

Flash Update on the Response to Floods in North-West Syria #3

18 February 2021

This update provides a summary of the response to the recent floods in north-west Syria by the UNHCR co-led Clusters of Protection, Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) and Shelter/Non-Food Items (SNFI).

HIGHLIGHTS



Close to 142,000 IDPs across 407 IDP sites in north-west Syria were reportedly affected by recent floods. Over 25,000 tents were either destroyed or damaged. The flooding has resulted in one death and three injuries.



The UNHCR co-led Protection, CCCM, and Shelter/NFI Clusters are coordinating the response to the urgent needs of the affected population. As floods are a regular occurrence in this season, the Clusters had developed contingency plans that enabled them to effectively respond. The Clusters continue to monitor the development of the crisis and are adjusting their plans to respond to the impact of the expected worsening weather conditions.



Thanks to the milder weather conditions, shelter response efforts have increased. So far, over 4,200 NFI kits have been distributed by partners in the Shelter/NFI Cluster across many IDP sites, and another 12,000 NFI kits are planned for distribution. In addition, close to 2,000 IDP households have already received new tents, and some 6,700 IDP households are expected to receive tents soon.



Close to 142,000 IDPs in Idlib, north-west Syria, were affected by flooding since January 2021.
Photo by UNHCR/Bakr Alkasem

SITUATION OVERVIEW

There are some 2.7 million internally displaced people (IDPs) living in north-west Syria, with some 1.6 million people living in 1,302 IDP sites. Between 14 January and 17 February 2021, 141,729 IDPs across 407 IDP sites in north-west Syria were affected by torrential rain and strong winds, according to information verified by the CCCM Cluster. So far, the flooding has resulted in one death and three injuries, and in the destruction or damage of more than 25,000 tents. The majority of the devastated shelters are in informal sites where IDPs spontaneously settled. These sites are more prone to floods and the drainage of water remains challenging. Most of the affected IDPs have chosen to stay close to their relatives and friends residing in the same IDP sites, while a few families who did not have this option are being relocated temporarily or accommodated in reception centres.

The harsh weather conditions have exacerbated the already dire needs of the IDP population, including food, shelter and non-food items (NFIs). As floods are a regular occurrence in this season, all UNHCR co-led clusters – Protection, CCCM and SNFI – developed emergency response plans to minimize the impact, and all three clusters are currently coordinating to quickly respond to the urgent needs of the population affected by the flooding. UNHCR has been contributing to the shelter and NFI response to the damages caused by the floods. So far, UNHCR's partners have distributed more than 500 NFI kits to affected families. Meanwhile, as part of its regular 2020-2021 winterization programme, UNHCR has trans-shipped all the planned 10,000 winter core relief item (CRI) kits, most of which have already been distributed to almost all the targeted 10,000 IDP families in north-west Syria.

UNHCR CO-LED CLUSTER UPDATES

CCCM: The CCCM Cluster is assessing the situation based on information received from partners in the various IDP sites. The Cluster is compiling and cross-checking reports of incidents, gathering accurate and reliable information on affected sites, damages and most urgent needs, and coordinating the initial response. To ensure consistency in reporting and that information is verifiable, the Cluster encourages organizations to report on incidents in its [Incident Reporting Tool](#), which is also used by other clusters as a basis for their sectoral response. The Cluster is actively contributing to the recently established Technical Working Group on the flood response.

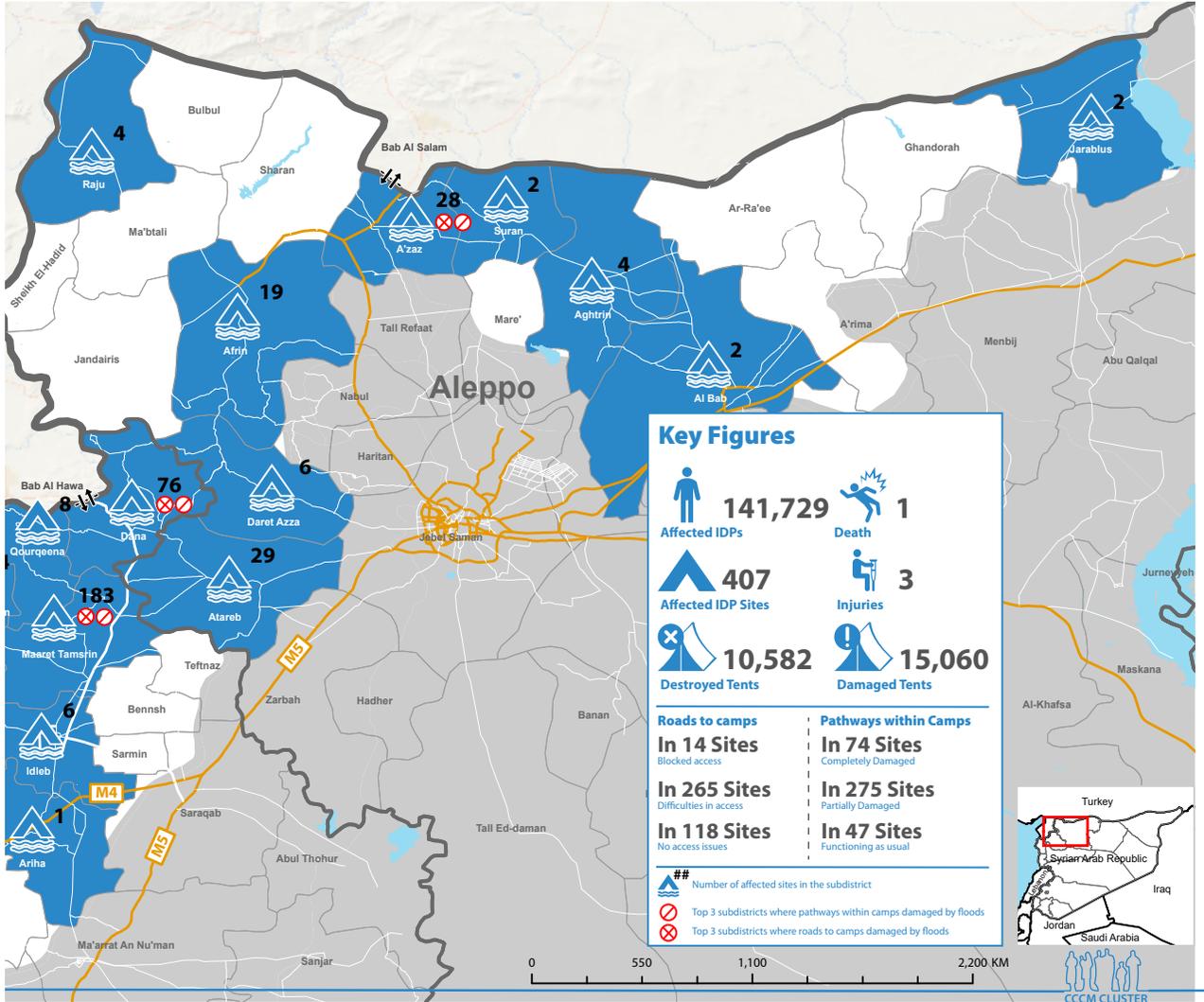
Protection: Protection Cluster partners are engaging with affected communities via outreach modalities to identify households and individuals in situations of vulnerability and requiring specific interventions and support. Partners are providing psychosocial first aid and individual protection assistance (cash and material support for protection outcomes) and protection services to those in need, while also making referrals to appropriate service and assistance providers. The Protection Cluster continues to monitor for potential protection issues resulting from the flooding. Protection partners continue to observe that households are reluctant to leave their areas of residence, even in situations where the flooding has affected their accommodation, reportedly due to fears of losing their location of residence and/or assets, as well as access to

assistance and livelihoods. Concerns remain for vulnerable individuals, particularly displaced children, older people and persons with disabilities. Temporary family separations have been reported. In some affected locations, families send their children either to their relatives to stay in better accommodation or, in some cases, children engaged in income generating activities do avoid returning to their camps due to the loss of family shelter.

SNFI: Cluster members are actively responding to the needs of the population that has been affected by the floods. Thanks to the milder weather conditions, shelter response efforts have increased. So far, over 4,200 NFI kits have been distributed across many IDP sites, and another 12,000 NFI kits are planned for distribution. Some partners have already distributed multi-purpose cash and ready-to-eat meals. In addition, close to 2,000 IDP households have already received new tents, and some 6,700 IDP households are expected to receive tents soon. However, Cluster members have few available tents compared to the large number of affected sites. Moreover, Cluster members are faced with challenges derived from the self-settled nature of those IDP sites which complicates the process of obtaining the necessary documentation to initiate the distribution of tents. Improving infrastructure in camps and IDP sites is essential to avoiding future flooding that happens regularly especially during winter.

NW Syria - Update6

14 January 2021 - 4 February 2021



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