newly established and newly expanded IDP sites.
- In light of the ongoing deterioration of the conflict and in line with the humanitarian readiness plan, the FSL cluster lead remains ready to respond to the growing humanitarian needs. About 36,800 RTEs are prepositioned in Syria, which is sufficient for approximately 184,000 people. In both Syria and Turkey, around 123,000 RTE kits have been prepositioned, enough for approximately 615,000 people.
- Since 1 June, more than 46,600 RTEs have been provided to displaced families, covering an estimated 233,000 people.
- In June, food rations were distributed to an additional 29,000 displaced households in Dana camps, increasing the total caseload from 700,000 to 823,000 beneficiaries.
- A beneficiary selection based on vulnerability criteria was conducted. In July, more than 186,000 households were reached with general food assistance reaching over 925,000 beneficiaries in Idlib and Aleppo governorates.
- In July and August 2019 only, the nutritional value of food rations was increased from 1,550 to 1,900 kilocalories per day. From September on, the plan is to further increase the nutritional value of a food ration to reach 2,100 kilocalories per person per day.
- In July, 750 households received poultry kits in Aleppo and Idlib governorates. The distribution was accompanied with the training of the village focal points on Good Agricultural Practices. The assembling of 10 solar powered irrigation systems in Jisr-Ash-Shugur is ongoing and their installation is expected in August.
- In July 2019, the FSL cluster technical lead agency and its partners finalized a large-scale vaccination campaign reaching 75,701 households in 251 communities in Idlib and Aleppo governorates by vaccinating 2,396,148 chickens against Newcastle Disease (33% more animals than planned). This was the first Newcastle Disease vaccination campaign for smallholder chicken flocks in Syria since 2011. 25% of beneficiary households were headed by women and 54% of capacity building for 487 village focal points directly benefited women. For the first time in Syria, a thermo-tolerant Newcastle Disease vaccine was used, which does not require cold chain and can safely be applied by trained

livestock keepers. 1.5 million doses of the vaccine were provided to trained village focal points to vaccinate chickens hatching after closure of the project.

- The FSL cluster technical lead agency is launching a voucher scheme to increase local availability and affordability of animal feed to livestock owners. This scheme can be upscaled in response to demand.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Out of the 681,000 (approximately 136,200 households) people estimated to be displaced, the cluster's capacity covers approximately 85,454 households with 170,908 RTERs. The remaining 50,746 households need emergency food assistance (almost 101,492 RTERs), requiring an additional funding of USD 3.5 million.
- At the same time, Cluster members' capacity covers approximately 83,547 households with 250,642 food rations for three months. The remaining 52,653 households need food rations (equaling almost 157,958 food rations), requiring an additional funding of USD 9 million. Cluster members plan to assist newly crisis affected households with quick livelihoods interventions. 60,000 households are planned to be reached in the first 6 months with a quick grant of 300 USD, requiring an additional funding of USD 18 million. Therefore, the total gap for providing food assistance and livelihood support is approximately USD 30.5 million.
- To cover the needs of bread as the main staple food and avoid the potential gap, the Cluster encourages support to the wheat value chain, in all its steps starting from the provision of agricultural inputs to the marketing phase.
- The security situation remains to be the main constraint that causes delays in the response.

Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI)

Needs:

- The Humanitarian Needs Assessment Program (HNAP) conducted an assessment for the Shelter and Non-Food Items (SNFI) Cluster to assess the shelter adequacy and living conditions in northwest Syria. It was published in the first week of September. At the time of the assessment, 18% of the population in northwest Syria were living in either managed, informal or transit camps, 6% in unfinished apartments or houses, 5% in damaged houses/apartments, and 1% in collective centres.
- Overall, the numbers of households living in damaged apartments/houses are highest in Dana, Saraqab, Daret Azza, and Haritan sub-districts of Idlib and Aleppo governorates. The situation in Dana is particularly alarming as 68,344 households were living in managed camps at the time of the assessment (49% of the sub-district population). The number of households living in camp in this sub-district continued to increase in July and August 2019.

Response:

- In August, the SNFI Cluster reached more than 120,000 individuals with shelter and NFI assistance in Aleppo and Idlib Governorates.
- The SNFI Cluster have planned to rehabilitate housing units (apartments, houses) for around 15,158 people in September. Some 530,000 people would need support to rehabilitate the shelters they are living in, including 300,000 individuals living in damaged or unfinished buildings. Cluster members could scale up the response and target 32,000 additional people, with an additional funding of \$7 million.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Following the Winterisation After Action Review, the SNFI Cluster has prepared a plan in coordination with the members. The cluster members are planning to reach 1,140,000 people in need of winter assistance. The cluster members managed to secure funding (\$18.6M) to reach around 600,000 people in need. 19 cluster members are requesting \$16.8 million in order to reach 540,000 additional people.

Funding requirements for winterization needs:

| | Funding | Individuals to be reached |
|---------------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| Total Appeal | \$35,400,000 | 1,140,000 people |
| Secured | \$18,600,000 | 600,000 people |
| Gap | \$16,800,000 | 540,000 people |

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<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/stima>

**\$16.8
million**

Funding required for
winterization activities

**\$7
million**

Funding required for
shelter rehabilitation