

# North-west Syria

December 2021

In 2021, UNHCR has sent across the border around 109,300 core relief items kits and shelter materials to assist more than 546,500 individuals.

UNHCR's protection partners have been able to adapt their activities to the COVID-19 situation, without disrupting protection interventions.

In 2021, through its partners, UNHCR has provided protection services, such as psychosocial support and referrals, to more than 203,000 individuals.

#### Humanitarian assistance trans-shipped in December

# 39,500

people targeted with the humanitarian assistance trans-shipped this month

3,300



family tents trans-shipped across the border from Turkey to north-west Syria

34

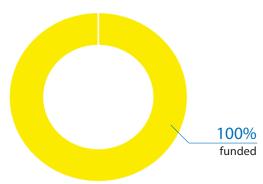


trucks used to transport the items

#### Funding requirements for 2021

#### US\$ 22 million

requested for the UNHCR cross-border humanitarian response



as of 14 December 2021

Main objectives of the cross-border operation Support the coordination of the cross-border humanitarian response through the Cluster system

Identify protection risks and assistance needs and inform the overall response Provide protection services and emergency assistance with core relief items and shelter solutions Build capacity of (local) humanitarian organizations

Fill critical gaps in the basic needs of IDPs where required and feasible

#### Situation overview

Of a total population of over 4 million people in north-west Syria, it is estimated that around 2.8 million IDPs are considered as people in need of humanitarian assistance. New and protracted IDPs share the same urgent needs, in an area that has limited shelter options and where the fighting has caused the destruction of civilian infrastructure, including health facilities, schools, bakeries, and has disrupted the provision of basic services. With an increase in hostilities and deteriorating economic situation coupled with harsh weather conditions that have been severely damaging IDPs' shelter and properties, the population is now facing more difficulties in addressing their basic needs. Bad weather conditions and fire-related incidents continue to affect the displaced population, while new displacements continue to be tracked.

The vaccination campaign started in May 2021 and over 275,608 people have been vaccinated with one dose to date. At the same time, the number of positive COVID-19 cases has been rising steadily and reached 93,028 cases with 2,353 deaths (2.5% death rate) and 69,635 (74.9%) recoveries. While access to health and adequate sanitation in the context of continuous displacement remains limited across the region, the humanitarian community is actively operating to deliver lifesaving assistance while ensuring the safety of the people.

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#### **Background**

Following the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2165, UNHCR established its cross-border activities from southern Turkey in July 2014. In 2021, through its own programme, UNHCR has partnerships with seven organizations - ACTED, Maram, Muzun, SEMA, Shafak, SRD and Watan - to assist displaced people through the provision of core relief items (CRIs), shelter support, and protection services. In addition, UNHCR is co-leading the Protection, Shelter/Non-Food Items (Shelter/NFI) and Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Clusters. All Clusters closely follow-up the humanitarian developments in the conflict affected areas in north-west Syria and contribute to emergency preparedness and response plans.

## Response updates

#### **UNHCR Programme**

In 2021, in coordination with its partners and other humanitarian actors, UNHCR continued to provide basic assistance and protection services to IDPs and conflict-affected vulnerable host community members in north-west Syria under the cross-border operation from Gaziantep, Turkey. The response was scaled up in 2020 to serve the urgent humanitarian needs of the population in the region, who has been severely affected by the ongoing hostilities, inadequate shelter conditions and a deteriorating economic situation, and continued despite the limitation of having only one border crossing through which the humanitarian assistance is delivered.

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, UNHCR closely monitors its partners' activities - which were adjusted in line with recommendations and guidelines issued by the WHO, clusters and relevant coordination fora - to ensure the continuity of the humanitarian response. Some of the measures that UNHCR's partners have put in place are door-to door distributions and small groups sessions, avoiding large gatherings and ensuring social distancing.

In December, UNHCR organized six trans-shipments delivering 3,300 tents and 4,600 NFI kits, which will be distributed by partners in north-west Syria to assist 39,500 people.

UNHCR has succeeded in reaching 100% of their targets for transhipping hygiene kits, CRI kits and tents, while also 100% of the distribution plan has been achieved by the partners.

UNHCR's protection partners conducted awareness raising and psychosocial support sessions, identified cases and referred them to basic services in Idleb and Aleppo; such community-based protection interventions reached 15,668 people in December. Moreover, additional 277 displaced and vulnerable people received protection services such as awareness raising on civil status documentation and housing, land and properties, legal consultation and assistance.



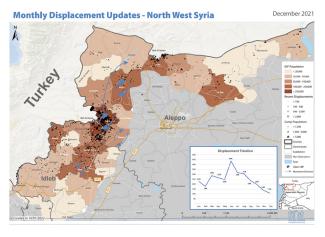
Tent installation in Idleb. ©WATAN



### **CCCM Cluster**

The Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster, led by UNHCR and co-led by Global Communities, coordinates the efforts of 64 members organizations providing cross border assistance in north-west Syria. In December, 39 members actively responded to the needs of the displaced population. Activities focus on coordinating and monitoring the Cluster members to cover the multi-sectoral needs in 1,398 IDP sites that host over 1.7 million IDPs (321,085 families) and, on behalf of the humanitarian community, track IDP movements. It is estimated that 45,997 IDPs are persons with specific needs, while more than half are children. Most sites are concentrated in Dana. In December, 15 new sites were added to the ISIMM and 24 sites were inactivated for reasons such as merging of sites or depopulation of sites and their subsequent closure. The majority of these sites are self-settled and lack camp management systems. To identify gaps and facilitate the coordination of multi-sectoral services,

the Cluster is prioritizing monitoring and collecting information as part of its coordination response, which is particularly important in the implementation of the COVID-19 response and mitigation measures.



Map produced by the CCCM Cluster

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The Cluster reached 272 IDP sites in December with activities ranging from camp management and capacity building activities to community mobilization, site assessment and risk mitigation, site management support, as well as fire awareness, prevention and response. During the month, some 89,890 individuals (17,539 families) were reached.

There are an estimated 2.8 million IDPs in north-west Syria. The Cluster recorded approximately 11,100 displacements in December 2021. Displacements were principally from Ehsem, Ariha and Athareb with the

main locations of arrival including Maaret Tamsrin, Dana and Afrin. Some individuals may have been exposed to multiple displacements and reasons for moving vary. In December, an estimated 3,341 IDPs were reported as having returned to their place of origin in north-west Syria, mainly to Ehsem, Ariha and Athareb.

Between January and December 2021, the Cluster tracked 299,275 displacements, which include second or third displacements, meaning that some people may have been forced to move multiple times and that the reasons for movement may vary.



#### Shelter/NFI Cluster

The Shelter/Non-Food Items (Shelter/NFI) Cluster, co-led by UNHCR and CARE, is coordinating the efforts of 62 member organizations in the cross-border operation who are implementing shelter and/or NFI activities as of December 2021. The Cluster addresses emergency shelter and NFI needs of vulnerable people by providing in-kind assistance as well as cash or voucher assistance.

Cluster members continue to actively respond to the needs of the newly displaced population as well as protracted IDPs in north-west Syria. A key priority for the S/NFI Cluster is continued support for the winter response, including coordination with members, identifying gaps based on the current plans and continued donor discussions on the high need versus available resources. In total, the Cluster estimates that 2.2 million people may need additional winter assistance. However, current targets with secured funds aim to provide assistance to approximately 1.2 million people. Regarding assistance modalities, 18% of the targeted population will receive vouchers, 35% will be supported with in-kind assistance and 47% with cash assistance. Around 69% of those

targeted are living in camps/settlements, and 31% are living in towns/communities.

In December, over 490,000 individuals received NFI assistance, in the form of NFI kits, kitchen sets, mattresses, jerry cans, carpets, solar lamps, tarpaulins, blankets and seasonal assistance such as fuel and stove, or through multi-purpose cash transfers. Shelter needs of approximately 32,000 people were addressed during the month, including the provision of emergency shelter, shelter rehabilitation and transitional shelters. Moreover, close to 115,000 individuals were reached with infrastructure improvements in IDP sites such as roads and drainage. The need for infrastructure support is still significant, especially for the sites that have been established by the IDPs themselves. Nearly a third of the 1,400 IDP sites in north-west Syria flood every year.

As part of the COVID-19 response, as was recommended at the beginning of the pandemic in coordination with the WASH and Health Clusters, Cluster members have so far provided 540,000 people with additional soap with NFI distributions in 2021.



#### **Protection Cluster**

The Protection Cluster (co-led by UNHCR and IRC) brings together 55 member organizations, which include actors of the three Sub-Clusters: Child Protection (led by UNICEF and World Vision), Gender Based Violence (led by UNFPA and Global Communities) and Humanitarian Mine Action (led by UNMAS and Halo Trust). The Cluster also convenes regularly the Protection Monitoring Task

members to strengthen programming, information collection and advocacy on protection concerns and principles.

In December, Cluster members provided 378,541 protection interventions to IDPs and affected host community members in Aleppo and Idleb, including: psychological first aid: local awareness-raising on bousing

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