SYRIA

Displacement associated with Conflict and Violence

Figure Analysis – GRID 2020

CONTEXT

Several significant offensives took place in Syria in 2019. All of them displaced hundreds of thousands of people, many of them already living in displacement. At the beginning of the year, Deir ez Zor governorate was affected by clashes between the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and the Islamic State in Iraq and Levant (ISIL) in Hajjin and Baghouz, which were the last pockets held by ISIL in Syria. The clashes forced around 125,000 from their homes in January and February and put immense pressure on infrastructure in Al Hol camp in Al Hasakeh, where more than half of the displaced arrived.

Ongoing displacement was also reported in the border areas between Idlib and Hama where the de-escalation zone was established in 2018. The increasing shelling along the unsuccessful de-escalation zone forced more than 100,000 people to flee between January and April. The violence rapidly escalated in May, and an estimated 630,000 displacements were recorded between May and August 2019. Idlib is subject to a complex series of ceasefire deals negotiated between Russia and Iran, which support the Syrian president, Bashar al-Assad, and Turkey, which backs non-state armed groups. The offensive escalated again In December when about 300,000 people were displaced in Idlib.

On 8 October, after US forces announced a withdrawal from Syria, the Turkish army passed through several border crossings to northern Syria. Its aim was to establish a safe zone 30 kilometres deep in Syrian territory to resettle Syrian refugees living in Turkey. The offensive, widely condemned, caused more than 202,000 new displacements from Kurdish border towns in just over two weeks.

New displacements that occurred in 2019	Total number of IDPs as of 31 December 2019 *(Year figure was last updated: 2019)*	Partial Solutions or Unverified Conditions		
		Number of IDPs who have made partial progress towards a durable solution*		Number of IDPs whose progress towards durable solutions cannot be verified**
		Flows *(1 January – 31 December 2019)*	Stocks *(Year figure was last updated: 2019*	Flows *(1 January – 31 December 2019*
1,847,000	6,495,000	342,000	1,431,000	-

*This corresponds to the number of IDPs whom our data providers have identified as having returned, resettled or locally integrated in 2019 and for whom the evidence obtained by IDMC suggests that progress toward durable solutions is only partial given their living conditions. In a few instances, this number may refer to movements having taken place in 2019 (flows) rather than a total number of people (stock).

**This corresponds to the number of IDPs whom our data providers have identified as having returned, resettled or locally integrated in 2019 but for whom there is no available evidence to corroborate progress toward durable solutions. In a few instances, this number may refer to movements having taken place in 2019 (flows) rather than a total number of people (stock).

NEW DISPLACEMENTS THAT OCCURRED IN 2019

This corresponds to new instances of internal displacement that occurred in 2019.

IDMC figure and rationale

IDMC used IDP Task Force (IDP TF) data. In cases where the IDP TF used Humanitarian Needs Assessment Programme (HNAP) data, we added the number of people affected by shelter damage in the same location, excluding people who remained in their damaged house. Where IDP TF used other data than HNAP, no further calculation was done because this data comes from various sources and is verified. Data from the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster, for example, would already include people displaced in the same location.

Sources and methodologies

HNAP assessments are based on direct observations in the field and interviews with local key informants (KIs) at the community level.

We also drew on the IDP Task Force's dataset. This compiles data received from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Syria Hub (OCHA Syria), CCCM Turkey, OCHA Jordan, the UN Refugee Agency in Jordan (UNHCR Jordan) and HNAP, which share data verified by clusters in their respective countries with the IDP Task Force.

Main caveats and monitoring challenges

Our figure differs from all other estimates because of the above-mentioned analysis.

Our figure is an underestimate for several reasons, mostly because of a lack of information on short-term displacements.

IDP Task Force takes an arbitrary decision to always give priority to CCCM Cluster data over HNAP data.

Estimates from both HNAP and IDP TF are derived from data provided by KIs, who can only offer estimates of the numbers of people displaced. This means that population figures are subject to an undefined margin of error.

Significant changes from last year

The number of new displacements is slightly higher compared with the past year because of the escalating offensive on Idlib during the year.

TOTAL NUMBER OF IDPS

This corresponds to the total number of individuals living in internal displacement as of 31 December 2019.

IDMC figure and rationale

IDMC used the total number of IDPs reported by HNAP and added the number of people affected by shelter damage. That is because the latter are people displaced within their own community who are not included in HNAP's total figure for IDPs. We also added the number of failed returns in 2019 to the reported figure. Failed returns represent people who attempted to return but ended up in collective shelters, camps or with host families.

Sources and methodologies

IDMC used HNAP assessments to calculate the total number of IDPs in Syria. These assessments are based on direct observations in the field and interviews with KIs at the community level.

Main caveats and monitoring challenges

HNAP's population figures may be subject to an undefined margin of error since they are based on the best estimates of the KIs they interview. We also were not able to disaggregate the population affected by shelter damage by the shelter they are living in now. Some people continue to live in their damaged houses and should not be counted as displaced. For the figures from 2019, this refers to only a very small number of people.

Significant changes from last year

The figure is very similar to the previous year as most of the new displacements were repeated or multiple.

NUMBER OF IDPS WHO HAVE MADE PARTIAL PROGRESS TOWARDS A DURABLE SOLUTION

This corresponds to the number of IDPs whom our data providers have identified as having returned, resettled or locally integrated in 2019 and for whom the evidence obtained by IDMC suggests that progress toward durable solutions is only partial given their living conditions. In a few instances, this number may refer to movements having taken place in 2019 rather than a total number of people.

IDMC figure and rationale

IDMC used the latest figure of returnees reported by HNAP in 2019 from the second round of the Community of Return Profiling (CoRP) as of December 2019.

For the total number of people having made partial progress towards durable solutions as of 31 December 2019, we added this number to the sum of people who returned in 2018 and were not re-displaced in 2019 and thus remain in the same community to which they returned.

The evidence obtained by IDMC suggests that all the returnees' progress toward durable solutions is only partial given their living conditions upon return.

Sources and methodologies

For this estimate, IDMC used CoRP developed by HNAP. This is a system designed to monitor and assess trends and conditions in communities that have experienced returns, either in 2018 or in 2019. HNAP employs CoRP in five thematic areas: safety and security, social cohesion, services and infrastructure, livelihood and economic, and mobility. Community focal points in each of the assessed communities are asked a set of questions, each pertaining to one of these thematic areas.

Main caveats and monitoring challenges

Our figure is an underestimate for several reasons, mostly because of a lack of information on short-term displacements and returns.

Some of those returns also may be failed returns, including people who stay in camps, collective shelters, or with host families. Based on the information in the CoRP, however, we are not able to disaggregate the figure accordingly. Based on the HNAP baseline returnee dataset, this might concern 31,500 people.

The total number of people having made partial progress towards durable solutions as of 31 December 2019 also includes some refugees who returned from abroad. We were not able to disaggregate the figure. This concerned about 51,000 movements in 2019, based on the HNAP data on returning refugees. The figure includes only reported returnees in 2018 and 2019. People who reportedly returned in previous years are not included there.

HNAP's population figures are subject to an undefined margin of error since they are based on the best estimates of the KIs they interview.

Significant changes from last year
The figure halved compared with last year's estimate of 715,000. This can be attributed to large-scale violence in Idlib, Hama and Aleppo governorates as well as Al Hasakeh, Raqqa and Deir ez Zor. This violence slowed down the return rate.

CONFIDENCE ASSESSMENT

The Confidence Assessment provides an at-a-glance overview of the comprehensiveness of the data available regarding displacement associated with conflict for each country. It describes the methodologies used, frequency of reporting, data disaggregation and geographical coverage. Here two key metrics are analysed: the new displacements and the total number of IDPs.

Displacement metric	New displacements	Total number of IDPs
Reporting units	People	People
Methodology	Key informants, Other	Key informants
Geographical disaggregation	Admin 2 or more	Admin 2 or more
Frequency of reporting	Every month	Every month
Disaggregation by sex	No	No
Disaggregation by age	No	No
Data triangulation	Some local triangulation	No Triangulation
Data on settlement elsewhere	No	No
Data on returns	Yes	Yes
Data on local integration	No	No
Data on cross border movements	Partial	Partial
Data on deaths	No	No
Data on births	No	No

For any additional questions please email: data@idmc.ch

For the full country profile on Syria please visit:
http://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/syria