



# Rapid WASH and Settlement Assessment

IDP sites in North West Syria  
January 2021

Assessment conducted by



Assessment supported by



## Executive Summary

CARE, together with partners IhsanRD, IYD, Shafak and Violet conducted a Rapid WASH and Settlement Assessment across 449 IDP sites in Idlib and Aleppo Governorates during December 2020 and January 2021.

The extreme levels of conflict experienced in Northwest Syria between December 2019 and March 2020 led to the forced displacement of close to one million people. With lack of available shelter in host-communities and existing displacement camps across the Northwest – as well as very few new formal camps established by the humanitarian community at the time of displacement – families on the run were forced to settle wherever they could. This led to a rapid increase of informal or self-settled camps scattered across Idlib and Aleppo provinces. Often, these locations were not suited for the establishment of camps and the sites lacked access to basic infrastructure and services such as running water, sewage networks and electricity.

As a result, hundreds of thousands of people are now living in camps relying almost exclusively on humanitarian services to meet their survival needs.

The vast majority of IDP sites are entirely reliant on humanitarian actors to provide water trucking to meet their household needs. This is expensive and leaves IDP sites extremely vulnerable in case of interruptions to humanitarian operations whether due to shortages in funding, lack of access to the site, etc. Many of these camps still lack adequate sanitation facilities with reports of overflowing latrine pits and lack of fecal sludge management raising serious health concerns. Additionally, the lack of adequate sanitation facilities raises serious protection concerns especially for women and girls. Further to this, a heavy reliance on humanitarian actors for continuous removal of sewage wastewater from camps through daily desludging services leaves sites vulnerable and unsustainable. Finally, despite concerted efforts by humanitarian actors to improve access to handwashing facilities as part of COVID-19 mitigation efforts, access to handwashing and soap remains a key concern.

CARE, with its partners, conducted a Rapid WASH and Settlements Assessment across a very large sample of IDP-sites focusing on three main aspects:

1. To assess access to adequate sanitation and handwashing facilities at IDP sites and understand the potential to establish more sustainable sanitation solutions for wastewater management in the future.
2. To assess availability of water supplies, identify barriers to adequate water supplies and explore potential longer-term solutions such as establishing connections to existing water supply network systems.
3. To assess settlement conditions in IDP settlements including surface water drainage and access roads for emergency services

### The assessment found that:

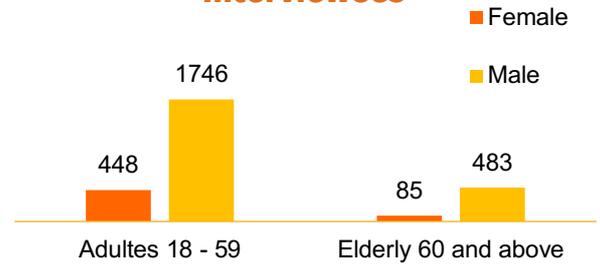
- 65% of the interviewed key informants reported that the IDP sites do not have adequate sanitation facilities available, 57% of reported not having access to handwashing facilities while 85% of respondents reported that there is no available soap for handwashing.
- 76% of the respondents reported that nearby towns (less than 3km) have existing functioning sewage network systems. It may be possible to connect IDP sites to some of these existing sewage networks. However, further detailed technical assessments is required to establish the feasibility of this.
- While 83% of those interviewed reported having access to adequate water supplies, 86% reported that they are entirely reliant on humanitarian actors to provide their daily household water needs.
- 81% of KII respondents reported that nearby towns (less than 3km) have existing functioning water network systems. Further detailed technical assessments could establish if connections to these water systems is feasible
- 62% of respondents reported drainage at the IDP sites to be either bad or very bad with pooling of water during the winter months
- 40% reported that access roads are bad and in need of enhancement while 11% reported that access roads are so bad that trucks and lifesaving activities are unable to access sites

## Methodology and demographics

2,762 surveys were conducted across 449 IDP sites in Al Bab, A'zaz, Jarablus, Jebel Saman, Harim, Idleb and Jisr-Ash-Shugur districts in Aleppo and Idlib governorates. The surveys included 925 (7 Females, 918 Males) Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and 1,837 (526 Females, 1311 Males) household interviews.

The above numbers of females KII refers to the scarcity of the representation of women's leadership roles within the camps. This inherent limitation to the assessment methodology led CARE to increase the number of household interviews and target more females through these. The locations of the assessments were as follows:

### Sex & Age Groups of Interviewees

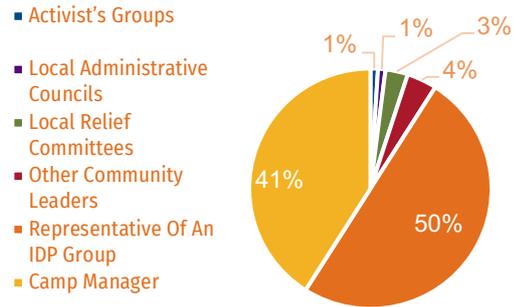


Governorate	District	Sub-district	Number of camps	Number of Assessments
Aleppo	Al Bab	Al Bab	11	53
	A'zaz	Aghtrin	2	12
		A'zaz	15	89
		Mare'	1	7
		Suran	4	24
	Jebel Saman	Atareb	25	150
		Daret Azza	1	6
	Jarablus	Ghandorah	4	24
		Jarablus	10	60
	Idlib	Idleb	Bennsh	2
Idleb			18	108
Maaret Tamsrin			60	360
Harim		Armanaz	29	186
		Dana	163	1,043
		Harim	12	72
		Kafr Takharim	1	6
		Qourqeena	21	120
		Salqin	13	78
		Badama	25	148
Jisr-Ash-Shugur		Darkosh	18	108
		Janudiyeh	14	96
		<b>Total</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>2,762</b>

Table 1: Number of interviews in each of the locations

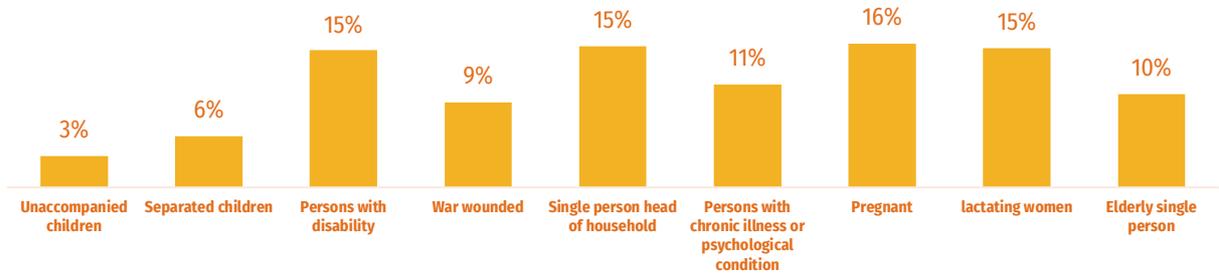
The diversity of the KII interviewees was as follows. Half of KII interviews were conducted with representatives of IDPs within the camps (459 out of 925), followed by the camp managers with 41% (385 out of 925), while local councils were 4% of interviewees (35 out of 925) and community leaders represented 3% (27 out of 925). The lowest percentage of interviewees were relief committees and the activator groups (1% each).

### Roles of KII Interviewees

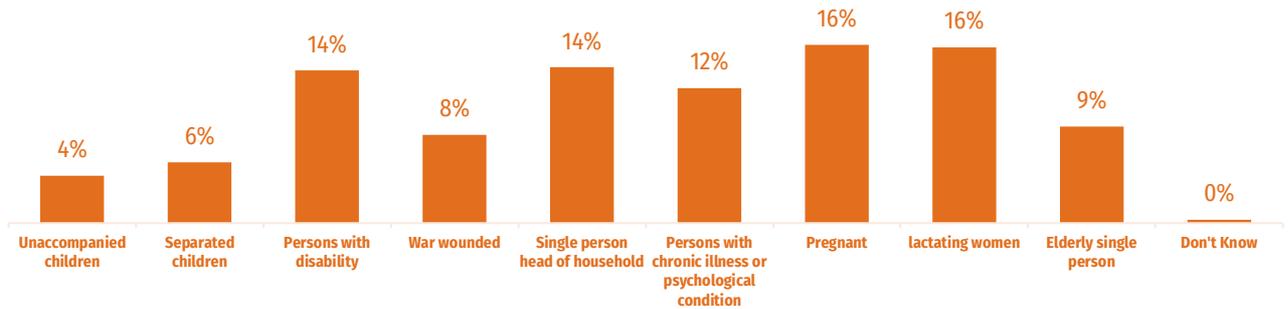


Vulnerable groups were identified as being present among the IDP populations in both KII and HH interviews. See the breakdown below.

### Vulnerable Groups identified in KIIs



### Vulnerable groups identified in IDP HH interviews



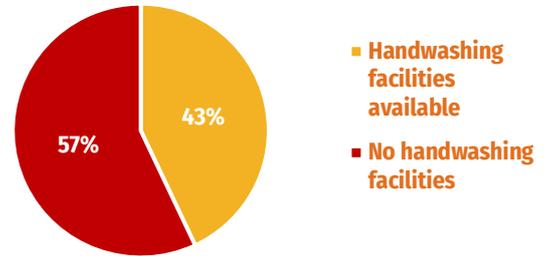
## Sanitation, Handwashing, Soap and Hygiene

65% of the respondents reported that the IDP sites do not have adequate sanitation facilities available. 57% of respondents within the assessed camps mentioned that there are no handwashing facilities, 43% of respondents reported that their camps had some handwashing facilities while 85% of respondents reported that there is no available soap for handwashing.

Many of the sites assessed had previously been supported by CARE and its partners including through the installation of sanitation facilities. However, these emergency interventions were limited in scope and the assessment clearly shows that additional sanitation support is required to these and unsupported sites, particularly with a focus on increasing the number of latrines and handwashing facilities available. The lack of soap availability indicates a critical supply issue at IDP sites.

Lack of access to sufficient sanitation facilities is particularly concerning for women and girls, due to greater risks of sexual harassment, sexual violence, humiliation, physical violence and exploitation they face, and adoption of negative menstrual hygiene behavior, as well as for people with disabilities and older people.

### Availability of Handwashing facilities



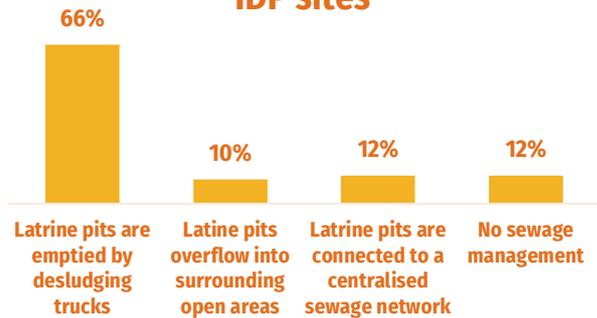
### Potential Connections to Existing Sewerage Network Systems

66% of respondents reported that desludging services are used to remove sewage wastewater from latrines pits while only 12% reported IDP camps being connected to a centralized sewerage network.

Additionally, 56% of the respondents indicated that desludging were provided by humanitarian organizations indicating a very high reliance on ongoing and expensive external support.

KIIs reported that 81% of assessed IDP camps are within 3km for existing towns. 76% of KII respondents reported these towns have existing functioning sewerage network systems. The possibility of connecting IDP sites to existing sewerage network systems could be explored further.

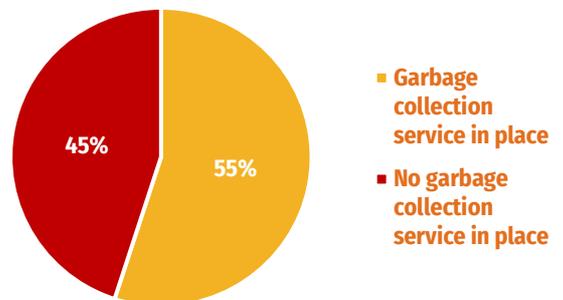
### Sewage waste management at IDP sites



## Environmental Health

55% of respondents mentioned that there are garbage collection services within their camps, while the rest reported that there is no garbage collection service. Households without waste collection services may be collecting and managing waste locally using local dump sites or burning waste. Solid waste management needs will need further examination before intervention.

### Garbage collection services



## Water supplies

82% of respondents indicated having enough water to meet their needs in the past 30 days. This is a significant improvement compared a similar assessment carried out by CARE in early 2020. However, 92% reports that their water needs are covered by water trucking and 86% of the respondents also highlighted that they were relying on humanitarian organizations to provide this water trucking. This indicates a high coverage of water trucking providers, which is largely provided by humanitarian actors. Out of those that reported not having enough water, the main reasons reported were being unable to afford to purchase water (35%), vendors not available (35%) or not enough water storage available (26%).

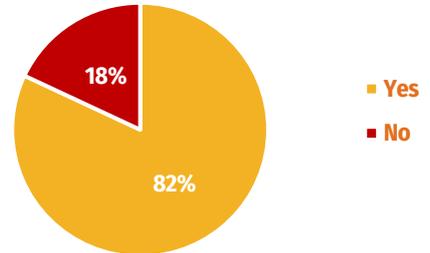
The coverage of humanitarian water trucking operations, as assessed across the sites in this survey, is high – though still incomplete. However, the very high reliance on water trucking (92%) and in particular water trucking provided by humanitarian organizations, as reported by 86% of the respondents, more than 8 months after the establishment of most of these sites stands out as alarming. Water trucking is expensive, and it leaves families living at these sites extremely vulnerable to interruptions of humanitarian service delivery.

Only 7% reported accessing water through a piped water network or a well, while the remaining 1% reported relying on river water or surface water sources.

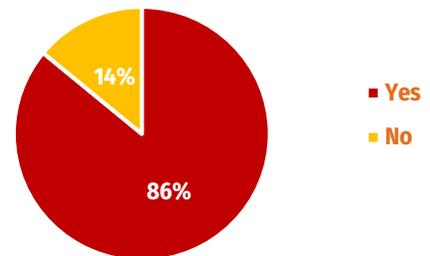
### Potential Connections to Existing Water Supply Network Systems

81% of assessed IDP camps are within 3km of existing towns. 76% of KII respondents reported these towns have existing functional water networks. The possibility of connecting IDP sites to existing water supply networks could be explored further. This would reduce the need for continued water trucking and centralize the water quality control process.

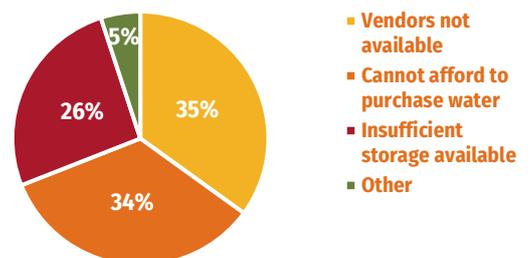
### Adequate quantity of water in the past month



### Reliance on Water Trucking by Humanitarian agencies



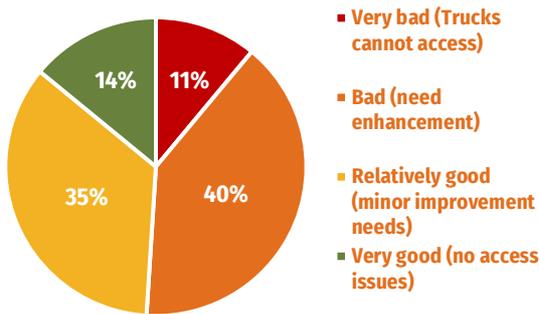
### Main reasons for insufficient availability of water



## Settlements and Site Improvements

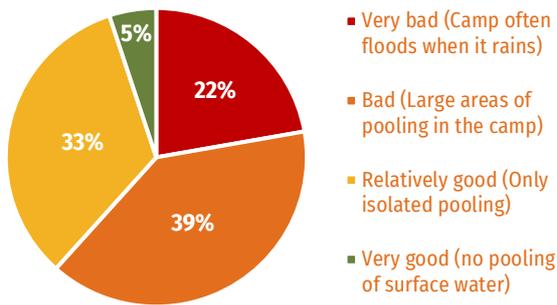
With sites having mainly been set up by families themselves, there are considerable concerns that the location of many of these sites leaves them extremely vulnerable to harsh winter weather and heavy rains. This poses a significant risk in itself as flash floods in IDP camps in Northern Syria have destroyed homes and killed people in the past, but it also poses significant risks to the delivery of humanitarian services – such as water trucking and desludging – that many camps rely on.

### Status of access roads



11% of respondents indicated that access roads are so bad that trucks and lifesaving activities were unable to access sites. 40% respondents reported that access roads are in a bad condition and in need of improvement. 35% of respondents expressed that the roads are in relatively good condition. With around half of the respondents suggesting bad or very bad conditions of access roads, there is clearly a need to enhance roads in certain areas to ensure lifesaving services can access site, to mitigate risks of flooding and to avoid further deterioration which may prevent access to sites in future.

### Surface water drainage



61% of respondents reported drainage in their camp to be either bad or very bad. 22% of those reporting very bad, indicated that their camp floods when hit by heavy rains highlighting a critical need to improve surface water drainage in camps which are prone to flooding. Only 5% of the assessed sites report no issue with pooling of surface water.

The assessment shows that more than half of the +400 assessed sites require site improvement interventions to mitigate risks of flooding threatening the life, wellbeing and possessions of inhabitants as well as threatening to cut the camps off from ongoing humanitarian deliveries.

## Recommendations

1. The lack of adequate sanitation and handwashing facilities poses a serious risk to the health of people residing in IDP sites in NW Syria. When there is a lack of adequate sanitation available, the prevalence of open defecation increases, and women and girls have increased risks of violence and intimidation which leads to fears of using sanitation facilities. Safe sanitation facilities in close proximity to dwellings including locks inside the doors and adequate lighting are required in order to meet the needs of women and girls especially. There is a need for WASH actors to urgently rehabilitate and install latrines with functioning handwashing facilities.
2. The lack of soap availability means that any handwashing will be ineffective in stopping the spread of COVID-19 and water borne diseases. There is a need to help to make soap more widely available by working with markets, provide cash/vouchers or increase in-kind distributions and inform people about when they will receive soap distributions. Hygiene messaging should be increased and focus on handwashing and other COVID-19 preventative measures. Include women, girls, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups when designing the programmatic response to ensure that their voice is heard, and their specific needs are addressed. Include disposable pads in all NFI kits as those items are repeatedly being requested and often overlooked.
3. The high reliance on desludging trucks for removing sewage wastewater combined with large quantities of overflowing latrine pits and lack of sewage management indicates a critical need to install localized wastewater management systems in long term sites. This may include channeling sewage wastewater from IDP sites to connect to either existing sewerage networks or localized wastewater treatment options could be established. Connections to existing sewerage networks in nearby towns is likely in some cases, given that 81% of assessed IDP camps are within 3km for existing towns and 76% of KII respondents reported these towns have existing functioning sewage network systems. Any new proposed connections to existing sewerage networks would require detailed technical analysis of the existing sewerage system, including its capacity and assessment at the point of discharge from the system.
4. While 82% of respondents indicated having enough water in their household to meet their needs in the past month, 86% of respondents reported that their water was being provided by humanitarian actors through water trucking services. This indicates a high vulnerability of IDP populations and reliance on humanitarian support for basic water needs. Longer term IDP sites would benefit from connections to water supply network systems. Given that 81% of assessed IDP camps are within 3km of existing towns and 76% of KII respondents reported these towns have existing functional water networks there is a high probability that it is possible to connect some IDP sites to existing water network systems, especially those in close proximity to existing water networks. Expansion of existing water networks and new connections would require detailed technical analysis and planning. However, if successful, this would reduce reliance on water trucking, reduce costs and centralize water quality control over water supplies.
5. Inadequate water storage results in IDPs being unable to save enough water for their families, even if water trucking is available. WASH actors should also ensure adequate water storage is available to meet minimum standards of water quantities.
6. Given the high reliance of IDPs on emergency services for their daily needs, there is a need to ensure IDP sites are accessible (ability for water trucks and desludging trucks to access for example). This may include enhancing access roads through leveling and improving drainage.
7. A high proportion (62%) of respondents reported drainage at the IDP sites to be either bad or very bad with pooling of water during the winter months. There is a critical need to improve surface water drainage in camps which are at high risk of flooding during the winter months.