Assessed communities in north-west Syria witnessed a total of 274,613 IDP arrivals in May, 87% of which were reported in Idleb and surrounding areas. Idleb and surrounding areas witnessed an exponential intensification of aerial bombardment precipitating mass displacement across the region. There were 240,532 IDP arrivals compared to 29,702 IDP arrivals in March representing a huge increase of 709%. The majority of arrivals (171,308 IDPs) were reported in Dana sub-district. The humanitarian situation across Idleb governorate remains grave with the continued violence in Idleb and surrounding areas.

Northern Aleppo governorate witnessed markedly less movement in comparison to Idleb governorate. 34,081 IDP arrivals and 15,675 IDP departures were reported across 393 communities in May. Nearly half of IDP arrivals in Northern Aleppo reportedly came from Idleb and surrounding areas.
Towards the end of April, there was a rapid escalation in violence in Idleb and surrounding areas despite much of northern Hama and southern Idleb being declared a demilitarised zone. As a result, throughout May, there was a huge wave of movement northwards with 71% of all total IDPs across the region arriving to Dana sub-district (171,308). The majority of IDP departures were from the southern sub-districts of Heish (42,193), Khan Shaykun (31,966) and Ziyara (24,267).

The sheer number of new arrivals has placed increased pressure on basic services in Dana sub-district putting humanitarian operations that are already at or above capacity under considerable strain. The situation in many communities has become insupportable due to the severe level of violence. A total of 24 health facilities, 35 schools, four facilities providing protection services, three IDP settlements, and one refugee camp were reportedly affected by hostilities throughout May. In addition, more than 300 civilians have been killed since the conflict escalation began in late April, according to reports.

IDP Arrivals

Though Dana sub-district witnessed the overwhelming majority of IDP arrivals, Salqin (12,463), Atareb (9,504), Ariha (8,842) and Ma’arrat An Nu’man (5,821) sub-districts also received IDP arrivals.

On a community level, Qah (61,583), Atmeh (50,730) and Bab El Hawa (21,426) received the highest number of IDP arrivals. Qah and Atmeh communities accounted for 46% of all IDP arrivals throughout May.

The most common push factor for IDP arrivals in Idleb and surrounding areas was the escalation of ground-based conflict followed by escalation of aerial bombardment and anticipation of future conflict escalation. The top three pull factors for IDP arrivals in the region were; safety and security in the assessed location, family ties/ host community relationship and, access to humanitarian assistance. In areas most impacted by the renewed conflict escalation, 16 humanitarian agencies were forced to suspend operations.

IDP arrivals generally came from sub-districts situated in southern Idleb which faced the most severe escalation in violence. Kafr Nobol and Madiq Castle were the most common last sub-districts of departure at 43,614 IDPs and 41,800 IDPs respectively.

According to reports, both of these sub-districts faced a severe intensification of aerial bombardments leading to high fatalities among the civilian population.

The most common place of departure of IDP arrivals was the same region (94%).

Last sub-district of departure of arrivals (#IDPs):

- Kafr Nobol: 43,614
- Madiq Castle: 41,800
- Ziyara: 27,205
- Khan Shaykun: 17,106
- Ehsem: 7,343

Last place of departure of IDP arrivals:

- Same region: 94%
- Different region: 5%
- Other/unknown: <1%

The 24 sub-districts situated in southern Idleb which faced the most severe escalation in violence were.

- Kafr Nobol: 43,614
- Madiq Castle: 41,800
- Ziyara: 27,205
- Khan Shaykun: 17,106
- Ehsem: 7,343
Vulnerable groups among IDP arrivals:

Multiple displacements and the lack of access to basic services worsen individual and community needs with a high prevalence of disabilities, gender-based violence and trauma.

Top 3 shelter types of IDP arrivals:

1. Managed camp: 151,837 IDPs
2. Solid/finished house: 28,709 IDPs
3. Solid/finished apartment: 23,430 IDPs

151,837 IDP arrivals, representing 63% of total IDP arrivals, were residing in managed camps, according to KIs. 52,139 IDP arrivals were residing in solid/finished houses or apartments. 10,874 IDP arrivals were reported to be living in individual tents. The sheer number of IDP arrivals continues to put pressure on rents and the price of tents.

IDP Departures

There was a 52% increase in the number of IDP departures throughout May in comparison to April. Additionally, figures suggest a severe escalation in violence in comparison to March. 155,818 IDP departures were recorded in May, compared to March when 48,816 IDP departures were reported.

65% of IDP departures were displaced for the first time and 35% were facing multiple displacements, according to KIs.

On a community-level Kafr Nobol (6,614), Madiq Castle (5,236) and Hbit (4,033) witnessed the highest number of departures. These communities have witnessed a severe escalation in hostilities which has prevented people from being able to access basic services. According to reports, Madiq Castle sub-district faced continued aerial bombardment from 28 April.

Top intended destination sub-districts (# IDPs):

1. Dana: 21,367
2. Qourqueena: 4,560
3. Atareb: 1,710
4. Ma’arrat An Nu’man: 1,273
5. Ehsem: 787

KIs reported that Dana (21,367) sub-district was the top intended destination for IDP departures followed by Qourqueena sub-district (4,560) and Atareb sub-district (1,710).

Intended destinations of departures:

68% Same region
3% Different region
29% Other/unknown

KIs reported that safety and security, access to employment and, family ties to the host community were the primary factors motivating IDP departures to move to intended destinations. The main push factors forcing IDPs to leave communities were: escalation of ground-based conflict, followed by escalation of aerial bombardment and, anticipation of future conflict escalation.

NORTHERN ALEPPO

Key Figures

Communities assessed: 393

Total IDP arrivals: 34,081 (+35%)
Sub-districts with most arrivals (# IDPs):
- Afrin: 5,085
- Jandairis: 4,398
- Sharan: 3,969
- Raju: 3,505
- Bulbul: 3,368

Total IDP departures: 15,675 (+1%)
Sub-districts with most departures (# IDPs):
- Afrin: 2,901
- Al Bab: 2,530
- Jandairis: 1,769
- Raju: 1,776
- Sharan: 1,181

Total SRs: 3,137 (<1%)
Sub-districts with most SRs:
- Afrin: 701
- Jarablus: 422
- Raju: 410
- Ma’bitali: 366
- Sharan: 278

Overview

Northern Aleppo continues to witness sporadic inter-Armed Opposition Group (AOG) violence including shelling. However, clashes generally occur in Aleppo city and along the Turkish border. Northern Aleppo was also affected by the escalation in hostilities in Idleb governorate and absorbed a number of IDPs.

IDP Arrivals

Sub-districts situated in the northeast of Aleppo and near Idleb reported the highest number of IDP arrivals. 5,085 IDP arrivals were recorded in Afrin sub-district followed by 4,398 IDPs in Jandairis sub-district, 3,969 IDPs in Sharan sub-district, 3,505 IDPs in Raju sub-district and 3,368 IDPs in Bulbul sub-district.

Last sub-district of departure of arrivals (#IDPs):

- Afrin: 1,480
- Dana: 1,128
- Ma’arrat An Nu’man: 990
- Idleb: 962
- Al Bab: 901

Afrin sub-district also witnessed the highest number of IDP departures, 1,480 IDPs. Many IDP departures departed from sub-districts situated in Idleb including Dana sub-district (1,128 IDPs), Ma’arrat An Nu’man sub-district (990 IDPs) and, Idleb sub-district (962 IDPs). This suggests the high level of violence in Idleb governorate as well as the high concentration of IDPs in Dana sub-district where services are overstretched potentially forcing people to move. According to KIs, 49% of IDP arrivals came from outside the northern Aleppo region.
IDP Situation Monitoring Initiative (ISMI)
Monthly Overview of IDP Movements and Spontaneous Returns in north-west Syria, May 2019

IDP Departures
Northern Aleppo witnessed 15,675 IDP departures, a steady decrease of 1% in comparison to April’s figures indicating the relative stability in this region.

Top 3 shelter types of IDP arrivals:
1. Solid/finished house: 21,358 IDPs
2. Managed camp: 2,977 IDPs
3. Individual tent: 2,340 IDPs

Vulnerable groups among IDP arrivals:
- Elderly-headed households/Elderly travelling alone
- Child-headed households
- Female-headed households/Women travelling alone
- Orphans
- Disabled-headed households/Individuals with disabilities travelling alone

The most common pull factors for IDP arrivals were safety and security, access to income and employment and, family ties/host community relationship. 63% of total IDP arrivals were reported to be living in solid/finished houses.

Top 3 shelter types of IDP arrivals:
1. Solid/finished house: 21,358 IDPs
2. Managed camp: 2,977 IDPs
3. Individual tent: 2,340 IDPs

Ghandorah sub-district (506) was the top intended destination for IDP departures followed by Afrin sub-district (209) and Menbij sub-district (287). On the community level, Al-Bab witnessed the highest number of IDP departures (1,089) followed by Enab (599) and Mreimin Afrin (542).

According to KIs, the most common push factors for IDP departures were: loss of income; reduced access to humanitarian assistance; and, the opening of safe passages.

Endnotes
1 Some figures may be repeated displacements.
2 CCCM/REACH, ISMI Monthly Displacement Summary, April 2019
3 IDP departure figures reflect aggregated departures of both IDP and resident/pre-conflict populations.
4 Spontaneous returns: Former IDPs and/or refugees who return to their community of origin, with the intention of staying for a prolonged period of time, but not necessarily to their places of habitual residence, and who do not necessarily enjoy the full spectrum of rights afforded to them prior to displacement.
5 The Independent, ‘New wave of violence in Syria war as 200,000 flee Idlib offensive: “There were bombs every minute,”’ 21 May 2019
6 OCHA, ‘Syria: Situation Report 4: Recent Developments in Northwestern Syria (as of 31 May 2019),’ 31 May 2019
7 Idleb governorate’s surrounding areas include communities in Atareb, Daret Azza, Haritan, Jebel Saman and Zarabah sub-districts in western Aleppo governorate, as well as in Kafî Zeita, Madiq Castle, Suran and Ziyara sub-districts in northern Hama. These sub-districts have been added to the larger Idleb and surrounding areas region as populations in these sub-districts demonstrate similar movement patterns and are served by the same cross-border responses.
8 Reuters, ‘Russia, Syrian army step up attacks on rebel-held northwestern Syria: residents, medics,’ 02 May 2019
9 Community markers also account for camps, informal settlements and other IDP sites when they are in close proximity to a community; Only major departure movements for known communities of origin are shown with regards to large IDP arrival movements.
11 OCHA, ‘Syria: Situation Report 4: Recent Developments in Northwestern Syria (as of 31 May 2019),’ 31 May 2019
12 UN News Service, ‘Syria’s Idlib ‘on the brink of a nightmare, humanitarian chiefs warn, launching global solidarity campaign,’ 27 June 2019
13 OCHA, ‘Syria: Flash Update: Recent Developments in North-western Syria (As of 07 May 2019),’ 07 May 2019
14 Al Jazeera, ‘Syria’s war: NGOs suspend aid to embattled Idlib province,’ 11 May 2019
15 Vulnerable groups $ Female-headed households/Women travelling alone # Child-headed households Orphans © Elderly-headed households/Elderly travelling alone @ Disabled-headed households/Individuals with disabilities travelling alone.
16 OCHA, ‘Syria: Situation Report 4: Recent Developments in Northwestern Syria (as of 31 May 2019),’ 31 May 2019
17 OCHA, ‘Syria: Flash Update: Recent Developments in North-western Syria (As of 07 May 2019),’ 07 May 2019
18 Figures for the northern Aleppo region include accessible communities in the following sub-districts: Afrin, Aghtrin, Al Bab, Ar-Ra’e, Azaz, Babul, Ghandorah, Jandairis, Jarablus, Mare’, Menbij, Mreimin Afrin, Raju, Sharan, Sheikh El-Hadid and Suran.
19 Euronews, ‘Two shells fall in Syria’s Aleppo - Syrian TV,’ 22 May 2019
20 Reuters, ‘Turkey-backed Syrian rebels launch attack into Kurdish-held area,’ 04 May 2019

ABOUT REACH INITIATIVE
REACH is a leading humanitarian information provider that uses primary data collection and in-depth analysis as tools to enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development settings.