

BI-WEEKLY UPDATE

WHOLE OF SYRIA

Issue 5 | 1 - 15 March 2021











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1. COVID-19 Update

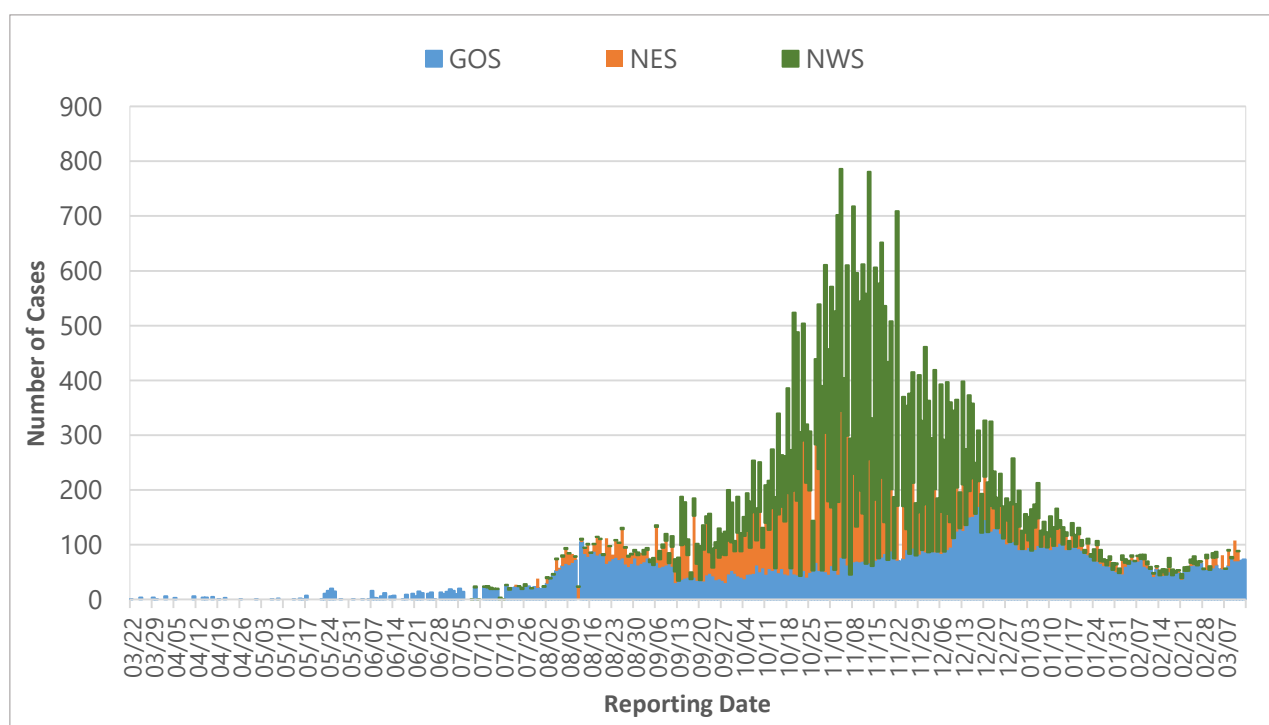
1.1. COVID-19 Statistical Summary at Whole of Syria Level

As of 13 March 2021

	46 389	Total cases (including 3 907 health workers)
	13 023	Active cases
	31 298	Recovered cases
	2 068	Deaths
	4.5%	Case Fatality Rate (CFR)
	20	COVID-19 functional laboratories
	188 780	COVID-19 tests done
	926	Overall testing rate per 100 000 population
	227.5	Incidence rate per 100 000 population (highest in Al-Hasakeh; 486)
	24.6%	Positivity rate (highest in As-Sweida; 64.7%)

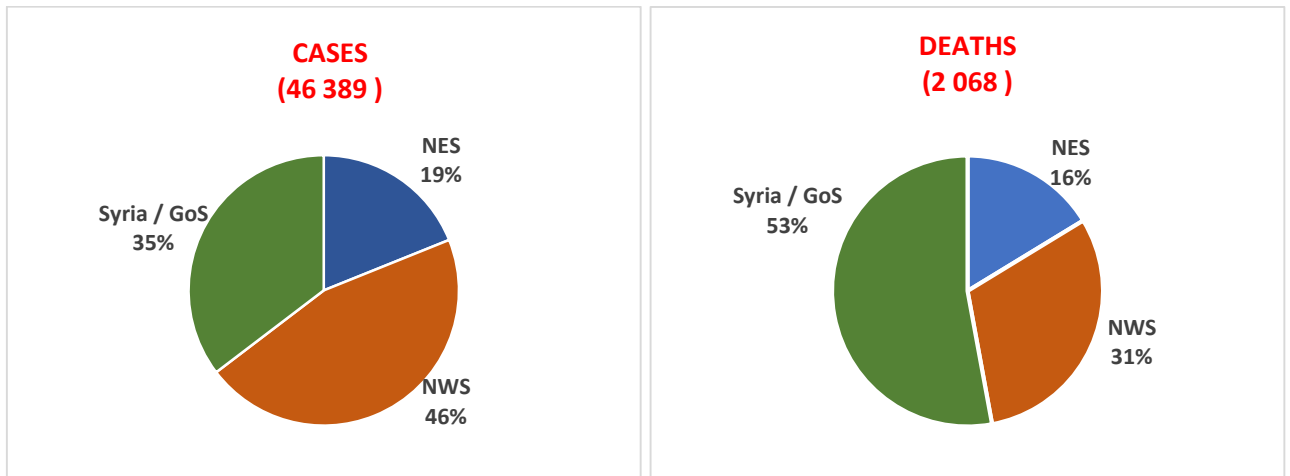
1.2. Daily Distribution of COVID-19 Cases and Cumulative CFR at Whole of Syria Level

22 March 2020 – 13 March 2021 (n = 46 389)



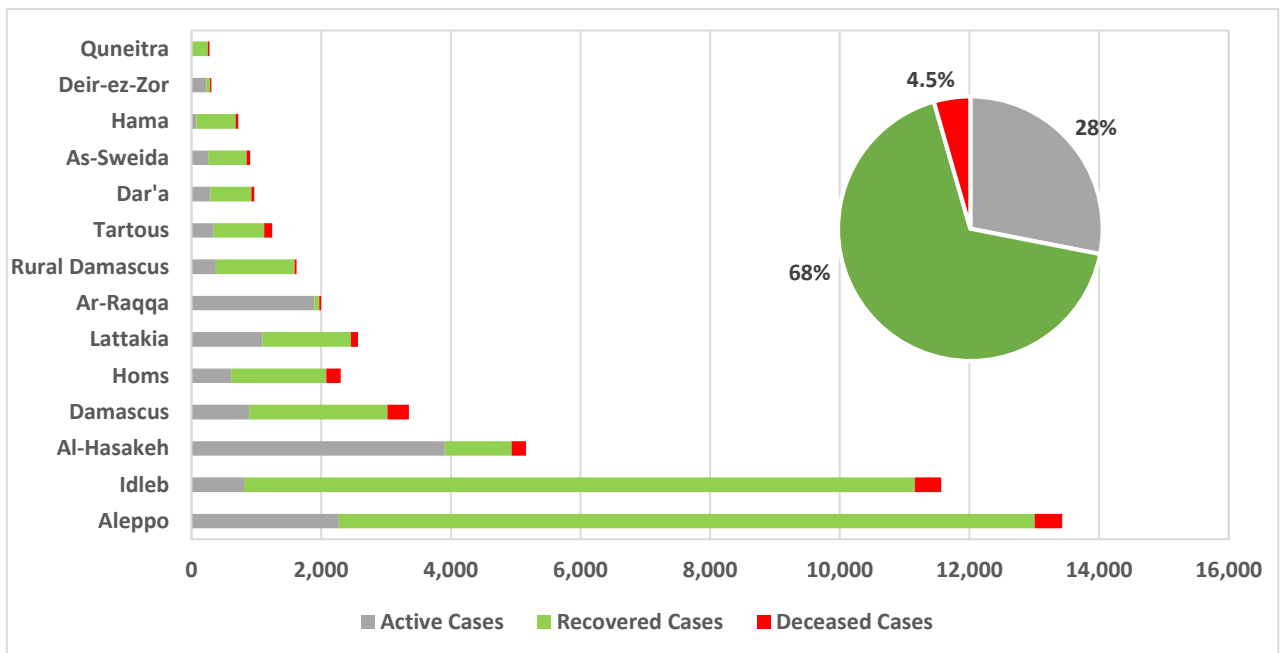
1.3. Distribution of COVID-19 Cases and Deaths at Whole of Syria Level

22 March 2020 – 13 March 2021



1.4. Distribution of COVID-19 Cases and Deaths by Governorate and Outcome

22 March 2020 – 13 March 2021



2. WHO Response

2.1. Health Sector Coordination

- Prepared and disseminated the following reports: *Health Sector COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan 2021* and *Health Sector Bi-Weekly Operational Update* (16-28 February 2021).
- Provided Inputs to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) for COVID-19 (*Humanitarian Update No 24*) and shared it with partners.
- Reviewed and provided inputs to 2021 draft HRP-Health Chapter and Inter-Sector Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), in consultation with health partners.
- Participated in Al-Hol weekly coordination meeting (4 March 2021).
- Participated in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) briefing on Data Responsibility in Humanitarian Action (8 March 2021).

- Conducted Health Sector Coordination meeting (9 March 2021) with more than 10 participants.
- Participated in “Understanding and Responding to Trafficking in Persons in Internal Displacement Crises” (10 March 2021).
- Participated in North Area Based Planning Workshop (14 March 2021).
- Participated in the Inter-Sector Coordination Meeting and provided an operational update including COVID-19.
- Participated in a webinar focusing on COVID-19 vaccination in humanitarian settings.
- Participated in the Global Health Council (GHC) Strategic Advisory Group call to finalize and discuss the agenda of the Global Partner’s Meeting.
- Participated in the Health Sector’s Reproductive Health sub-working group meeting.
- Participated in the Central Area Based Planning Workshop.

Sub-National Health Sector Activities: North-East Syria

- Prepared a situation report on Al-Hol fire incident.
- Prepared a document with health sector challenges in Al-Hol camp, to be submitted to Camp Administration.
- Provided regular updates on the response of health actors.
- Represented the Health Sector in Al-Hol camp coordination meeting arranged by the Protection Sector (2 and 9 March 2021).
- Facilitated an in-person discussion with Camp Administration and health sector partners working in Al-Hol camp on the issue of health referrals (3 March 2021) and prepared a concept note on this topic.
- Attended the monthly meeting of Whole of Syria partners (4 March 2021).
- Convened weekly Health Sector coordination meetings for Al-Hol camp (4 and 11 March 2021) and monthly Health Sector coordination meetings for Al-Areesha (7 March 2021), Mahmoudli (10 March 2021) and Al-Roj (14 March 2021) camps.
- Hosted the Inter-Hub meeting with NES Forum partners (9 March 2021).
- Organized contingency planning exercise on patient referrals in Al-Hol camp; which was attended by UN agencies, cross-border partners and local NGOs (11 March 2021).

2.2. Non-Communicable Diseases and Primary Health Care

- Facilitated the participation of MOH technical officers to attend the virtual webinar on “Prioritizing Tobacco Control Under the Thirteenth General Programme of Work (GPW13)” held by EMRO. Three MOH technical officers responsible for the Tobacco Control Program, Tobacco Surveillance and Occupational Health participated.
- Under a Russian fund, the rehabilitation process for Al-Sayda-Zainab PHC started. The centre is affiliated with Al-Quneitra DOH but is located in Damascus governorate.
- Within the progress on PHC Measurement and Improvement Initiative, MOH finalized data collection for phase I of the initiative in 6 governorates: Damascus, Homs, Al-Quneitra, Latakia, Aleppo and Deir-ez-Zor. Moreover, using the WHO Progression Model Tool, the PHC country profile will be developed and shared with the Regional Office.
- Carried out a follow-up mission to Homs governorate on 7-11 March. Objectives of the missions include (a) visiting the four WHO-rehabilitated public health centres located in northern rural Homs (Jaboreen, Kafer-Nan, Ter-Mala and Tal-Daw PHC) to assess the work quality after handling to MOH; (b) visiting two PHCs (Al-Quseir and Jab-Al-Jandali PHC) for which WHO Country Office (WCO) will provide lead isolation for the X-Ray rooms (the two X-Ray devices were donated by WCO in 2019); (c) conducting technical engineering assessment for health facilities to which MOH requested rehabilitation (Al-Bassel Hospital in Karm Al-Loz and Al-Qusair PHC).

- Delivered 8 792 treatment courses and lifesaving medicines including 4 100 insulin vials, 85 000 insulin syringes to MOH, Al-Hol isolation centre in Al-Hasakeh, NGOs (Al-Qutaifah Health Charity and Al-Sham Association) in Rural Damascus, Tartous Diabetes Centre in Tartous, DOH Homs, and DOH Aleppo.

2.3. Communicable Disease (CD)

- Supported by WHO, the national de-worming campaign started on 1 March 2020. The campaign will target 3 036 000 school-age children from all governorates. Chewable tablets of mebendazole (500 mg) were donated by the headquarters. This year the national campaign has reached all governorates, including Idleb.
- Due to the increase of lice in school-children, WHO distributed 150 000 anti-lice lotions to School Health Directorates in all governorates.

2.4. Laboratories

- Within a plan to strengthen the capacity of the COVID-19 laboratories, WHO delivered 3 new PCR machines with a capacity of 96 tests per run. Two PCR machines were delivered to Tartous and Rural Damascus; while the third, which is in favour of As-Sweida, has been delivered centrally to MoH until the laboratory is established.
- By the beginning of March, WHO has completed the support of the previous 6 laboratories with 10 biosafety cabinets (2 Aleppo, 2 Rural Damascus, 1 Homs, 1 Lattakia, 1 Qamishli hospital, 3 CPHL).
- For laboratory training on COVID-19 testing, molecular biology testing, biosafety and biosecurity procedures; during the second week of March, WHO has supported the third training in 2021. This training targeted 6 laboratory technicians from Al-Quneitra, while the previous 2 training targeting 12 laboratory technicians from public health laboratories in Lattakia and Hama.
- As of 6 March 2021, 103 566 tests were conducted at public health laboratories, with a daily average of 395 tests.

2.5. Trauma

- To ensure a timely and appropriate response at public hospitals for emergency cases, including COVID-19, more than 9 400 treatments of life-saving medicines for trauma cases as well as burn kits for patients in-need were delivered to health partners in Aleppo, Damascus, Al-Hasakeh and Homs.
- To ensure the provision of physical therapy services to affected patients, in and around Homs city, the needed physiotherapy equipment was provided to the WHO-rehabilitated DOH centre in Homs (Jib Al Jandali)
- Trained 75 health workers (prosthetics and orthotics technicians, physiotherapists, and physiatrists) from Damascus and Rural Damascus, at the MOH centre of Prosthetics and Rehabilitation, on *“Rehabilitation of Patients with Upper Limb Amputation”*, *“Development of Intellectual Skills for Children with Cerebral Palsy”* and *“Manufacturing of Hip-Knee-Ankle-Foot Orthoses (HKAFOs)”*.
- Trained 75 health workers from Damascus and Rural Damascus on *“Immediate Life Support and Ventilator Management”*, *“Hospital Major Incident Medical Management and Support”*, and *“Managing the Emergency Plan”* to enhance their capacities in responding effectively to emergencies in the country.
- Conducted a teleconference with the Violence and Injury Prevention (VIP) advisor at the regional office to discuss the way forward regarding Syria Road Safety and Roadmap.

2.6. Mental Health

- Closely coordinated with UNHCR, UNICEF, UNMAS, AAH, DORCAS, OXFAM, MEDAIR, UNDP, GOPA, SSSD on different MHPSS activities. These activities include capacity building, mhGAP operational team, creating task-forces for each area of mental health (from technical and managerial personnel to formulated long term strategic framework such as psychotherapy law, advocacy, and policy updating).

- To scale up the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) integrated services at the community level, WHO followed up with the Mental Health (MH) Directorate at MoH and the Healthy Villages Programme to develop the 2021 MH project focusing on three areas: mental health for the elderly, mental health for mother and child, and psychological counselling to quit smoking. Discussions were held to add one psychotropic medication (Bupropion) to the Essential Medicines List (EML) to support smoking cessation.
- In partnership with three non-state actors (NSA), the Mental health services delivered at 28 locations across the country reached 10 470 during January and February 2021.
- Disseminated new guidelines for MHPSS-COVID-19 through MHPSS technical working groups.
- Conducted 11 capacity-building workshops with MoE, targeting School Health Workers and OXFAM Community volunteers. Training programmes include “The Mental Health GAP (mhGAP) programme”, “Psychological First Aid” and “Basic Psychosocial Skills for COVID-19 Responders”.
- Actively participated in the Global Health Cluster MHPSS Clinic, supported by the WHO Mental Health Department at Headquarters. Presented the Syrian experience during the last year as well as the way forward.
- Currently finalizing the training agenda for selected NGO community workers participating in the “My hero is you” campaign under the RCCE pillar.
- Received a new psychotropic shipment, the distribution plan is in place targeting partners in emergency areas.



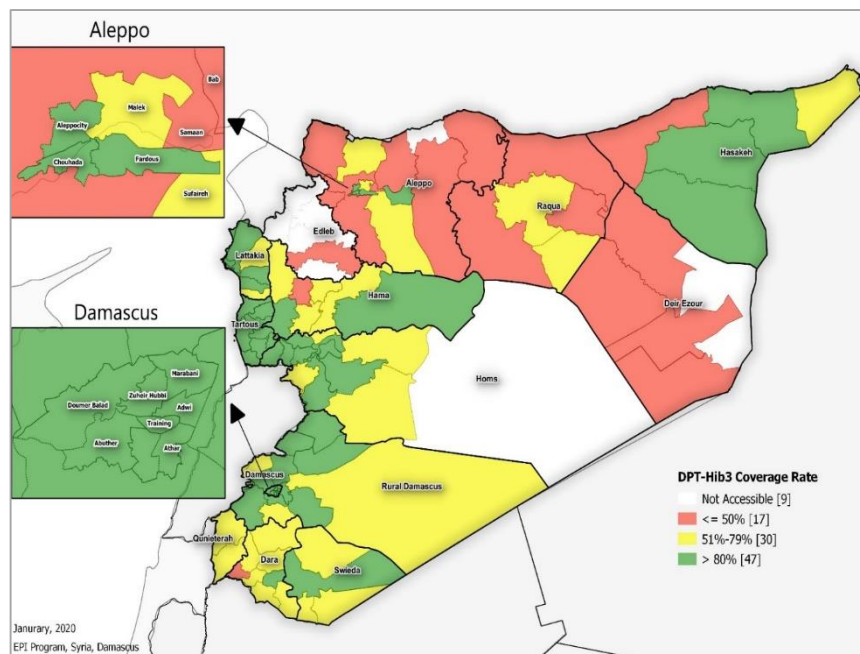
Capacity Building workshop targeting school health workers on psychological first aid and basic psychosocial skills for COVID-19 responders.

2.7. Tuberculosis (TB) / HIV

- Two TB mobile clinics provided health services in both Aleppo and Rural Damascus governorates, including conducting 35 awareness-raising sessions on TB for 870 beneficiaries. 84 TB suspected cases were tested, in which 4 cases were confirmed positive.
- Followed-up on routine activities for TB & AIDS programmes including conducting field supervisory visits to the TB centre in Dara’ governorate and the AIDS centre in Lattakia governorate, leading two educational sessions for youth on AIDS, and shipping suspected samples to the TB National Reference Lab in Damascus.
- On the occasion of World Tuberculosis Day, followed-up on the preparations of the event which will take place in Aleppo governorate on 24 March 2021.
- Within the Al-Sham NGO continued outreach activities for HIV high-risk groups; 1 939 beneficiaries were targeted through 216 awareness-raising sessions; 709 volunteers were tested for HIV and 2 positive cases were reported.
- The Green Light Committee meeting for Drug-Resistant TB (DR-TB) in Syria was organized virtually between 28 February and 5 March 2021. Participants included the National TB Programme team as well as partners including International Organization for Migration (IOM), WHO Headquarters, WHO Eastern-Mediterranean Regional Office, and WHO Country Office, and a WHO consultant. The meeting which was held for five days aimed at; (a) reviewing the status of the DR-TB programme in Syria, (b) advising on concrete actions to be taken by the National TB Programme and partners to ensure rapid expansion and continuity of quality TB and DR-TB services in the context of COVID-19, following the latest WHO guidance, (c) providing recommendations to improve the management of drug-resistant TB programme.

2.8. Immunization

- To enhance routine immunization in Syria in 2021, WHO supported two planning workshops for the Extended Program of Immunization (EPI) managers in governorates to refine the plans which included high-risk areas in NES. Special plans have been set for the Eastern-Euphrates side (Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor).
- To enhance quality-surveillance indicators for early detection and timely response to outbreaks, WHO supported a training-of-trainers for surveillance officers on vaccine-preventable diseases. Later workshops were conducted at the governorate level to ensure the readiness of surveillance teams.
- To sensitize on early reporting of Vaccine-Preventable Disease (VPD) cases to local health authorities, WHO conducted advocacy training at the central MoH level on VPD surveillance for school-health officers, SARC health officers, as well as partners from the private sector.
- To ensure laboratory confirmation as well as timely identification of cases of measles, the Measles Review Committee evaluated the current situation of the program as well as its readiness.
- Procured supplies for the national Rotavirus laboratory to revive the surveillance system in Syria.



Map of Syria showing DPT-Hib3 vaccine coverage rates

Polio Activities

- Conducted a meeting for the Polio National Certification Committee to finalize the certification document for Polio in Syria; the committee reviewed all vaccination activities conducted in 2020 as well as the capacity improvement to detect cases, should they occur, through a quality surveillance system and a WHO-accredited laboratory.
- Conducted Polio National Immunization Days (NID) campaign (7-11 March 2021) in all governorates, with a special emphasis on high-risk areas in NES, including camps and nomads. The campaign targeted 2.8 million under-5 children with two drops of bOPV through 1 129 vaccination sites and 2 315 mobile teams. To implement the campaign; MOH deployed over 9 000 health workers, while WHO provided the required logistic support to ensure a smooth implementation through; training health workers and supervisors, delivering vaccines inside Syria and transporting the mobile vaccination teams.



Supporting the Polio National Immunization Days (NID) Campaign, Damascus

- Procured supplies for the national Polio laboratory including Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) case testing and environmental sampling.
- WHO supported the following activities:
 - Training of Trainers for EPI officers on surveillance.
 - Quarterly workshop for AFP surveillance conducted in hospitals selected by MOH to follow up on AFP cases.
 - The meeting of the Polio committee of national experts to follow up on the AFP cases.
 - The meeting of the National Certification Committee (NCC) to develop the national polio certification report for 2020.
 - A seminar on surveillance at the MOE School Health Department.

2.9. Environmental Health

- Monitored the water quality to check chemical and biological contamination from different water sources; water networks, ground wells, reservoirs, water tanks and jerry cans; and provided culture tests to identify pathogens.
- Conducted (a) 42 tests in eight villages in Rural Aleppo (Northern and Southern parts); 90 tests in eight districts in Rural Damascus; (b) 590 tests in NES (Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa, and Deir-ez-Zor), including eight IDPs camps and collective shelters. Among the aforementioned, 18 water sources in Rural Aleppo and 38 water sources in Rural Aleppo were found to be biologically contaminated and were consequently sterilized.
- Working on delivering a healthcare-waste-transport vehicle to Hama, to ensure safe management of healthcare waste.

2.10. Points of Entry

- Trained 40 officials from Directorates of Health (DoH) of Aleppo, Deir-ez-Zor, Al-Hasakeh, Hama, Homs and Al-Quneitra who are at the forefront of PoE response. The training took place through two WHO-supported workshops (9- 11 and 13-15 March 2021) at MoH premises and focused on enhancing the preparedness and response capacity at POE, specifically IPC measures and risk communication based on the IAR recommendations conducted last December; as well as updating the COVID-19 case definition.
- MOH, supported by WHO, conducted a field visit to Homs to review the capacity at three ground-crossing PoE; Jousiya, Jisr Al-Qamar, and Dabousiya (6 and 7 March 2021).
- Working on equipping the medical point at Al-Boukamal ground-crossing with Iraq with medical devices and furniture to provide health services to travellers. This medical point is currently under construction by DoH Deir-ez-Zor
- Working on establishing a medical point at a ground-crossing in Homs.

2.11. Nutrition

- Conducted the annual meeting with the focal points at MOH nutrition department to review the 2020 results and challenges as well as to plan for 2021.
- Data collected in January 2021 showed the following:
 - Stabilization centres: 102 patients were admitted into 25 stabilization centres, where the highest number was 18 admissions in Aleppo.
 - Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) program: 77 006 benefited from 356 health centres, where 15 565 received special care and 262 were referred to hospitals.
 - Neonatal Resuscitation programme: 6 998 deliveries were registered in 46 hospitals at 12 governorates.

2.12. Information Products and Related Activities

- HeRAMS Annual Report of 2020 for public hospitals in Syria
- HeRAMS Annual Report 2020 for SARC (Syrian Arab Red Crescent) health centres in Syria
- (Health Sector & WHO) 4Ws snapshots across Syria for January 2021
- Updated COVID-19 Dynamic Infographic Dashboard for Syria
- Updated the online item tracking system for COVID-19 in Syria
- Health Sector Severity scale and People-in-Need (PiN) 2021 at WoS level
- Reported on EMRO KPIs
- Provided key information on health facilities based on HeRAMS
- Updated Maps for health sector interventions

2.13. External Relations and Communication

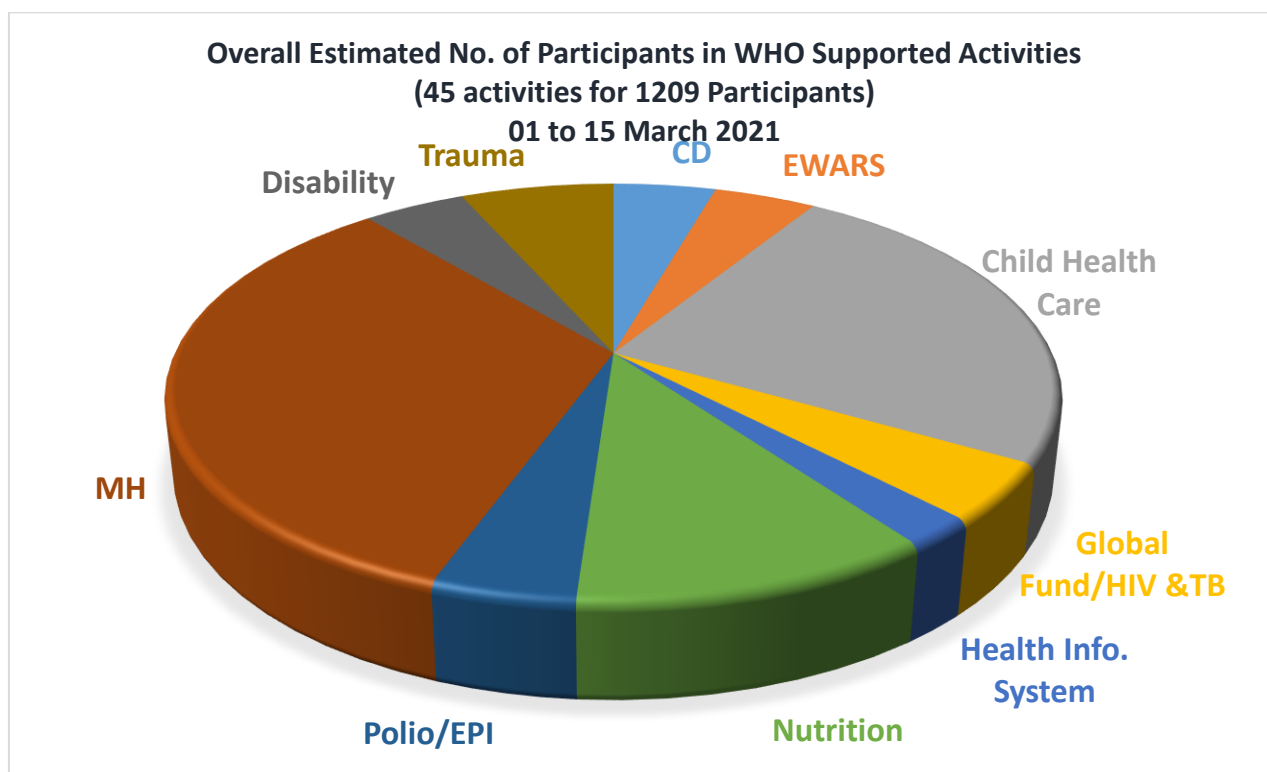
- WHO and UNICEF are working in close cooperation with MOH to develop the COVID-19 vaccination media campaign, which includes capacity building workshops for journalists, health educators and community influencers. It also entails the development of the full media package (TV and radio spots, social media messages, billboards, posters, flyers, etc.) to be implemented at the national level.
- WHO conducted a social media campaign to document and raise awareness on the national polio vaccination campaign that took place on 7-11 March 2021 for all children of Syria under the age of 5.
- WHO-Syria's digital and social media channels are regularly updated with new information on COVID-19 and other public health resources. COVID-19 Vaccination brief was updated on 1 March.
- WHO country office launched the social media campaign on the International Women's Day.
- WHO country office followed up closely with WHO Regional and Headquarter offices concerning the development of the 10th anniversary Syria crisis advocacy materials, key messages and social media campaign. A series of social media post cards depicting the resilience of Syrian people and their urgent medical needs were launched on 14 March.
- WHO-Syria developed training materials as part of the Solidarity Initiative focusing on psycho-social support to parents, caregivers and children through 'My Hero is You' colouring book. It also followed up closely with NGOs on all related preparations.

2.14. Community Engagement (NGOs)

- Through sub-contracting with Al-Hikma Hospital, WHO strengthened lifesaving and life-sustaining health care services in NES. The number of recipients of trauma care services was 105, while the number of beneficiaries from advanced surgical interventions was 31, mainly from IDPs camps and informal settlements.
- Provided medication and performed primary health care services including medical consultations on Child Health, Reproductive Health, and Chronic Diseases. Health service provision in Damascus was boosted through sub-contracting "Nour Foundation for Relief and Development" where 1 522 health services were provided.
- Conducted awareness-raising sessions on HIV to at-risk population; 802 benefited through the mobile teams in 12 governorates, while 1 137 people received Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) as part of the awareness-raising sessions. Al-Sham Association for Health was sub-contracted to perform psychosocial and health support.

2.15. Pharmacy

- Facilitated the annual national meeting to review and update the medicinal requirements as well as medical equipment to deliver basic and essential health services to all Syrian. Key stakeholders from



2.18. Aleppo Sub-Office

- The Polio National Campaign was launched targeting 444 724 under-5 children in Aleppo governorate (7-11 March 2021)
- Conducted a field assessment for mentally- and neurologically-ill patients (people with epilepsy and mental retardation) as a response to the reported cases in the eastern side of Rural Aleppo. As outcomes were identified, WHO supported in-kind MHPSS donations to Yaden Bi Yad Non-State Actor (NSA), an NGO specialized in trauma and people with special needs.
- Al-Sham NGO continued its outreach activities for HIV high-risk groups; 67 beneficiaries were targeted through 7 awareness-raising sessions, during which 52 volunteers were tested for HIV and 1 positive case was confirmed.
- Delivered 5 shipments of five tons which will provide 23 217 medical treatments.
- Currently preparing for the upcoming workshop with MoE / health directorate targeting 25 school health workers on psychological first-aid.
- Two grant agreements with Non-State Actors (NSA) in Aleppo are queued for approval from the Ministry of Local Affairs and Labour, while the third is awaiting the Regional Office's approval.

2.19. Homs Sub-Office

- While the national polio vaccination campaign targeted 172 500 under-5 children in Homs, the total number of vaccinated children reached 182 682. In Hama, while the targeted number was 274 589, the total number of vaccinated children reached 251 600.
- In line with Al-Sham NGO health project "Prevention and promotion for health and mental health on HIV to the most at-risk population in Syria", supported by WHO; the two teams, formed in Homs and Hama, started an activity of "Raising awareness among the most at-risk population" for prisoners in both governorates. Six sessions were completed with a total number of beneficiaries of 245 people.

Al-Rukban Returnees

- The total number of people who left Al-Rukban, transiting through Homs shelters, remains at 19 977 people, of whom 329 people left Al-Rukban supported by UN/SARC.
- On 15 February, all six males left Abdul Rahman Al-Shatter shelter towards areas of their choice, and the shelter is reportedly vacant.

2.20. Lattakia Sub-Office

- The national Polio vaccination campaign targeted 120 500 under-5 children in Lattakia and 108 047 in Tartous. The campaign in both governorates was accomplished through 1 222 health workers; 435 of whom were working with mobile teams
- Conducted a multi-sectoral field assessment visit to isolation and quarantine facilities, during the RC/HC visit to Lattakia and Tartous, to reflect on the health sector response in the coastal areas as well as the inter-agency joined efforts to support the health system within the context of COVID-19.
- Conducted assessment visits to isolation facility at Al-Haffeh Hospital (which is undergoing rehabilitation work) to assess the hospital's infrastructure and health needs.
- To assess the hospital's needs, its triage system and its overall COVID-19 preparedness plan; technical officers from Damascus joined by the Deputy Minister of Higher Education conducted a field assessment visit to Tishreen Hospital in Lattakia.
- Under the neonatal resuscitation program, a workshop was supported in Tishreen Hospital targeting 25 doctors.
- Supported mental health training for 25 health educators and nurses from the School Health Directorate.



Polio Immunization campaign in Lattakia governorate



WHO team conducting assessment visit to Tishreen Hospital in Lattakia governorate

2.21. Al-Qamishli Sub-Office / NES Response

- In response to the fire incident that took place on 27 February 2021 in Al-Hol camp and resulted in 35 affected cases, WHO provided the following:
 - Urgent external referral for the most critical cases to Al-Hikmeh Hospital.
 - Coordination with health partners on the situation and needs.
 - On 1 March 2021, a WHO team conducted a field mission to Al-Hasakeh National Hospital where the preliminary 27 cases were referred. The mission aimed at evaluating the cases in terms of Total Body Surface Area (TBSA), degree and prognosis, and to assess the pharmaceutical and supply needs.
 - In parallel, WHO dispatched an urgent donation to Al-Hasakeh National Hospital (7 TESK 2019 module 1B set, renewables, dressing material, burns aids, PPE, medical supplies)

External referral outside the camp to Al-Hasakeh City					In Camp	
Dead	Active				Discharged	
	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Critical		
10	5	1	4	1	6	8

- On 4 March 2021, WHO conducted a field mission to attend a meeting with Al-Hol camp management, camp administration and health partners to discuss the referral mechanism in the camp.
- From 7 to 11 March 2021, the Directorate of Health in Al-Hasakeh launched the national Polio vaccination campaign, in cooperation with WHO & UNICEF, targeting more than 300 000 under-5 children in Al-Hasakeh governorate including 20 000 children at IDP camps and shelters.
- On 9 March 2021, a WHO team conducted a mission to Al-Hasakeh city and Al-Hol camp, where the team:
 - met with the Governor of Al-Hasakeh and discussed the overall health situation and the way forward to better support the affected population.
 - met with the Director of Health in Al-Hasakeh; discussions revolved around technical issues related to the provision of supplies and the way forward to enhance cooperation and to overcome challenges.
 - visited Al-Hol camp, to follow up on the current and on-hold activities (COVID Treatment Facility and 4 static medical points) as well as to follow up on the polio vaccination campaign in the camp.
- On 10 & 11 March 2021, WHO donated mebendazole tablets (500 mg) to the health partners in Al-Hol camps (KRC, MSJM, EPDC, Yamama, SARC, & MSF) as a response to the high prevalence of Helminthiasis cases (intestinal worms) in Al-Hol and Al-Areesha camps, in addition to distributing awareness messages to health partners.
- Monitored the drinking water quality through regular visits to 8 camps and 30 collective shelters. 1 168 samples were tested, of which 11.5% were contaminated on the jerry cans level. Also, 18 boreholes were tested and were not contaminated.
- The table below shows the number of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) cases



Polio Immunization campaign in Al-Hol camp



Visit to the COVID-19 treatment facility in Al-Hol Camp

	New Admissions	Recoveries	Active Cases
Al-Hikmah	9	8	3
Al-Tabqa National Hospital	2	1	2

2.22. Deir-Ez-Zor Sub-Office

- Diarrheal diseases are increasing and form a high percentage of the total morbidity (more than 50%) and are related to mortality as well. It is the third cause of mortality among infants aged 1 to 11 months (15.6%) after congenital malformation and pneumonia.
- Because water stations are not functioning or at a low-operation capacity, people are still using raw water from the river either in many areas. Therefore:
 - WHO conducted several coordinating meetings with the Directorate of Local Administration and Environment in Deir-ez-Zor to plan a project on monitoring of water quality to check for contamination. Water samples will be collected from the tanks of schools (344 schools), 46 SARC tanks, 91 water tanks, and 273 tanks randomly selected across the governorate communities in government-controlled areas over 12 Months. WHO will support the operational costs in addition to the equipment and lab materials. This project will cover the Western Euphrates.

- The National Polio campaign was launched on Sunday, 7 March 2021, in the presence of the Health Director and Deir-ez-Zor Governor. The campaign targeted 288 000 under-5 children. 124 healthcare workers in 38 primary health centres, in addition to 780 mobile healthcare workers were involved in the campaign.
- To strengthen the detection capacity and management of COVID-19 suspect travellers, a coordination meeting with DoH was held to plan for supporting the medical point of Al-Boukamal PoE, which will include providing medical equipment, furniture and ICT equipment.
- Conducted a coordination meeting with the Head of Leishmaniosis Program at DoH to plan for an awareness-raising campaign, distribute mosquito nets, and conduct home spraying in most Cutaneous-Leishmaniosis-affected communities in Deir-ez-Zor governorate.



Polio Immunization Campaign in Deir-ez-Zor governorate

2.23. North-West Syria Response

- Till epi-week 09, out of 242 sentinel sites (Aleppo 133, Idlib 109), 241 (Aleppo 133, Idlib 108), reported on the 13 syndromes / diseases under Early Warning Alert and Response Network (EWARN) which constitutes 99.6% completeness and 95% timeliness of reporting (compared to 95% in previous week of 2021).
- The number of beneficiaries who visited all 3 TB centers supported by WHO in northwestern Syria (NWS) during the period of March 1-15, 2021 were 440 people. During this period there were 15 people diagnosed with TB; 87 samples were sent for GeneXpert testing to Antakya aiming to confirm patients with TB resistance cases; 20 out of this number were confirmed as positive tests and 1 patient was diagnosed as MDR/RR-TB (Multidrug Resistant TB) case. 6 people out of 16 diagnosed with MDR-TB started their treatment under the supervision of Gaziantep University.
- A total of 21 215 confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been reported (9 653 from Aleppo and 11 562 from Idlib governorates) as of 13 March 2021. Till that date, 18 932 (89.2%) cases developed mild symptoms, 1 229 developed moderate/severe symptoms, and 1 054 cases were asymptomatic.
- The total number of COVID-19 associated deaths is 637 as of 13 March 2021, with 0 new death reported in the past 24 hours. (*Case Fatality Ratio: 3.0%*).
- WHO continues supporting 40 PHCs and mobile teams aiming to provide essential package of health care services, of which 18 are in Idlib and West Aleppo, 9 in North Aleppo Azaz, and 13 in Afrin (21 of them through integrated service delivery networks).
- NWS is allocated 240 000 doses of the AstraZeneca AZD1222 vaccine through May 2021; month of June is not included in this amount, and this is the main reason for the number being smaller than the *indicative* allocation amount previously communicated (336 000).
- Attacks reported, as per media monitoring, in the vicinity of the village of Al-Fateira in Jabal Al-Zawiya, south of Idlib, and the village of Arhab in the western countryside of Aleppo in NWS. One injury was reported between 8 and 14 March 2021.



Risk communication activities in North West Syria

- Conducted 2 training on Supply Chain Management in Afrin to train 21 pharmacists working in the health facilities in Afrin Network.
- The total number of launched EPI centres is 93 in North West Syria (NWS), all of them are working this week (100%). The total number of working teams is 134 out of 134 teams (100%) conducted 638 sessions during last week with average of 4.8 sessions per team, the estimated under 1-year children monthly targets is 13 578.
- Till epi-week 8 in 2021; Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) rate is 7.6 in northern Syria, 5.3 and 6.5 in Idlib and Aleppo respectively, while the overall stool adequacy rate was 93% in Northern Syria, the AFP surveillance network includes 28 District level officers (DLOs), 197 field level officers (FLOs) and 490 sentinel sites. The estimated number of under 15-year population is 3.8 million in Gaziantep hub accessible areas of northern Syria that is reached through AFP surveillance network managed by WHO partner EWARIN; 386 AFP cases were reported during the year 2020 up till epi-week 52, 44 AFP cases were reported during the year 2021 up till epi-week 8.



QATMA camp in Northwest Syria

3. Vaccine Updates

- For COVID-19 vaccine updates, please visit: [Update on COVID-19 Vaccination in Syria](#)

4. Useful Links

- [Syria Interactive Dashboards](#)
- [Syria Page In Health Cluster Site](#)
- [Syria Page In EMRO Site](#)
- [EMRO Dashboard](#)
- [COVID-19 Situation In EMRO Region Reports](#)
- [Latest Global WHO Weekly Update On COVID-19](#)
- [WHO COVID-19 Country And Technical Guidance](#)
- [United Nations Office For The Coordination Of Humanitarian Affairs](#)

5. Contact Us

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جائحة كوفيد-19 COVID-19 Pandemic



Wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub

اغسل يديك بانتظام بالماء والصابون أو بمطهر يحتوي على الكحول



Cough or sneeze into your bended arm or use disposable tissue

عند السعال أو العطس احم وجهك بنقي ذراعك أو استخدم منديل آتادي الاستعمال



If you have symptoms of fever & cough, self-isolate yourself & quickly seek medical care if you have trouble breathing

إذا ظهرت عليك أعراض الحمى والسعال، بادر بعزل نفسك، وسارع بالتماس الرعاية الطبية إذا شعرت بصعوبة في التنفس



World Health Organization
Eastern Mediterranean

For more information: للمزيد من المعلومات
www.emro.who.int/COVID19