

North-west Syria

September and October 2021

In 2021, UNHCR has sent across the border around 89,500 core relief items kits and shelter materials to assist more than **447,000 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 **171,000 individuals**.

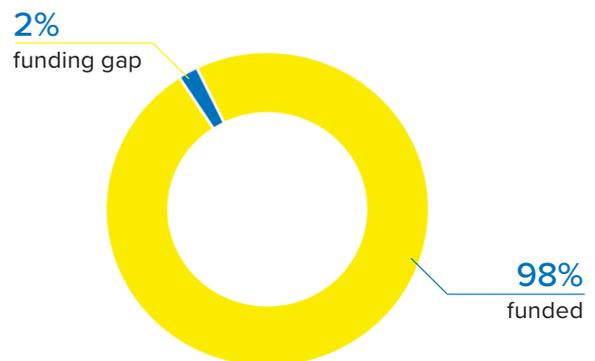
Humanitarian assistance trans-shipped in September and October



Funding requirements for 2021

US\$ 22 million

requested for the UNHCR cross-border humanitarian response



as of 23 November 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 4 million people in north-west Syria, it is estimated that around 2.7 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, with a deteriorating economic situation and 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. Weather and fire-related incidents continue to affect the displaced population, while new displacements continue to be tracked.

The cross-border humanitarian response continues under the UN Security Council Resolution that was renewed in July 2021.

The vaccination campaign started in May 2021; at the same time, the number of positive COVID-19 cases has been rising steadily. 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.

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 response plans accordingly.

Response updates

UNHCR Programme

In 2021, in coordination with its partners and other humanitarian actors, UNHCR continues 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 deliver humanitarian assistance.

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, UNHCR closely monitors its partners' activities - which were modified 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 September and October, UNHCR organized nine trans-shipments of 6,300 tents and 4,000 NFI kits, which will be distributed by partners.

During these months, around 29,000 conflict affected people in Aleppo and Idleb were assisted with 5,800 tents by UNHCR's partners in coordination with the CCCM and SNFI Clusters.

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 22,600 people. Plus over 2,890 displaced and vulnerable people received protection services such as awareness raising on civil status documentation and housing, land and properties, legal consultation and assistance.

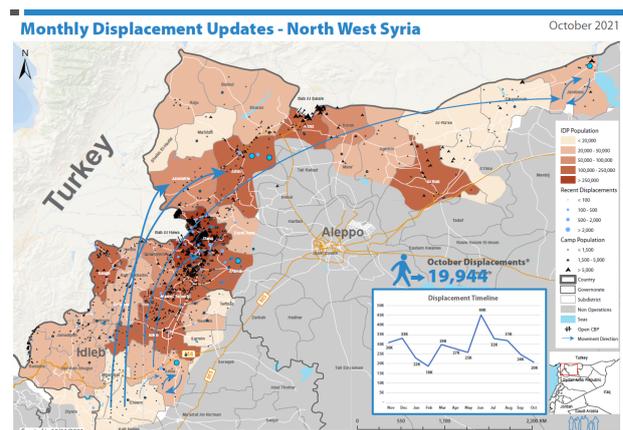


Awareness-raising session, Idleb ©SHAFAK

CCCM Cluster

The Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster, led by UNHCR and co-led by Global Communities, coordinates the efforts of 70 members organizations providing cross border assistance in north-west Syria; in September and October, 40 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 1,389 IDP sites that host over 1.7 million IDPs (315,000 families) and, on behalf of the humanitarian community, track IDP movements. It is estimated that close to 43,000 IDPs are persons with specific needs, while more than half are children. Most sites are concentrated in Dana. In September and October, 40 new sites were added to the ISIMM and 31 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.**

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.

The Cluster reached 206 IDP sites in September and October 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 these months, a total of over 581,000 individuals (104,000 families) were reached. The total estimated IDP population is over 2,803,000 IDPs. The number of displacement movements during September was around 24,000 and in October close to 20,000.

Shelter/NFI Cluster

The Shelter/Non-Food Items (Shelter/NFI) Cluster, co-led by UNHCR and CARE, is coordinating the efforts of 60 member organizations in the cross-border operation who implemented shelter and/or NFI activities as of October 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 at the moment 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 at this stage. In total, the Cluster estimates that 2.2 million people may be in need of additional winter assistance. However, current targets with secured funds aim to provide assistance to over 1 million people.

Protection Cluster

The Protection Cluster (co-led by UNHCR and IRC) brings together 52 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 Help Trust). The Cluster also convenes

The number of IDPs reported as having returned to their community of origin was close to 1,700 IDPs in September and 2,500 in October; with Ariha, Ehem and Jisr-Ash-Shugur sub-districts recorded as the top three returnee destinations during both months. Between January and October 2021, the Cluster tracked over 273,000 individual displacements, which include second or third displacements, meaning that some people may have been forced to move multiple times within the same period and that the reasons for movement may vary.

In September and October, over 119,000 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 196,000 people were addressed during these months, including the provision of emergency shelter, shelter rehabilitation and transitional shelters. Moreover, some 141,000 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 some 494,000 people with additional soap with NFI distributions in 2021.

The Cluster continues to inform advocacy and the overall response through protection monitoring, In September and October, Cluster members provided 421,200 protection interventions to IDPs and affected host community members in Aleppo and Idlib, including: psychological first aid; legal

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