Highlights

- The humanitarian crisis for people in northwest Syria reached new and dire levels during the reporting period, characterized by continued population movement due to the escalation of hostilities.
- More than 961,000 people have been displaced since 1 December 2019, exceeding worst-case planning figures by the humanitarian community. Of these, some 575,000 are children and nearly 198,000 are women, together comprising 81 percent of the newly displaced.
- The deteriorating humanitarian situation on the ground has raised international concerns. A one-day cross-border UN interagency technical mission into northwest Syria took place on 2 March—the first of its kind in the 9 year conflict—to assess the humanitarian situation for children and their families on the ground.
- Nevertheless, the humanitarian community continues to deliver relief programs and services to the affected population in Idlib and northern Aleppo.
- UNICEF and partners are scaling up their response to meet the needs of 800,000 internally displaced people in northwest Syria. The scale up plan is US$ 36 million with US$ 18.8 million as a gap considering funding received from CERF.

UNICEF’s Response and Funding Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>People to be reached UNICEF response from 1 December 2019</th>
<th>Funding Required (US$)</th>
<th>Funding Gap (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>$15,750,000</td>
<td>$7,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>308,000</td>
<td>$4,900,000</td>
<td>$2,250,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>$2,500,000</td>
<td>$1,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<td>$10,500,000 (tbc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Protection</td>
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<td>$3,380,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>$750,000</td>
<td>$750,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>800,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$40,000,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$18,780,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* IA response plan is now for 1.1m people. In our sectors the IA response plan is for about $63m, so UNICEF plan in terms of funding around 2/3 of the overall for our areas of work.
Funding Overview
UNICEF and partners are scaling up their response to meet the needs of 800,000 internally displaced people in northwest Syria. The scale up plan is US$ 36 million with US$ 18.8 million as a gap considering funding received from CERF. UNICEF has received a total of USD 15.5 million from the Government of Japan to support build early resilience and stimulate early recovery though learning with a focus on vulnerable populations such as children, women and youth. The grant covers Education and WASH activities.

Partners
The UNICEF Cross-Border hub in Gaziantep has 21 operational partners in northwest Syria, with 48 active Programme Documents worth US$ 20.3 million and US$ 10.8 million in supplies.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs
The reporting period has been characterized by continued population movement due to the escalation of hostilities, further affecting civilians, including those internally displaced in Idlib and those who have taken refuge in Turkey. Tension between Turkey and Syria escalated following the reported killing of more than 33 Turkish soldiers in an airstrike in Idlib on 27 February. On 1 March, Turkey announced the launch of a military operation “Spring Shield”, against Syrian armed forces in north west Syria. The hostilities briefly impacted on the Cross-Border operation with a brief suspension of operation from Bab Al Hawa (BAH) and Bab Al Salama (BAS) on 28th February. Hostilities continued and thus far Saraqib has changed control three times since the beginning of the month with continuation of clashes between the warring parties north and west of the city.

According to the Camp Coordination Camp Management Cluster (CCCM) and the Humanitarian Needs Assessment Program (HNAP), between 1st December 2019 and 1st March 2020, over 961,000 people were displaced in northwest Syria. 81 percent of them are women and children—some 576,000 children and nearly 198,000 women.

Most of the newly displaced moved within Idlib governorate, with Dana sub-district hosting the largest population of the newly displaced people, followed by Maaret Tamsrin, Salqin and Idlib city. Tens of thousands of others moved to areas in northern Aleppo governorate, mainly A’zaz, Afrin, Jandairis and Al Bab. Forty two percent of the new IDPs in northwest Syria are currently living with host families and camps. Some 4,000 people are reportedly still seeking shelter, while 173,000 people live in unfinished houses or buildings, 149,000 people live in rented houses and 136,000 people are sheltering in individual tents.

The humanitarian crisis has raised international concerns. A one-day cross-border UN interagency technical mission into northwest Syria took place on 2 March—the first of its kind in the 9 year conflict—to assess the humanitarian situation for children and their families on the ground. The mission included the Regional and Deputy Regional Humanitarian Coordinators for Syria, UNICEF's Whole of Syria Coordinator, Melinda Young, and representatives from IOM, UNFPA, UNHCR, WFP, OCHA and WHO.

Despite the deteriorating situation on the ground, humanitarian workers and UNICEF partners continue to deliver relief programs and services to the affected population in Idlib and northern Aleppo.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

Nutrition
Since 1 December, UNICEF has reached 96,776 pregnant, lactating mothers and children under the age of five years; which represents 36 per cent of the targeted scale up for nutrition program until July. UNICEF managed to reach 77,868 mothers and children through its 10 partners. UNICEF is increasing its partnerships to 13, using 70 per cent of the cluster implementation strategy.

UNICEF is also supporting 52 out of 65 functional integrated Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) and will support the establishment of additional 40 RRTs to bring up the number of the functional RRTs to 105. These RRTs are expected to reach 367,500 children and mother with life-saving health and nutrition services.

Of the total 68,232 children between 6-59 months screened, 1,561 children were found to be acutely malnourished. Potential mortality was averted among 347 severely malnourished children due to timely detection and referral to appropriate treatment. Screening of Acute Malnutrition among 28,544 pregnant and lactating mothers, potential morbidities and mortalities were reversed among 2,315 pregnant and lactating mothers.

A total of 14,812 newly displaced children between the age of 6-59 months, pregnant and lactating mothers were prevented from becoming acutely malnourished with the provision of high energy biscuits. Additional; 31,424 mothers and children were equally prevented from becoming acutely malnourished due to the provision of Lipid Based Nutrients (LNS).
UNICEF boosted its partner’s capacity to prevent acute malnutrition by pre-positioning additional High Energy Biscuits; which will save lives of additional 70,000 newly displaced mothers and children. UNICEF has supported the improvement of infant feeding and caring practices among 23,727 mothers and caregivers; which will contribute to reducing mortality among children under the age of 5 years in North West Syria.

Health

Since 1 December; UNICEF provided immunization services to a total of 30,933 children under 1 year of age who received BCG, 28,199 received DTP1, 24,778 received DTP3, 27,956 received IPV1 and 29,085 received first dose of Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine.

Polio Campaign: A polio campaign is planned for the second week of April in all accessible areas of northwest Syria. A total of 920,000 doses of oral polio vaccines are procured and will be delivered on 6 March through the Bab Al Salama crossing point.

UNICEF and partners continued to reach communities through health centres and mobile clinics. Since 1 December, 32,102 outpatient consultations (both in fixed health facilities and mobile clinics) were carried out in host and IDP communities (15,828 children and 16,274 PLWs).

EPI Centre Functionality: Currently there are 73 EPI centres providing immunization services in NWS out of 116 centres. A total of 31 have been relocated earlier to a safer location in northern Aleppo and Idlib.

WASH

Since 1 December; UNICEF and partners have reached 677,923 people in host communities and 630,473 internally displaced people. Recent UNICEF-restored water stations are supporting 674,065 host communities and 400,916 IDPs in Armanaz, Dana, Kafar Nubul and Ma’arrat Tamasrin in Idlib governorate; and in Afrin and Azaz districts of Aleppo governorate.

A total of 304,000 internally displaced people are receiving water trucking and solid waste management services further, over 52,500 newly displaced benefited from the construction/installation of new latrines, as most of the existing public/community latrines are overcrowded. Additional 45,473 new IDPs have received WASH services including water trucking, hygiene promotion, waste solid management and benefited from the installations of new latrines.

Strategy for responding to new displacements: At the WASH Cluster level, the number of member organizations responding to this emergency has increased from 7 to 28. UNICEF is also continuously expanding its partnerships. The WASH partners selection by UNICEF was based on partners’ capacity to respond to an additional 330,000 IDPs and 205,100 host communities.

UNICEF WASH response is well coordinated with the cluster, to identify gaps on daily/weekly basis and mobilize implementing partners (IPs) to respond to the gaps, especially with the rapid response mechanism within 24-hours. The rapid response includes critical hygiene promotion, distribution of hygiene kits and supply of drinking water. The implementing partners have been requested to intensify hygiene promotion to reduce the possibility of spread of coronavirus, while a detailed program communication strategy is being worked out.

Arrangements are made to ensure that water purification and hygiene NFIs are available to newly displaced people in all locations through stocks positioned inside Syria with UNICEF partners.

UNICEF, in line with the WASH Cluster strategy, is promoting restoration of water stations in host communities that are receiving high number of IDPs, especially through quick repairs and rehabilitation. This intends to reduce the prevailing demand and bridge the gap on water supply that has resulted from limited capacity of private water truckers to meet the demands of the large number of newly arrived IDPs.

Inter-cluster response with Nutrition and Health clusters is promoted to respond to the malnourished/sick children and their families with critical hygiene promotion, hygiene kits. WASH cluster members are also committed to coordinate with Protection and Education clusters to respond to WASH needs within child-friendly spaces and schools.

Education

In February, UNICEF, through its partners was able to reach 6,659 children with education services in Afrin, Janadris in northern Aleppo and Dana in Idlib. A total of 2,814 children in non-formal education provided with textbooks, school bags and learning material. During February, UNICEF conducted a Back to Learning Campaign reaching 1,000 children. A total of 2,329 children were provided with formal education.
Impact of Insecurity on Program Delivery: Insecurity continues to impact learning activities for children. The Idlib Educational Assembly suspended the education activities in Idlib for three days from 29th February to 3rd March due to the security situation. The increased hostilities and shifting in front lines led one of UNICEF partners to relocate two schools from Atareb and Tauma to kafrluseen district in Idlib.

Around 200 schools are currently used as shelter by IDPs causing disruption to children’s education. There are reports of one school being occupied by armed forces.

Supplies: Education is planning to distribute 5,200 tents to establish Temporary Learning Centres (TLC) for displaced children in displacement affected areas. A total of 5,160 school in a box, 6,030 recreational kits, 400 replenishment kits, 4,625 school bags are planned for distribution.

Child Protection

This week partners reported reaching 6,853 IDP and Host Communities children and parents/caregivers. (3,457 were IDPs; 2,823 of whom were children: 1,393 boys and 1,430 girls). Host communities reached accounted for 3,396; 2,845 of whom were children: 1,309 boys and 1,536 girls).

Supplies: Since mid-December 2019 to date, 325 recreational kits, 36 ECD kits were delivered reaching approximately 31,000 children. 64 adolescence kits were delivered reaching 3,200 adolescent boys and girls. Identification wrist bands for preventing family separation reached 63,500 children and parents/caregivers. Additionally, 136 first aid kits were distributed to date in support to the running of Child Friendly Spaces and Women and Girls Safe Spaces, as well as, in support to child protection mobile teams.

Impact of Insecurity on Program Delivery: Since 1st March 2020, one partner has notified on suspension of operations. One Women and Girls Safe Space (WGSS) in Idlib, as well as, one Mobile Outreach team assigned to Arhani and EinShib were suspended due to airstrikes in the area. In February alone, 5 UNICEF CP partners reported temporary suspension of activities affecting 18 child protection service delivery points, which included 8 Child Friendly Spaces (CFS), 8 mobile teams and 2 Women and Girls Safe Spaces. Additionally, 6 Child Protection partners had to relocate from communities in 7 sub-districts in Idlib to new safer locations. Relocations took place from communities in the following sub districts: Ehsem, Teftenaz, Bennsh, Maaret Tamsrin, Kafr Karmin, Daret Azzaz and Haritan. No new relocations amongst UNICEF CP Implementing Partners have been reported yet this month.

Scale Up: The Programme plans to scale up to reach 180,000 affected population in the coming months. Despite capacity gaps and absorption limitations by implementing partners in certain areas, the section seeks opportunities particularly building on earlier efforts of preceding years of investment by UNICEF.

Next SitRep: 12 March 2020

UNICEF Syria Crisis: https://www.unicef.org/emergencies/syrian-crisis


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