

IDP Situation Monitoring Initiative (ISMI)

Monthly Overview of IDP Movements and Spontaneous Returns in north-west Syria, April 2019

Summary of Findings

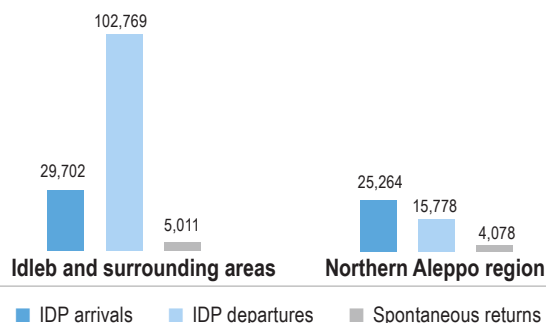
Communities assessed: **634**

Total IDP arrivals:¹ **54,966** (+41%)²

Total IDP departures:³ **118,547** (+85%)

Total spontaneous returns (SRs):⁴ **9,089** (+35%)

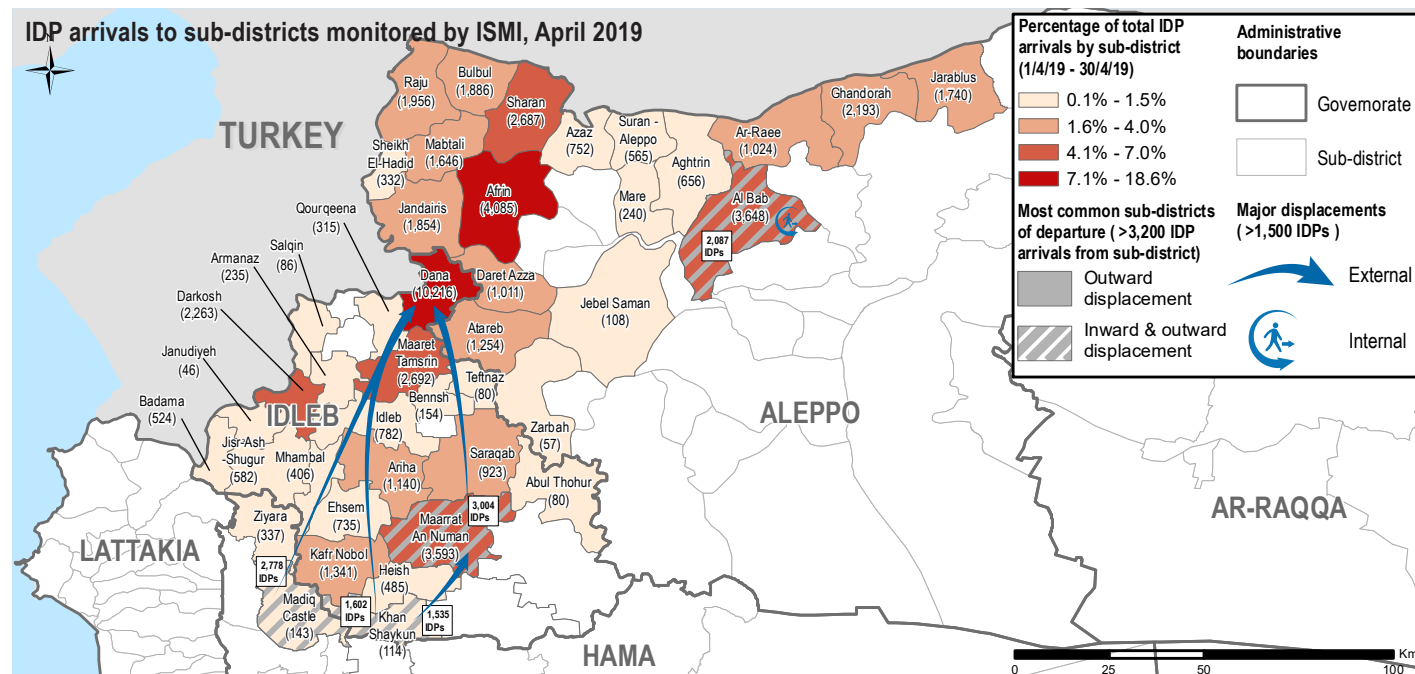
Total IDP arrivals, IDP departures and SRs by region:



In April, assessed communities in north-west Syria witnessed a total of **54,966 IDP arrivals**, with 55% arriving in Idleb and surrounding areas and 45% arriving in the Northern Aleppo region. Both regions continued to see hostility between Government of Syria (GoS)-allied forces and armed opposition groups (AOGs), as well as inter-AOG violence. Towards the end of the month, **there was a sharp escalation in violence marked by increased aerial bombardments and the destruction of civilian infrastructure.**⁵

There was a significant increase in IDP departures from Idleb and surrounding areas with **102,769 departures**, representing an increase of 111% compared to March. **Madiq Castle continued to witness a high number of departures (44,501 IDPs)** due to the continued escalation in violence in this sub-district.

Northern Aleppo witnessed **25,264 IDP arrivals** and **15,778 IDP departures**, with Afrin and Al Bab sub-districts receiving the largest number of IDP arrivals, at 4,085 and 3,648 respectively.



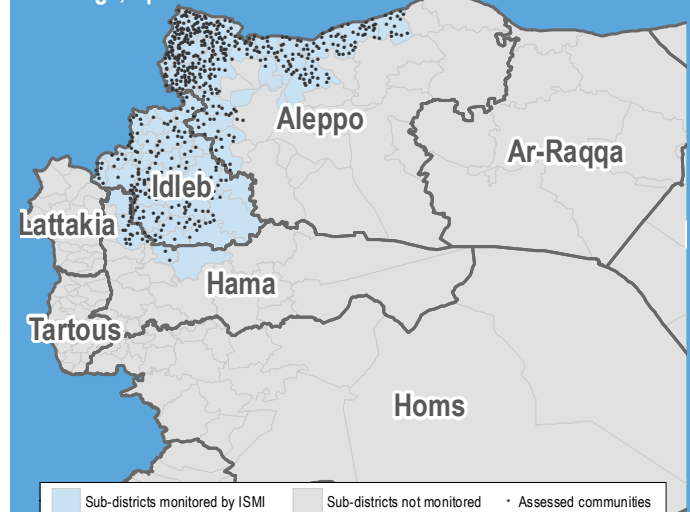
About ISMI & This Factsheet

The IDP Situation Monitoring Initiative (ISMI) is an initiative of the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster, implemented by REACH and supported by cluster members.

Following a baseline assessment conducted at the end of 2016, weekly, bi-weekly and now monthly data collection cycles were initiated. This factsheet presents an overview of reported inward and outward movements of IDPs from 1 to 30 April 2019. Such displacements were reported in 634 communities in sub-districts monitored by ISMI. The coverage map in this section shows the sub-districts that were monitored for the most recent round of data collection, as well as the communities reporting movements. ISMI monitoring coverage varies over time depending on access. Displacements are identified through an extensive key informant (KI) network, either from alerts initiated by KIs or from follow-up by enumerators. At least two KIs are interviewed in each assessed community, and collected information is further triangulated through other sources, including CCCM member data and humanitarian updates. This approach allows for regular updates on IDP movements at the community level across sub-districts monitored by ISMI in north-west Syria.

The data used for this product was collected, triangulated and verified based on submissions from ISMI's network and select CCCM cluster members following the ISMI methodology. Due to differences in methodology and coverage, figures presented in this output may differ from official CCCM Cluster or UNHCR data. All data is for humanitarian use only.

Coverage, April 2019



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IDLEB & SURROUNDING AREAS⁶

Key Figures

Communities assessed: 234

Total IDP arrivals: 29,702 (+55%)

Sub-districts with most arrivals (# IDPs):

Dana	10,216
Ma'arrat An Nu'man	3,593
Maaret Tamsrin	2,692
Darkosh	2,263
Kafr Nobol	1,341

Total IDP departures: 102,769 (+111%)

Sub-districts with most departures (# IDPs):

Madiq Castle	44,501
Kafr Nobol	36,124
Ziyara	6,430
Khan Shaykun	3,228
Heish	2,001

Total SRs: 5,011 (+45%)

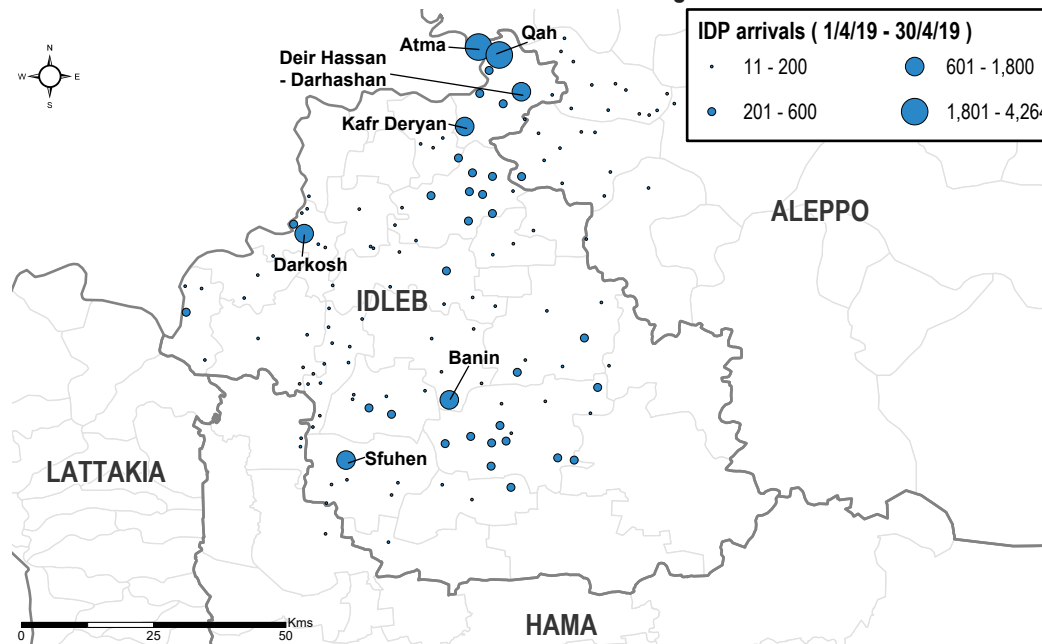
Sub-districts with most SRs:

Kafr Zeita	1,425
Heish	1,254
Khan Shaykun	564
Ma'arrat An Nu'man	547
Saraqab	445

Overview

Following trends seen in February and March, Idleb and surrounding areas continued to witness large scale displacement precipitated by aerial bombardments and the destruction of civilian infrastructure.⁷ Living conditions have continued to deteriorate due to the closure of markets, shops and

IDP arrivals to assessed communities in Idleb and surrounding areas⁸



schools as a result of heightening insecurity. As well as an intensification of air strikes, there has been an increase in shelling along frontlines and a growing number of attacks involving improvised explosive devices in urban areas.⁹

Northern Hama and southern Idleb witnessed the sharpest increase in hostilities resulting in large movements of IDPs northwards to Dana sub-district, which received 10,216 arrivals, equating to 34% of total IDP arrivals across the whole region.

Moreover, 37 communities in southern Idleb and northern Hama were found to be empty according to the most recent Rapid Needs Assessment.¹⁰

IDP Departures

In April, 102,769 IDP departures were reported compared to 48,816 IDP departures in March. Such a dramatic increase strongly suggests a rapid escalation in hostilities and an untenable situation in many communities.

Madiq Castle sub-district continued to be particularly impacted and witnessed 44,501 departures, representing an increase of 59% compared to total departures in March. Departures from Madiq Castle sub-district have remained high since February which saw 25,680 departures, indicating the particularly grave and constant level of violence in this sub-

district. Madiq Castle and Kafr Nobol sub-districts combined accounted for 78% of all departures in the region with Kafr Nobol sub-district witnessing 36,124 IDP departures in March.

IDPs also departed from other areas along conflict lines in the region, notably Ziyara (6,430 IDPs), Khan Shaykun (3,228 IDPs) and Heish (2,001 IDPs) sub-districts.

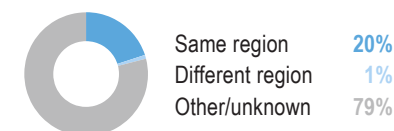
Civilians continue to bear the brunt of the conflict with numerous reports of high civilian casualties.¹¹ Hostilities escalated dramatically in the final week of April with an intensification of airstrikes and shelling.

According to KIs, the most common push factor for IDPs departing communities was the escalation of aerial bombardment. Escalation of ground-based conflict and anticipation of future conflict escalation were the second and third most common push factors for IDPs across the region.

All three factors combined give a strong indication of the level of violence facing civilians.

It should also be noted that the high level of insecurity has forced many humanitarian organisations to suspend activities in the region exacerbating the already dire outlook in regards to basic service provision.¹¹

Intended destinations of departures:

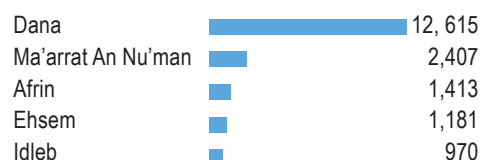


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Following trends seen since January 2019, **Dana (12,615 IDPs)** and **Ma'arrat An Nu'man (2,407 IDPs)** sub-districts continue to be the top intended destinations for IDP departures. The perceived stability of sub-districts in northern Idleb in comparison to the continuously escalating violence in southern Idleb and northern Hama is evident. **Dana sub-district was the top intended sub-district for 37% of IDPs.**

Top intended destination sub-districts (# IDPs):



On a community level, **Atma (1,175 IDPs)** was a top intended destination for the second consecutive month. Such mass displacement northwards is likely to exert pressure on already strained services in these communities with increased pressure on housing, and camps operating at full or excess capacity.

IDP Arrivals

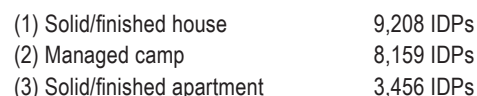
The number of IDP arrivals decreased by 55% in comparison to last month and as mentioned previously **Dana sub-district continues to witness the most IDP arrivals, receiving one third of all arrivals this month.** IDP arrivals increased rapidly in the last week of April due to the intensification of aerial bombardments.

Ma'arrat An Nu'man (3,593 IDPs), Maaret Tamsrin (2,692 IDPs), Darkosh (2,263 IDPs)

and Kafr Nobol (1,341 IDPs) sub-districts also witnessed IDP arrivals. Vulnerable groups are present among IDP arrivals, raising protection concerns in destination communities.

The majority of IDP arrivals (9,208 IDPs) reside in solid finished houses, managed camps (8,159 IDPs) and solid/finished apartments (3,456 IDPs). 3,199 IDP arrivals were residing in individual tents, 1,538 IDPs in unfinished/ damaged buildings and 1,215 IDPs in informal settlements.

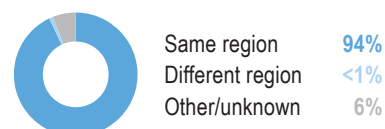
Top 3 shelter types of IDP arrivals:



In sum, these figures reflect the continued pressure being exerted on shelter due to the high population density in destination sub-districts. Furthermore, rental costs have reportedly increased fivefold in destination communities.¹¹

Safety and security was the most common pull factor for IDP arrivals followed by family ties to the host community. **Access to shelter/ shelter support** was the second most common pull factor.

Last place of departure of IDP arrivals:



The majority of IDP arrivals (94%) had departed from communities within the Idleb and surrounding areas region, with the most part arriving from **Madiq Castle (7,059 IDPs), Khan Shaykun (5,449 IDPs) and Ma'arrat An Nu'man (5,255 IDPs)** sub-districts. On a community level, **Madiq Castle community witnessed the highest number of departures (1,890 IDPs).** According to reports, Madiq Castle sub-district faced continued aerial bombardment from 28 April and the resultant suspension of humanitarian operations since 29 April.¹²

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



KIs reported the presence of vulnerable groups among IDP arrivals including female-headed households, women travelling alone, child-headed households, orphans, elderly-headed households, disabled-headed households and individuals with disabilities.

Vulnerable groups among IDP arrivals:¹³



The presence of vulnerable groups raises additional protection concerns in arrival communities.

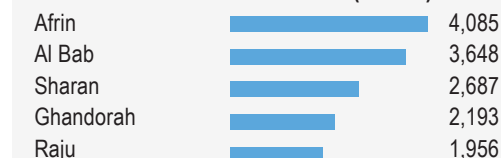
NORTHERN ALEPPO¹⁴

Key Figures

Communities assessed: 400

Total IDP arrivals: 25,264 (+7%)

Sub-districts with most arrivals (# IDPs):



Total IDP departures: 15,778 (+4%)

Sub-districts with most departures (# IDPs):



Total SRs: 4,078 (+24%)

Sub-districts with most SRs:



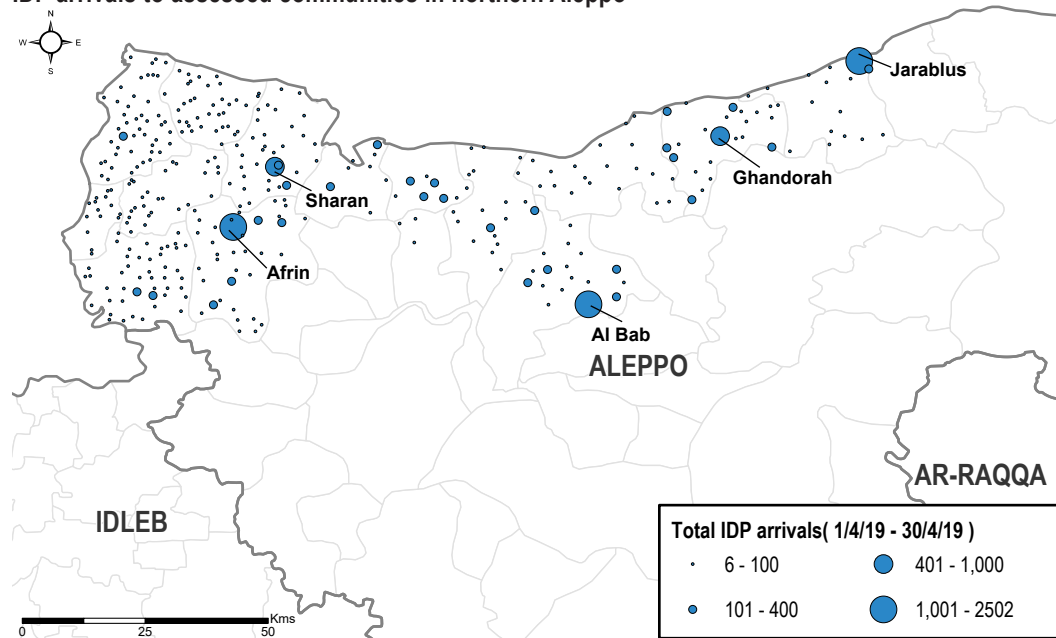
Overview

Northern Aleppo witnessed continued insecurity and sporadic inter-AOG violence according to KIs.

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IDP arrivals to assessed communities in northern Aleppo¹⁵



Throughout April, the northern Aleppo region witnessed a total of **25,264 IDP arrivals** and **15,778 IDP departures**, representing decreases of 7% and 4% respectively as compared to the previous month. Towards the end of April, IDP arrivals to the Northern Aleppo region from Idlib and surrounding areas began to sharply increase as a result of escalating hostilities. In addition, the Northern Aleppo region witnessed **4,078 spontaneous returns**.

IDP Arrivals

There was a slight decrease in the number of IDP arrivals compared to March, the Northern Aleppo region witnessed **25,264 IDP arrivals compared to 27,053 in March**.

As violence intensified towards the latter half of April in neighbouring Idlib governorate, IDPs began to arrive in **Afrin (4,085 IDPs) and Al-Bab (3,648 IDPs) sub-districts** due to their proximity to Idlib governorate. Sharan (2,687), Ghandorah (2,193) and Raju (1,956) sub-districts also witnessed a significant number of IDP arrivals.

Nearly **one third of all IDP arrivals (31%) came from Idlib and surrounding areas whilst 33% of IDP arrivals departed from communities within the Northern Aleppo region**. These figures suggest a perceived level of stability and security in comparison to Idlib governorate and simultaneously indicate a potential strain on services due to high population density in areas witnessing a large number of arrivals. This could be the case, for example with **Al-Bab sub-district** which witnessed **3,648 IDP**

arrivals but was also the most common last sub-district of departure for arrivals, with 3,228 IDP departures.

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

Al Bab	3,228
Ma'arrat An Nu'man	1,470
A'zaz	1,244
Idlib	1,058
Menbij	903

Ma'arrat An Nu'man sub-district situated in Idlib governorate was the last place of departure for an estimated **1,470 IDP arrivals** whilst A'zaz (1,244 IDPs), Idlib (1,058 IDPs) and Menbij (903 IDPs) sub-districts were also the last recorded place of departure for many arrivals.

Top 3 shelter types of IDP arrivals:

(1) Solid/finished house	14,824 IDPs
(2) Individual tent	3,316 IDPs
(3) Managed camp	1,702 IDPs

The most common pull factor was safety and security followed by access to income/employment opportunities. Meanwhile, **the most common push factor causing IDPs to flee was an escalation in ground-based conflict followed by loss of income.**

Nonetheless, as with Idlib, **safety and security** was overwhelmingly noted as the biggest pull factor. The relatively stable situation in northern Aleppo allows for better humanitarian access in comparison to Idlib and surrounding areas where humanitarian organisations have had to suspend services. As a result, IDP arrivals note access to

humanitarian services such as shelter and food as reasons for moving to northern Aleppo.

IDP Departures

Of the **15,778 departures** reported during April, **93% were secondary displacements** and had been displaced multiple times. IDPs facing multiple displacements are usually more vulnerable with more protection needs. **For the second consecutive month, Al-Bab sub-district witnessed the highest number of departures (4,269 IDPs)** followed by Ghandorah (1,705 IDPs), Afrin (1,627 IDPs), Jandairis (1,301 IDPs) and Bulbul (1,213 IDPs) sub-districts.

Top intended destination sub-districts (# IDPs):

Al Bab	1,043
Ghandorah	747
Menbij	741
Afrin	443
Sharan	336

Spontaneous Returns

Northern Aleppo witnessed 4,078 spontaneous returnees (SRs) throughout April. Afrin sub-district witnessed the highest number of SRs (726 SRs) followed by Ma'tali (687 SRs) and Sharan (480 SRs) sub-districts.

Sub-districts with most spontaneous returns to former homes:

Afrin	726
Ma'tali	687
Sharan	480
Bulbul	365
Raju	316

Endnotes

¹ Some figures may be repeated displacements.

² CCCM/REACH, ISMI Monthly Displacement Summary, [March 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 ReliefWeb, [‘Second Syrian Hospital Hit By Airstrikes In Less Than 24 Hours.’](#) 29 April 2019

⁶ Idleb governorate’s surrounding areas include communities in Atareb, Daret Azza, Haritan, Jebel Saman and Zarbah sub-districts in western Aleppo governorate, as well as in Kafr 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.

⁷ CCCM/REACH, ISMI Monthly Displacement Summary, February 2019, [February 2019](#), [March 2019](#)

⁸ Community markers also account for camps, informal settlements and other IDP sites when they are in close proximity to a community.

⁹ OCHA, [‘Humanitarian Update: Syrian Arab Republic - Issue 02.’](#) 4 April 2019

¹⁰ REACH, [‘Southern Idleb and northern Hama Rapid Needs Assessment.’](#) May 2019

¹¹ OCHA, [‘Situation Report 1: Recent Developments in North-western Syria.’](#) 10 May 2019

¹² OCHA, [‘Flash Update: Recent Developments in North-Western Syria.’](#) 07 May 2019

¹³ Vulnerable groups: ♀ Female-headed households/Women travelling alone ♀♂ Child-headed households ♀X Orphans ♂ Elderly-headed households/Elderly travelling alone ♂ Disabled-headed households/Individuals with disabilities travelling alone.

¹⁴ Figures for the northern Aleppo region include accessible communities in the following sub-districts: Afrin, Aghtrin, Al Bab, Ar-Ra’ee, A’zaz, Bulbul, Ghadorah, Jandairis, Jarablus, Ma’btali, Mare’, Raju, Sharan, Sheikh El-Hadid and Suran.

¹⁵ Community markers also account for camps, informal settlements and other IDP sites when they are in close proximity to a community.