

## Major Developments in North-West Syria

Over 2.8 million IDPs are living in north-west Syria, including 960,000 people who have been newly displaced since December as a consequence of the latest escalation in conflict.

Shelter options are extremely limited and many IDPs resort to inadequate types of shelter. According to HNAP, 44% of IDPs use tents as shelter, around 9% are staying in substandard shelter, most of which are unfinished buildings; and 3% of IDPs have found public buildings, like schools, to be the only shelter option, thereby disrupting the provision of public services.

## Response

Shelter/Non-Food Item (SNFI) Cluster members continue to actively respond to the needs of the newly displaced population as well as protracted IDPs in north-west Syria. **Around 247,000 individuals, both IDPs and host community members, were assisted with NFI and/or shelter in April.** In coordination with the Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster, SNFI Cluster members are trying to identify more land to extend the perimeter of existing camps.

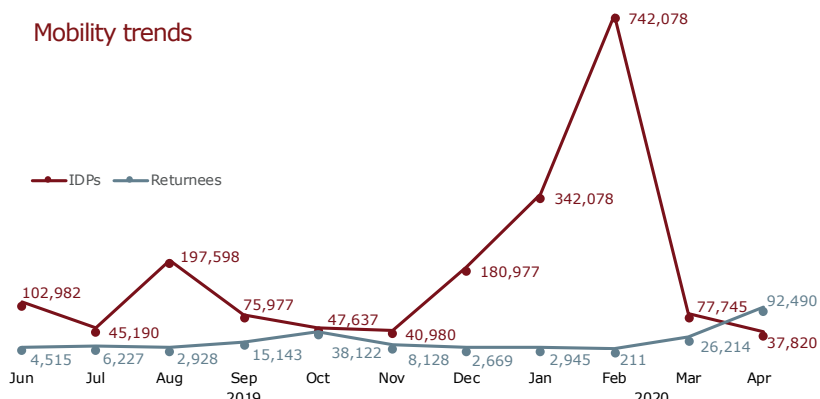
In April, more than 135,000 individuals received NFI kits, which contain kitchen sets, mattresses and blankets, as well as winter items. Shelter needs of around 110,000 people were addressed with activities including emergency and/or seasonal shelter assistance and shelter rehabilitation. Of those, more than 57,000 individuals were assisted with the provision of emergency shelter, which includes family tents or shelter kits.

The SNFI Cluster is actively coordinating with the Health and WASH Clusters to **respond to the needs of the IDP population in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.** SNFI aims to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 during distributions, to improve the conditions of inadequate shelters and decongest overcrowded collective shelters. The SNFI Cluster has also developed and widely shared its recommendations to mitigate the risks related to the COVID-19 outbreak for shelter and NFI activities. The recommendations have been updated and translated into Arabic.

The SNFI Cluster, together with HNAP, have conducted an [assessment on the Collective Shelter Situation in NWS](#). The results of this report indicate that **none of the assessed collective shelters to-date achieve the minimum emergency standards across all relevant sectors.** Few collective shelters provide suitable shelter solutions for their inhabitants and the most prevalent issues overall were **overcrowding and WASH.**

Profiles on the assessed collective shelters have also been developed and partners are encouraged to conduct their own assessment before intervening. Notably, some partner organisations have already planned to conduct shelter rehabilitation. Moving forward, the new data collection will begin in the first week of June, in other collective shelters that weren't identified in the first round; including in Aghtrin, Badama, Harim, Jandairis, Maaret Tamsrin, and Qourqeena sub-districts.

### Mobility trends



Graph: Number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in NWS and returnees from within Syria for the past 9 months, as reported by the Humanitarian Needs Assessment Program (HNAP) in April 2020.

## Shelter Response

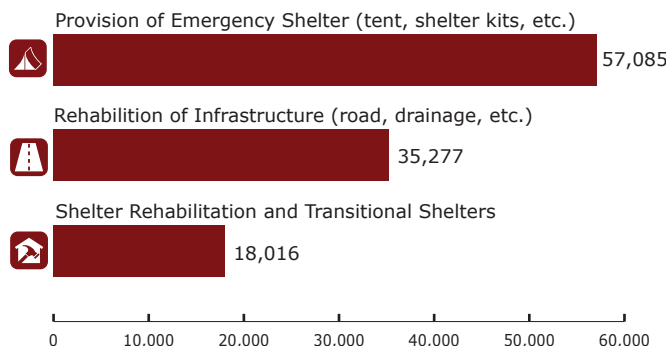


**110,378** people reached in April

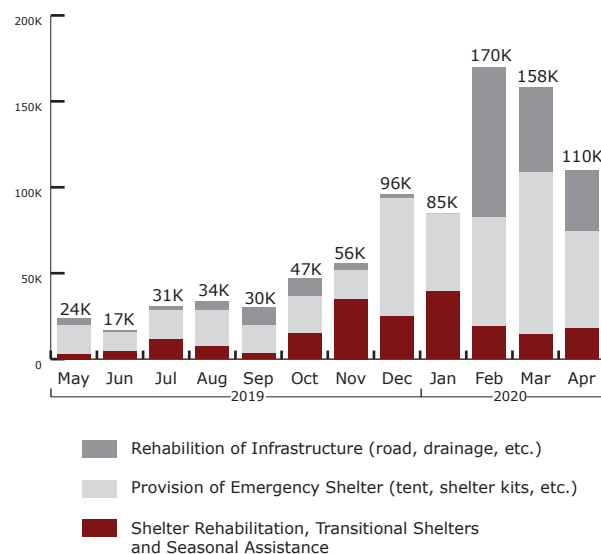
**538,031** people reached in 2020

538,031 people were reached in 2020 with rehabilitation of infrastructure; provision of emergency shelter; shelter rehabilitation, transitional shelters and seasonal assistance.

### People reached in April by sub-activity



### People reached in the past 12 months by activity



## NFI Response

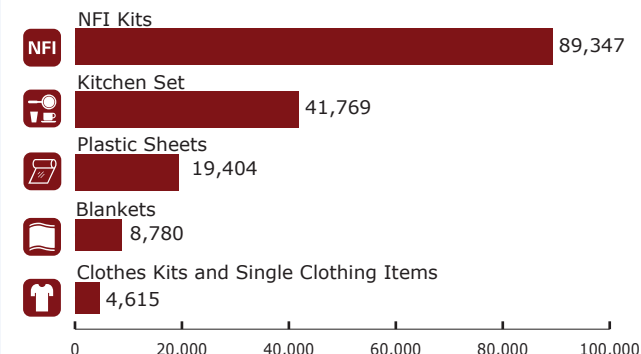


**136,796** people reached in April

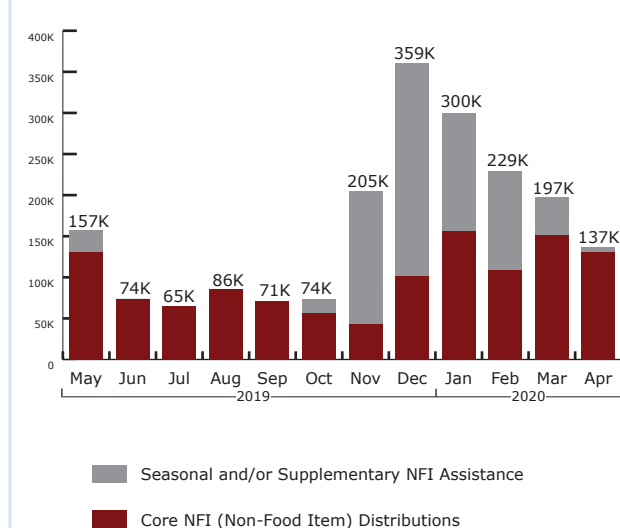
**861,904** people reached in 2020

861,904 people were reached in 2020 with seasonal and/or supplementary NFI assistance, and core NFI distributions

### People reached in April by modality (top 5 modalities)



### People reached in the past 12 months by activity



**Difficulties in finding a place to rent**

Whilst the availability of houses and apartments for rent has improved over the past month, IDPs reported that the spike in the market has meant that many cannot afford rent. For instance, the average rent in Dana sub-district stood at 125 USD per month, with most property owners requesting two or three months' rent in advance. Large deposits are also being demanded by landlords. As a result, many have to rent sub-standard and unfinished buildings which are cheaper. Several different families have also been sharing one apartment. In response, landlords have introduced clauses into lease agreements prohibiting tenants from accommodating additional people, and threatening eviction for breaches.

**Evictions from collective centres**

The recent collective center assessment conducted by HNAP and the SNFI Cluster shows that 16,428 IDPs were forcibly evicted from 12 collective shelters to camps or tents. Up to 7,549 IDPs living in two collective shelters decided to leave the centers in order to search for better access to humanitarian assistance. A further 17 collective shelters are at risk of eviction. This would impact a total of 651 households (3,332 IDPs).

Reasons for eviction included returning the building to its pre-conflict use, as in the case of 13 collective shelters.

Evictions impact the most vulnerable – in this case, the evictions involve over 130 pregnant and lactating women; 100 women and men with disabilities; and 557 female-headed households. In times of a global pandemic when shelter is even more vital, these evictions have a severe impact on the most vulnerable.

Link to the collective center assessment:  
<https://www.sheltercluster.org/x-border-operation-turkey-hub/documents/collective-shelter-conditions-nw-syria>

**Do No Harm principle**

While humanitarian organisations strive to respond to the increasing needs of the IDPs in north-west Syria, this can inadvertently result in IDPs being evicted. As humanitarian organisations scale up and rent new premises, they cause a market distortion because they are able to pay more than IDPs.

Reducing the risk of harm for conflict-affected populations is a protection component of humanitarian response. Humanitarian programmes should not create insecurity or increase the risk of eviction. Humanitarian organisations should conduct due diligence before renting property to ensure that no one is evicted as a result and that they are not paying above-market prices.

**Establishment of new IDP settlements and improvement of self-established settlements**



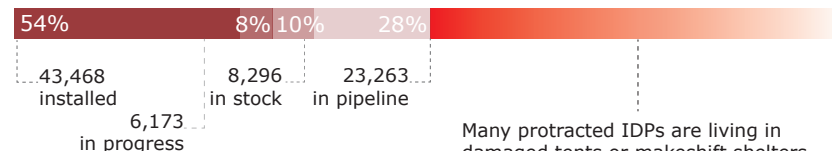
Shelter/NFI Cluster members are currently improving IDP settlements and providing shelter for 435,000 people who have been displaced recently.

Image Credit: SAED Charity

**Tents**

**434,866**  
people targeted

**81,200**  
tents planned for



Many protracted IDPs are living in damaged tents or makeshift shelters. Funding is required to replace or upgrade them. The SNFI Cluster is coordinating with HNAP to estimate the number of protracted IDPs who need shelter support in camps.

**NFI Kits**

**873,850**  
people targeted

**174,770**  
household NFI kits required



**Winterization**

**824,152**  
people reached with winter assistance

