

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

Summary of Findings

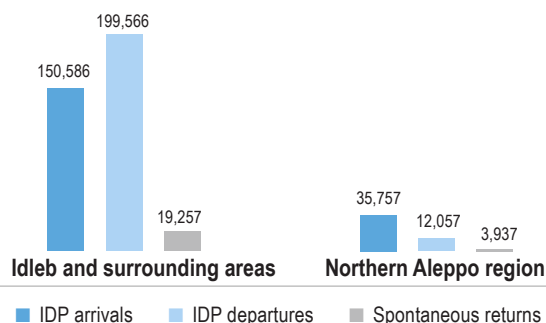
Communities assessed: 739

Total IDP arrivals:¹ 186,343(↑252%)²

Total IDP departures:³ 211,623(↑526%)

Total spontaneous returns (SRs):⁴ 23,194(↑231%)

Total IDP arrivals, IDP departures and SRs by region:



Northwest Syria continues to witness large scale displacement, leading to complex humanitarian needs in areas experiencing a continuously high number of IDP arrivals. Between 1st and 31st August, assessed communities across northwest Syria witnessed a total of **186,343 IDP arrivals**, representing an increase of 252% compared to figures reported in July. KIs reported **211,623 IDP departures** equivalent to a 526% increase compared to the number of IDP departures in July.

Idleb and surrounding areas continues to account for the overwhelming majority of IDP movements in the region due to prolonged conflict escalation. **94% of IDP departures and 81% of IDP arrivals reported across northwest Syria occurred in Idleb and surrounding areas.**

Northern Aleppo continues to experience IDP movement, though on a smaller scale to that seen in Idleb and surrounding areas. Throughout August, **northern Aleppo witnessed a total of 35,757 IDP arrivals and 12,057 IDP departures.**

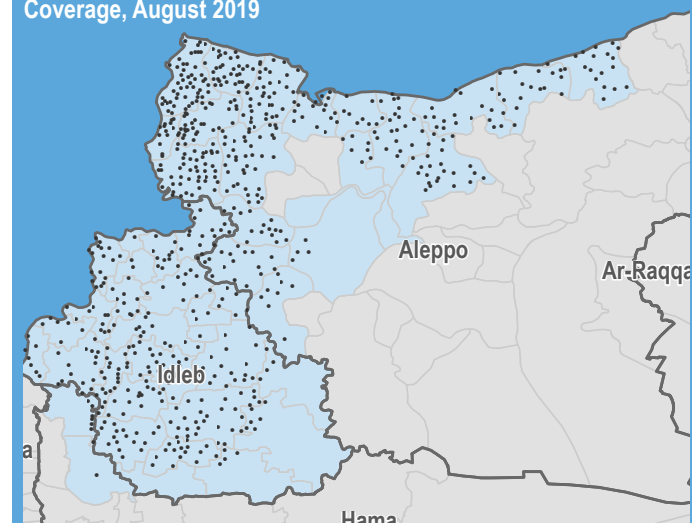
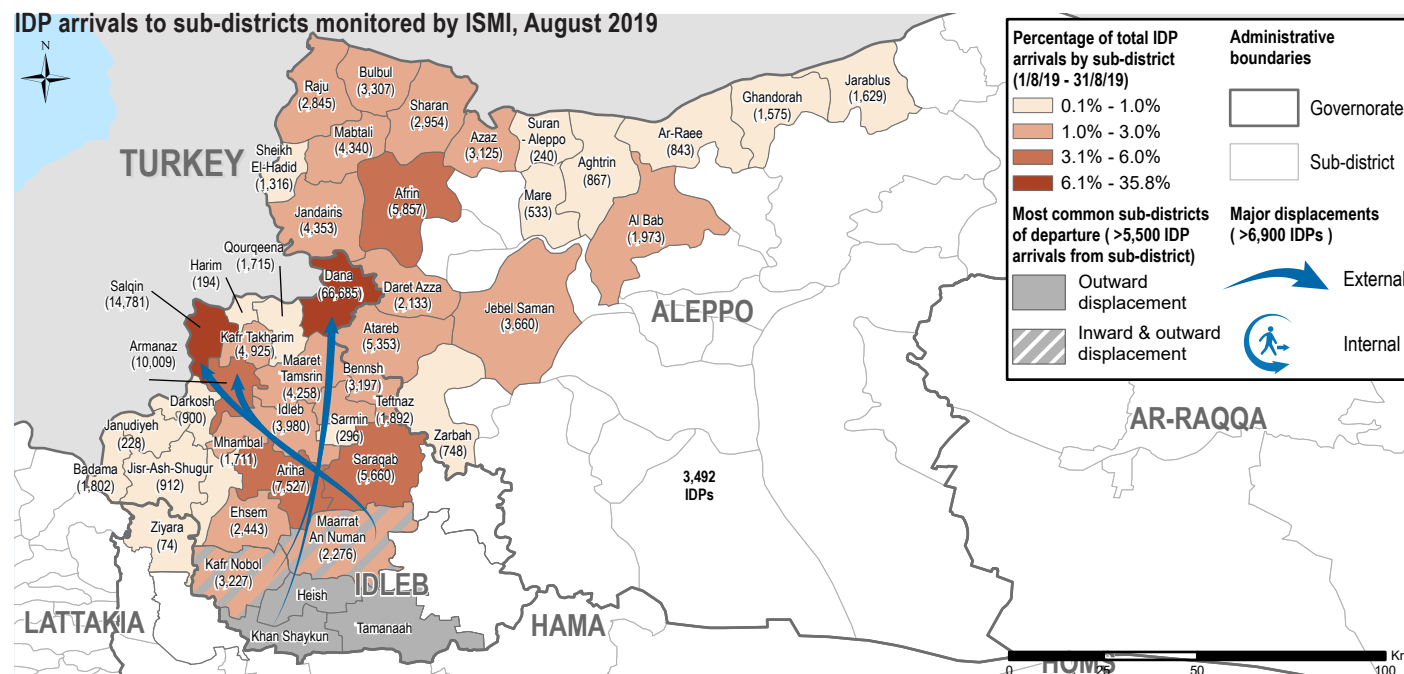
About ISMI & This Factsheet

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 31 August 2019. Such displacements were reported in 739 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, August 2019



IDLEB & SURROUNDING AREAS⁵

Key Figures

Communities assessed: **343**

Total IDP arrivals: **150,586 (+185%)**

Sub-districts with most arrivals (# IDPs):

Dana	66,685
Salqin	14,781
Armanaz	10,009
Ariha	7,527
Saraqab	5,660

Total IDP departures: **199,566 (+491%)**

Sub-districts with most departures (# IDPs):

Ma'arrat An Nu'man	130,227
Heish	27,141
Kafr Nobol	23,490
Ariha	7,056
Sanjar	3,066

Total SRs: **19,257 (+175%)**

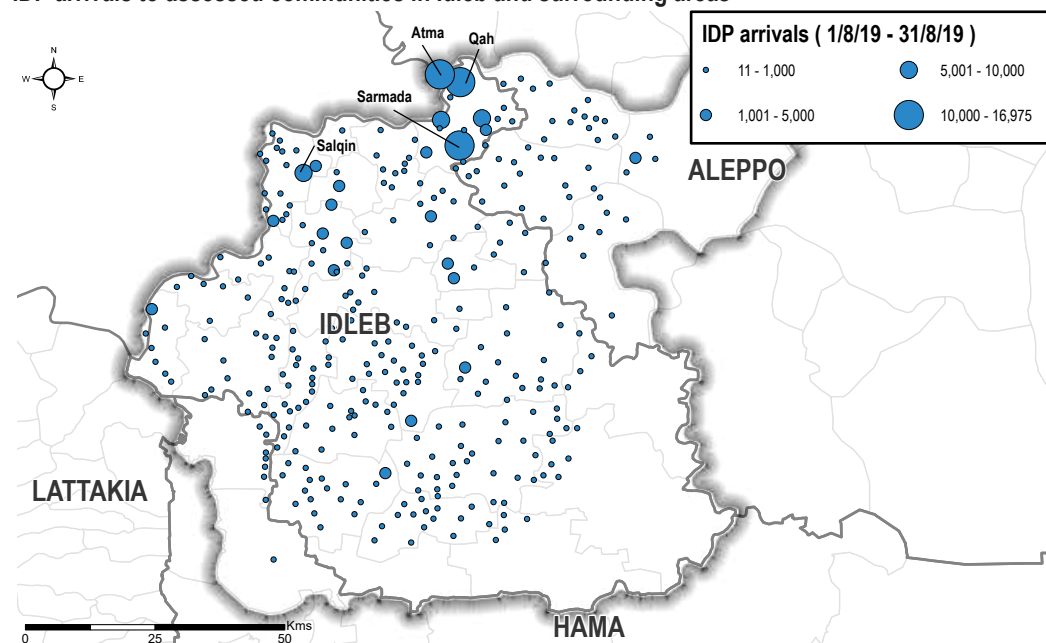
Sub-districts with most SRs:

Kafr Nobol	14,965
Mhambal	1,596
Dana	1,140
Ehsem	855
Ma'arrat An Nu'man	490

Overview

Civilians continue to be severely impacted by hostilities between the Government of Syria (GoS) and Armed Opposition Groups (AOGs) in Idlib and surrounding areas. **Since April 2019, aerial bombardments across the region have led to high civilian casualties, particularly in communities in southern Idlib and northern Hama.**⁶ According to reports, numerous medical facilities have been damaged or destroyed

IDP arrivals to assessed communities in Idlib and surrounding areas⁷



as a result of airstrikes.⁸ The high level of violence as well as the resultant deterioration in humanitarian conditions has caused and continues to cause mass displacement. **70,624 IDP departures reported in August were facing multiple displacements**, highlighting the widespread level of violence in the region as IDPs struggle to find safety. **128,942 IDP departures were facing displacement for the first time.**

IDP Arrivals

Continuing trends witnessed since April, IDPs have been arriving to sub-districts in northern Idlib. **Dana sub-district witnessed the highest number of IDP arrivals for the fourth consecutive month with 66,685 IDP arrivals reported in August.** 14,781 IDPs arrived to

Salqin sub-district whilst 10,009 IDPs arrived to Armanaz sub-district. **On a community-level, Qah (16,975), Sarmada (15,618) and, Atmeh (8,390) reported the highest number of IDP arrivals.**

Most common pull factors for IDP arrivals:⁹

	1st	2nd	3rd
Safety and security situation	190	22	8
Access to shelter/shelter support	4	85	66
Access to humanitarian assistance	8	52	59
Family ties/host community relationship	25	47	13
Access to income/employment	2	10	13

The continuously high number of IDP arrivals in sub-districts in northern Idlib has led to high population density and has increased pressure on already overstretched humanitarian assistance programmes.¹⁰

Vulnerable groups among IDP arrivals:¹¹



Vulnerable groups with complex protection needs were reported among IDP arrivals. **Women and girls are reported to be at greater risk of harm and exploitation during flight while unaccompanied children are at risk of early marriage, child labour and of association with armed groups.** In addition, the stress of displacement and the prolonged violence experienced by civilians has led to severe psychosocial needs.¹⁰

Top 3 shelter types of IDP arrivals:

(1) Managed camp	57,703 IDPs
(2) Solid/finished house	26,466 IDPs
(3) Unfinished/damaged building	24,055 IDPs

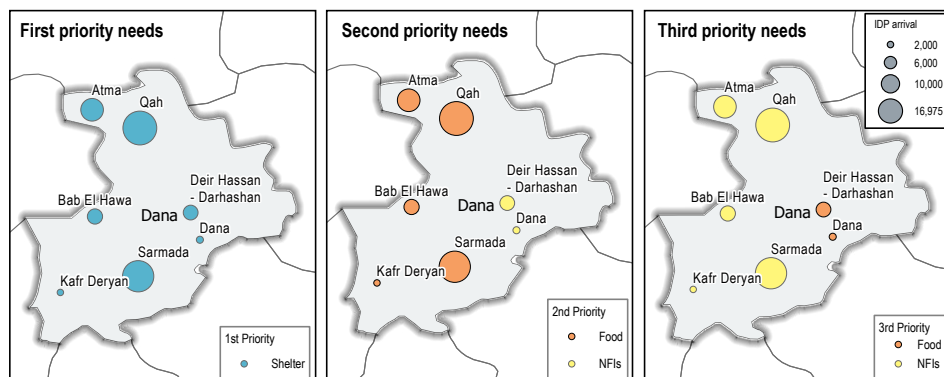
According to KIs, 57,703 IDP arrivals were residing in managed camps whilst 26,466 IDP arrivals were reported to be residing in solid/finished houses and 24,055 IDP arrivals were residing in unfinished/damaged buildings. Humanitarian partners have reported a shortage of shelter options in communities experiencing high levels of IDP arrivals as well as high rents and some displaced people having to stay out in the open.¹⁰

The top three priority needs in Dana sub-district, as reported by KIs were shelter, food and NFIs. These needs are particularly acute in communities which have experienced a high number of IDP arrivals such as Qah, Sarmada, and Atma.

IDP Situation Monitoring Initiative (ISMI)

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

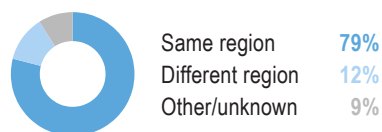
Top 3 priority needs of IDP arrivals in Dana sub-district:



Community	IDP arrivals	1st Priority	2nd Priority	3rd Priority
Qah	16,975	Shelter	Food	NFIs
Sarmada	15,618	Shelter	Food	NFIs
Atma	11,012	Shelter	Food	NFIs
Bab El Hawa	7,074	Shelter	Food	NFIs
Deir Hassan - Darhashan	6,840	Shelter	NFIs	Food
Dana (Dana)	2,736	Shelter	NFIs	Food
Kafr Deryan	2,405	Shelter	Food	NFIs

The majority of IDP arrivals (79%) came from within Idlib and surrounding areas.

Last place of departure of IDP arrivals:



IDP Departures

Ma'arrat An Nu'man sub-district experienced severe conflict escalation throughout August leading to a large number of IDP departures. **130,227 IDP departures were recorded from Ma'arrat An Nu'man sub-district, equivalent to 65% of all IDP departures in Idlib and surrounding areas.**

Reports state that communities in Ma'arrat An Nu'man faced severe aerial bombardment. Numerous residential neighbourhoods were impacted by airstrikes on 28 August with multiple civilian casualties reported.¹²

According to KIs, **many communities in Kafr Nobol and Heish sub-districts are now empty** due to the intensity of violence. Satellite imagery also shows extreme damage to many villages in southern Idlib with many commercial and residential areas no longer populated.¹³

On a community-level, **Ma'arrat An Nu'man witnessed the highest number of IDP departures with 39,604 IDP departures reported by KIs.** Telemnas (11,948) and Ghadqa (9,668) communities, also situated in

Ma'arrat An Numan sub-district, recorded high levels of IDP departures.

Kafr Nobol witnessed 23,490 IDP departures, according to KIs.

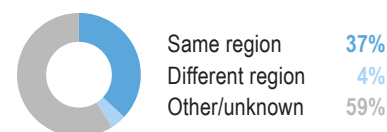
Most common push factors for IDP arrivals :

	1st	2nd	3rd
Escalation of aerial bombardment	142	94	0
Escalation of ground-based conflict	94	67	3
Anticipation of future conflict escalation	0	53	58
Loss of assets	0	11	71
Loss of income	8	9	37

Escalation of aerial bombardment and escalation of ground-based conflict were recorded by KIs as the primary factors motivating IDPs to depart communities.

37% of IDP departures intended to go to destinations within Idlib and surrounding areas.

Intended destinations of departures:



KIs reported Dana sub-district (15,823) as the top intended destination for IDP departures followed by Maaret Tamsrin (2,750) and, Afrin (1,988) sub-districts.

Top intended destination sub-districts (# IDPs):

Dana	15,823
Maaret Tamsrin	2,750
Afrin	1,988
Salqin	736
Qourqeena	541

Spontaneous Returns

A small number of spontaneous returns were reported by KIs in Idlib and surrounding areas. These most likely occurred at the beginning of August when there was a brief cessation in hostilities due to a ceasefire.¹⁰ According to KIs, most spontaneous returns were short-term.

Sub-districts with most spontaneous returns to former homes:

Kafr Nobol	6,876
Mhambal	1,596
Dana	1,140
Ehsem	855
Ma'arrat An Nu'man	473

6,876 SRs reportedly returned to their homes of habitual residence in Kafr Nobol sub-district, according to KIs. 1,569 SRs in Mhambal and 1,410 SRs in Dana sub-districts were residing in their former homes.

IDP Situation Monitoring Initiative (ISMI)

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

NORTHERN ALEPPO

Key Figures

Communities assessed: 396

Total IDP arrivals: 35,757

Sub-districts with most arrivals (# IDPs):

Afrin	5,857
Jandairis	4,353
Ma'tbali	4,340
Bulbul	3,307
A'zaz	3,125

Total IDP departures: 12,057

Sub-districts with most departures (# IDPs):

Al Bab	1,791
Jandairis	1,755
Afrin	1,411
Jarablus	1,243
Raju	1,184

Total SRs: 3,937

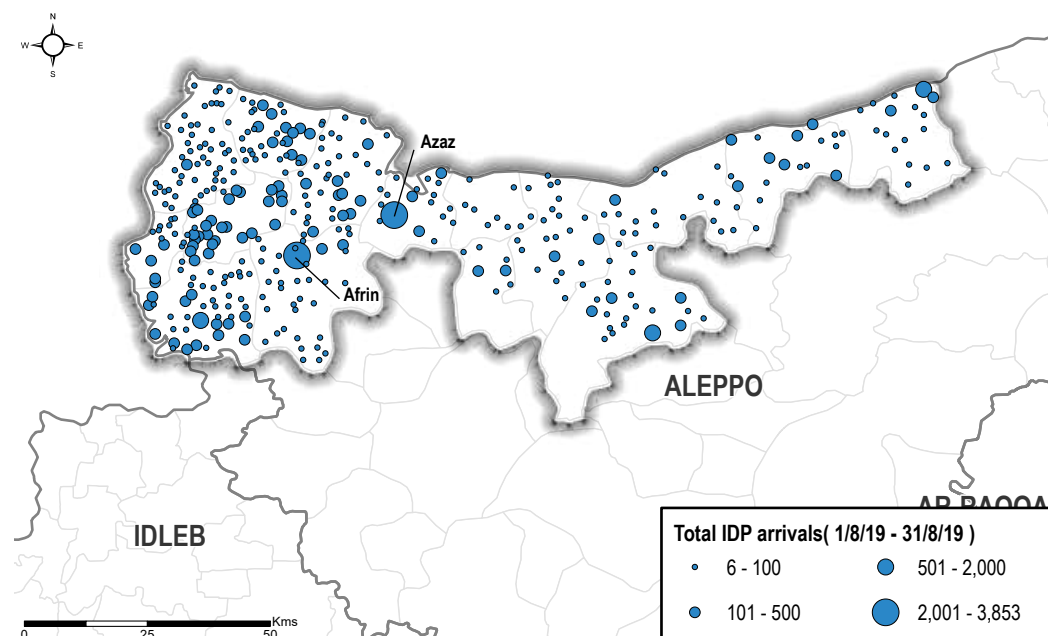
Sub-districts with most SRs:

Sharan	1,134
Afrin	624
Raju	454
Jandairis	279
Ma'tbali	269

Overview

Throughout August, KIs reported 35,757 IDP arrivals and 12,057 IDP departures in assessed communities in Northern Aleppo. Humanitarian access is generally possible in the region despite sporadic security incidents and humanitarian partners have implemented mobile and rapid response teams along displacement routes to support IDP arrivals from neighbouring Idlib.¹⁴

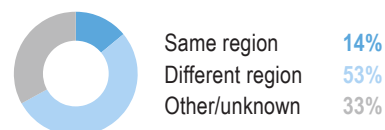
IDP arrivals to assessed communities in Northern Aleppo¹⁵



IDP Arrivals

Throughout August, IDPs fleeing increased conflict escalation in neighbouring Idlib and surrounding areas arrived to communities in Northern Aleppo. 17,846 IDP arrivals, representing 49% of all IDP arrivals reportedly came from Idlib and surrounding areas.

Last place of departure of IDP arrivals:



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

Ma'arrat An Nu'man	2,810
Afrin	1,880
Idlib	1,072
Dana	1,028
Al Bab	901

Ma'arrat An Nu'man sub-district was the most commonly reported last place of departure for IDP arrivals in Northern Aleppo with 2,810 IDP arrivals reported by KIs. 1,880 IDP arrivals departed from Afrin sub-district and 1,072 IDP arrivals departed from Idlib sub-district, according to KIs.

Afrin sub-district recorded the highest number of IDP arrivals with 5,857 IDPs arriving in August.

4,353 IDPs arrived to Jandairis and 4,340 IDPs arrived to Ma'tbali sub-districts.

On a community-level, Afrin (3,853), Azaz (2,024) and Al Bab (701) received the most IDP arrivals.

Most common pull factors for IDP arrivals:

	1st	2nd	3rd
Safety and security situation	220	51	6
Access to income/ employment	53	118	40
Access to shelter/shelter support	28	65	86
Access to humanitarian assistance	5	55	79
Family ties/host community relationship	58	10	8

According to KIs, a majority of IDPs arrived to communities in Northern Aleppo due to an increased level of safety and security in assessed locations in the region.

Vulnerable groups among IDP arrivals:



KIs reported the presence of all vulnerable groups, aside from elderly individuals travelling alone and elderly-headed households, among IDP arrivals.

Top 3 shelter types of IDP arrivals:

(1) Solid/finished house	23,839 IDPs
(2) Unfinished/damaged building	3,031 IDPs
(3) Solid/finished apartment	2,697 IDPs

A majority of IDP arrivals were reportedly residing in solid/finished houses. 23,839 IDPs, equivalent to 66% of IDP arrivals were reported to be living in solid/finished houses. 831 IDP arrivals were reported in managed camps.

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IDP Departures

KIs recorded **1,791 IDP departures from Al Bab sub-district, 1,755 IDP departures from Jandairis and, 1,411 IDP departures from Afrin sub-districts.**

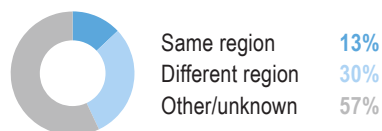
Al Bab community witnessed the highest number (900) of IDP departures followed by Afrin (576) and, Jarablus (484).

Most common push factors for IDP arrivals :

	1st	2nd	3rd
Escalation of aerial bombardment	54	198	16
Escalation of ground-based conflict	205	30	11
Loss of income	56	16	67
Anticipation of future conflict escalation	9	36	90
Reduced access to shelter	11	13	43

Escalation of aerial bombardment and escalation of ground-based conflict were the two most prominent factors motivating IDP arrivals to leave their last place of departure.

Intended destinations of departures:



Top intended destination sub-districts (# IDPs):

Al Bab	428
Jarablus	427
Afrin	348
Menbij	344
A'zaz	57

Spontaneous Returns

3,937 pre-conflict residents returned to their communities of origin throughout August, as reported by KIs. Sharan sub-district recorded 1,134 spontaneous returns, equivalent to 28% of all spontaneous returns recorded in the region. This suggests a perceived level of stability in this sub-district.

Sub-districts with most spontaneous returns to former homes:

Sharan	1,117
Afrin	573
Jandairis	279
Ma'tali	247
Bulbul	239

A majority of SRs in Sharan (1,117) sub-district returned to their homes.

Endnotes

¹ Some figures may be repeated displacements.

² CCCM/REACH, ISMI Monthly Displacement Summary, July 2019. These figures refer to IDP movements across Idleb and surrounding areas and Northern Aleppo. Throughout July, only Idleb and surrounding areas were assessed, so the increase in IDP arrivals is 185% for Idleb and surrounding areas only and 491% for IDP departures.

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 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.

⁶ Reuters, 'Civilian death toll mounts as Syrian offensive widens,' 17 August 2019

⁷ Community markers also account for camps, informal settlements and other IDP sites when they are in close proximity to a community; Only major departure movements for known communities of origin are shown with regards to large IDP arrival movements.

⁸ Physicians for Human Rights, 'UN Plan to Investigate Recent Attacks on Health Care in Syria Woefully Insufficient,' 16 September 2019

⁹ Number of accessible communities in which the most common push and/or pull factors for IDP arrivals or departures or SRs were reported by KIs.

¹⁰ OCHA, 'Recent Developments in Northwestern Syria Situation Report No.11,' 6 September 2019

¹¹ Vulnerable groups: ♀ Female-headed households/Women travelling alone ♀♀ Child-headed households ♀♂ Orphans ♂ Elderly-headed households/Elderly travelling alone ♿ Disabled-headed households/Individuals with disabilities travelling alone.

¹² Action on Armed Violence, 'Explosive violence in August 2019,' 10 September 2019

¹³ Save the Children, 'One child killed every day in 17 days in Idleb, Syria,' 26 August 2019

¹⁴ Unicef, 'Whole of Syria Humanitarian Results August 2019,' 23 September 2019

¹⁵ Figures for the northern Aleppo region include accessible communities in the following sub-districts: Afrin, Aghtrn, Al Bab, Ar-Ra'ee, A'zaz, Bulbul, Ghandorah, Jandairis, Jarablus, Ma'tali, Mare', Raju, Sharan, Sheikh El-Hadid and Suran.

ABOUT REACH INITIATIVE

REACH is a leading humanitarian information provider that uses primary data collection and in-depth analysis as tools to enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development settings.