

**BI-WEEKLY
SITUATION REPORT
WHOLE OF SYRIA**

Issue 15 | 1 – 15 August 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. COVID-19 UPDATE	1
1.1 COVID-19 Statistical Summary at Whole of Syria Level	1
1.2 Daily Distribution of COVID-19 Cases at Whole of Syria Level	1
1.3 Distribution of COVID-19 Cases and Deaths at Whole of Syria Level.....	2
1.4. Distribution of COVID-19 Cases and Deaths by Governorate and Outcome	2
2. WHO-SYRIA RESPONSE.....	2
2.1. Points of Entry (PoE).....	2
2.2. Environmental Health.....	3
2.3. Health Sector Coordination	3
2.4. Routine Immunization	4
2.5. COVID-19 Vaccination.....	4
2.6. COVID-19 Laboratories	5
2.7. Primary Health Care and Non-Communicable Diseases.....	5
2.8. Secondary and Tertiary Health Care (STHC)	5
2.9. Trauma	5
2.10. Tuberculosis (TB) / HIV	5
2.11. Mental Health (MH).....	6
2.12. Nutrition.....	6
2.13. External Relations and Communication.....	6
2.14. Community Engagement (NGOs)	6
2.15. Information Products and Related Activities.....	7
2.16. Capacity Building	8
2.17. Operations Support and Logistics	9
3. WHO SYRIA SUB-OFFICE RESPONSE.....	9
3.1. Aleppo Hub	9
3.2. Lattakia Hub.....	10
3.3. Homs Hub.....	10
3.4. Deir-Ez-Zor Hub.....	11
3.5. Qamishli Hub / Northeast Syria (NES).....	11
4. NORTHWEST SYRIA	12
4.1. Primary Health Care (PHC)	12
4.2. Referral System.....	13
4.3. Secondary Health Care	13
4.4. Non-Communicable Disease (NCD).....	13
4.5. Tuberculosis	13
4.6. EWARN	13
4.7. COVID-19.....	14
4.8. Mental Health & Psycho-Social Support (MHPSS).....	14
5. VACCINE UPDATES	14
6. USEFUL LINKS	14
7. FOLLOW WHO SYRIA	14

1. COVID-19 Update

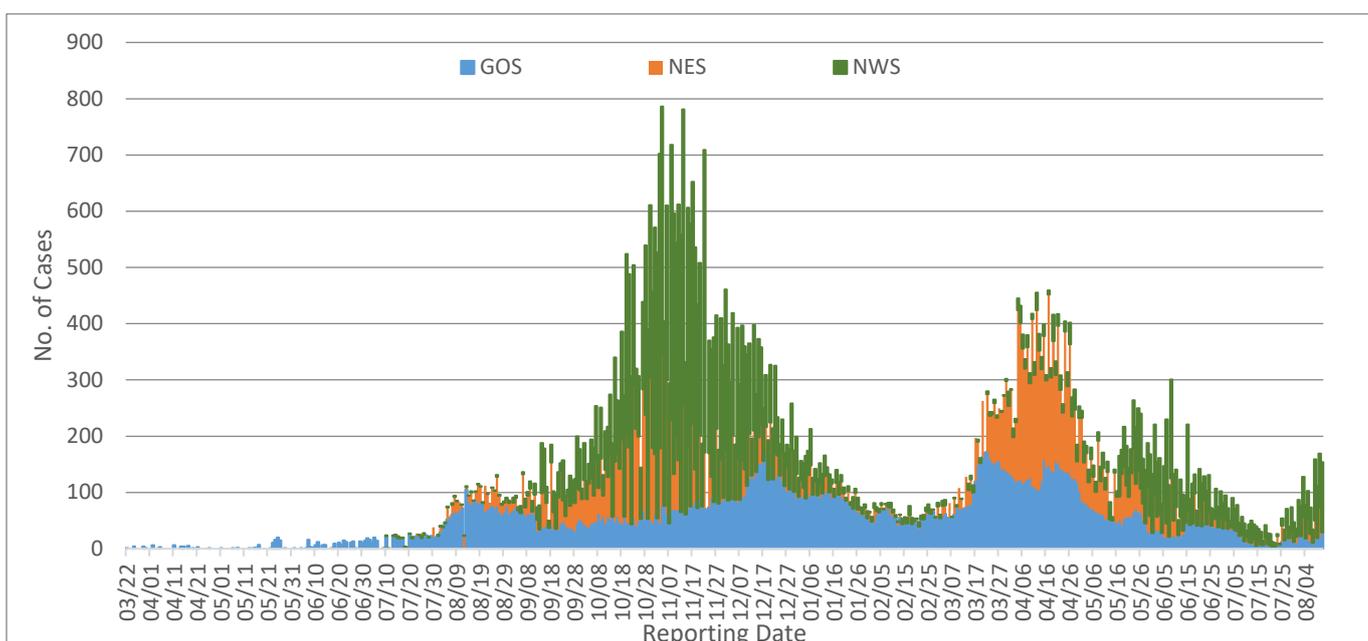
1.1 COVID-19 Statistical Summary at Whole of Syria Level

As of 11 August 2021

	72,255	Total cases (including 4,833 health workers)
	21,484	Active cases
	47,349	Recovered cases
	3,422	Deaths
	4.7%	Case Fatality Rate (CFR)
	15	COVID-19 functional laboratories
	310,850	COVID-19 tests done
	1,468	Overall testing rate per 100 000 population
	341	Incidence rate per 100 000 population (highest in Al-Hasakeh; 987)
	23.2%	Positivity rate

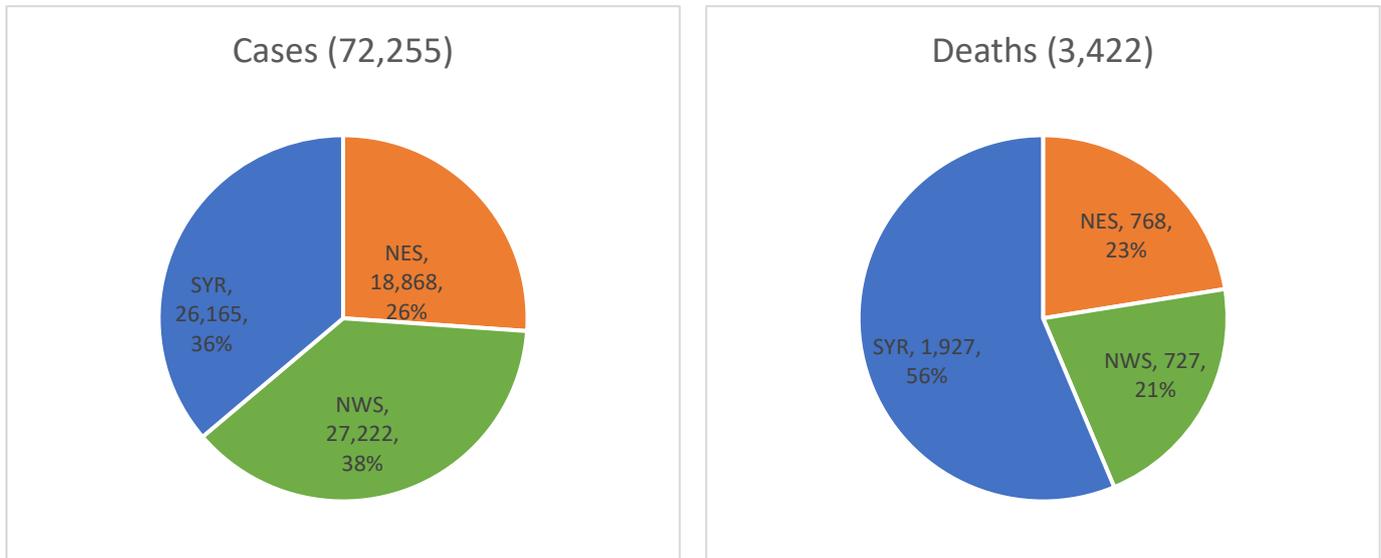
1.2 Daily Distribution of COVID-19 Cases at Whole of Syria Level

22 March 2020 – 11 August 2021 (n = 70,446)



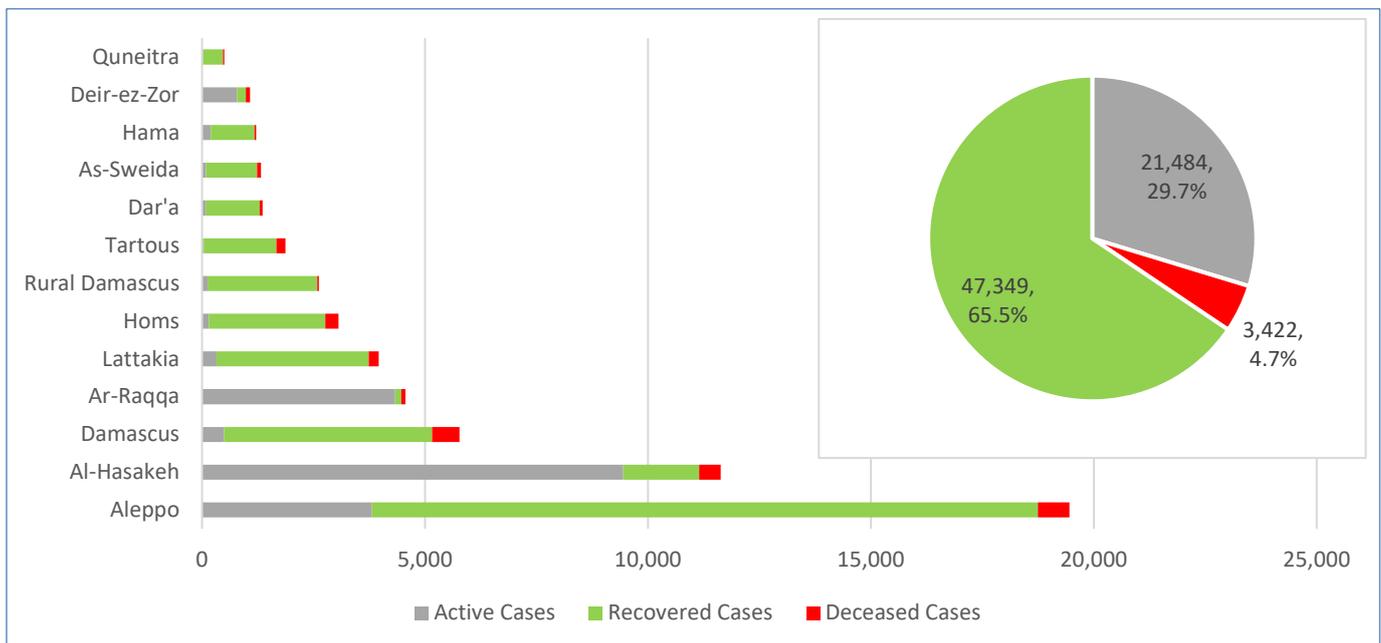
1.3 Distribution of COVID-19 Cases and Deaths at Whole of Syria Level

22 March 2020 – 11 August 2021



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

22 March 2020 – 11 August 2021



2. WHO-Syria Response

2.1. Points of Entry (PoE)

WHO continues to support MOH to enhance national capacity for preparedness and response to health emergencies and to ensure health security under International Health Regulations (2005), including strengthening core capacity at points of entry (PoE).

MoH and WHO are equipping the medical point at the Abu Kamal crossing in Deir-ez-Zor with medical devices and furniture so that it may facilitate the provision of health services to travellers. WHO is also establishing a medical point at the Jubousiya ground-crossing in Homs and another at Judeidet Yabous in Rural Damascus, refurbishing the spaces and equipping them with medical devices.

Core capacity at points of entry is an essential component of the International Health Regulations (2005); vital in controlling global health threats across borders and ensuring the safety of travellers. WHO and MOH conducted a POE core capacity assessment workshop on 29 July in Damascus. 28 public health experts from nine governorates (Damascus, Rural Damascus, Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Lattakia, Tartous, Al-Hasakeh, and Deir-ez-Zor) participated in the review of core capacities at all 16 designated PoE and began discussing a plan of action to enhance capacities and response.

2.2. Environmental Health

WHO monitors the quality of water, testing for chemical and biological contamination of different water sources, such as water networks, ground wells, reservoirs, water tanks, jerry cans, and running culture tests to identify pathogens in Rural Damascus, Aleppo, Deir-ez-Zor and NES in collaboration with the ministries of local administration and environment as well as the DOHs.

During the reporting period, testing was done on 38 water samples taken from four villages in the north and east of Rural Aleppo, 21 from nine districts of Rural Damascus, 50 from Al Bukamal and four subdistricts of Deir-ez-Zor, and 1 196 from NES (Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa, and Deir-ez-Zor) including from eight IDPs camps and collective shelters. Eighteenth ice blocks at Al-Hol and Areesheh camps in NES were also tested. Contamination was detected in 32 water sources in Rural Aleppo, 17 in Rural Damascus, and 176 in NES, among them 16 ice blocks. Only 22% (11) of the 50 water samples tested in Deir-ez-Zor were found to be safe for drinking. Bacteria culture tests detected e.coli in seven of 11 samples tested.

WHO visited sites in the Basira and Sur subdistricts of Deir-ez-Zor between 7 and 10 August in response to reports of increased cases of acute diarrhoea. The mission visited nine villages (Jadeed Aqedat, Sabha, Basira, Al Briha, Al Zer, Al- Hereji, Altwameeh, Alhreezi, Sur) and a number of households and collected and tested 90 water samples, of which 64, (71.1%) were found to be not safe for drinking. WHO continues to coordinate with authorities and partners to improve the quality of drinking water in those high-risk areas.

In response to the increased risk of water-borne diseases during the summer months among vulnerable populations, WHO continues to run awareness campaigns at Areesheh, Al-Hol and Abu Khashab camps, conducting community sessions and household visits to deliver key messages on handwashing, food safety practice, and water treatment. During the reporting period, individual visits were conducted to 100 households in the three IDP camps, during which IEC materials and chlorine tablets were distributed. 5 210 individuals have been reached to date. The campaign will continue through August to benefit more than 85 000 IDPs.

During the reporting period, WHO delivered 1 000 000 NaDCC water disinfectant (purification) tablets to DOH Deir-ez-Zor and NES to ensure water safety for the most vulnerable populations.

2.3. Health Sector Coordination

The Syria National Health Sector coordination team:

- Circulated various documents and updates on humanitarian issues to health sector partners (Dar'a Flash Update, HNAP reports, etc.).
- Attended and provided health sector inputs to regular and ad-hoc intersectoral coordination meetings.
- Attended a joint meeting (WoS, Health Sector Damascus, NES Forum) about the Euphrates water crisis and provided updates on health sector inputs to intersectoral coordination activities.
- Provided inputs (under the coordination pillar) to assist in the preparation of the Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan for COVID-19 for the period 2021-2023.

The Northeast Syria coordination team:

- Provided health sector inputs to Al-Hol camp coordination meeting organized by UNHCR.
- Arranged a north-east Syria interhub meeting on 10 August, during which COVID-19 vaccination updates were discussed.
- Organized and facilitated an Al-Hol camp health sector coordination meeting on 5 August.
- Attended the intersectoral meeting on rapid needs assessment in Tala'a/Serekaniye camp on 12 August.
- Attended and provided health sector inputs during a meeting about relocation at Areesheh camp, on 5 August.
- Followed up with health partners on a range of issues related to the health situation in different camps.

2.4. Routine Immunization

EPI activities in Syria are ongoing according to set plans. Fixed and mobile vaccination sites are functioning across areas controlled by GoS and the Self Administration. A special EPI initiative is currently ongoing in the hard to reach areas of Deir-ez-Zor east of the Euphrates river. As part of the Periodic Intensification of Routine Immunization (PIRI), teams have been mobilized to vaccinate deprived children and women with multi-antigens. So far, 34 953 children have been vaccinated as part of this initiative. A PIRA also took place in Ar-Raqqa, resulting in 7 299 children being vaccinated.

WHO coordinated together with MOH an ICC meeting with different ministries and line departments, together with UN agencies, during which the EPI coverage survey for 2019 was endorsed for publication.

The EPI logistics and supply chain committee has recommended that: SOPs of vaccine management be shared with all health directorates; preparations for capacity building on cold chain maintenance be finalized in September; and that Vaccine Supply Stock Management (VSSM) at governorate level be activated by establishing and connecting servers.

WHO conducted a one-day workshop in Damascus for the assessment of Missed Opportunity on Vaccination (MOV) attended by participants from all 13 accessible governorates. The workshop facilitated an assessment of the root causes preventing care takers from vaccinating children based on their knowledge, attitudes and practices. The workshop was followed by field visits to support assessment and data is currently being compiled.

A two-day workshop was conducted to facilitate a review of the quarterly EPI coverage at the governorate level and a discussion on how unreached children could be vaccinated in order to protect communities against the risks of disease.

2.5. COVID-19 Vaccination

- All Astra Zeneca (COVISHIELD) vaccines received through the COVAX facility were used by the end of June 2021.
- Second dose vaccination with AZ COVISHIELD began on 13 July 2021 and is still ongoing.
- Vaccination with Sinopharm began on 20 June 2021 and is still ongoing for priority groups (health workers, people above 55 years of age, adults with chronic diseases)
- Vaccination with Sputnik light vaccine (single dose) began on 7 August 2021 for the same priority groups, in addition to teachers.
- 140 000 teachers are being targeted to take a single dose of Sputnik light, in preparation for the new school year.
- Syria has to date administered 298 802 doses of different types, vaccinating a total of 178 111 people. Accordingly, national coverage at present is 0.89% of the population.
- On 15 August 2021 Syria received the second batch of COVAX facilitated AstraZeneca (AZ) vaccines with support from Sweden, amounting 174 720 doses, 79% of which will be administered by the national immunization programme in the Government-controlled areas (GoS) and northeast Syria (NES), and approximately 21% - in the northwest Syria (NWS) through Gaziantep.

2.6. COVID-19 Laboratories

As of 9 August, six of a planned seven capacity building training workshops had been conducted for 64 laboratory technicians from six governorates. Participants received training in different PCR testing protocols, including sample extraction and amplification, as well as refreshment training in the use of PPEs.

2.7. Primary Health Care and Non-Communicable Diseases

WHO supported MOH during two supervisory visits to the specialized NCD centres in Homs and Aleppo to follow up programme progress and logistic needs.

The Organization dispatched lifesaving medicines, including 3 850 vials of different types of insulin, to the MOH central warehouse and to health partners in Damascus (two video colposcope were delivered to the Maternal University Hospital), Aleppo (Al-Ihsan Charity, ASSLS, SARC Aleppo); Lattakia (SACSN), Dar'a DOH, Dar'a National Hospital, Al-Tabqa National Hospital in Ar-Raqqa. A total of 10 953 treatments were provided.

2.8. Secondary and Tertiary Health Care (STHC)

WHO dispatched 2 200 hemodialysis sessions and consumables for adults to the MOH central warehouse and to the Qamishli and Deir-ez-Zor hubs. Hemodialysis machines and other equipment were also delivered to DOH Al-Hasakeh and DOH Lattakia, Al-Tabqa National Hospital, Ar-Raqqa National Hospital, Qamishli National Hospital, provided for a total of 4 733 treatment courses.

In response to the escalating situation in Dar'a governorate, WHO provided lifesaving medicines and kits to DOH Dar'a and Dar'a National Hospital.

WHO conducted a three-day workshop on IPC measures in the context of COVID-19, attended by 50 trainees from As-Sweida and Lattakia governorates. A similar three-day online workshop was attended by 25 community health workers from DOH Al-Hasakeh.

2.9. Trauma

WHO has delivered over 19 000 treatments of life-saving medicines and more than 90 different types of surgical and trauma kits, supporting around 1 210 trauma cases, as well as three pieces of medical equipment, to health partners in the governorates of Damascus, Dar'a, Lattakia, Al-Hasakeh, and Ar-Raqqa. These deliveries are part of efforts to enhance the capacity of public health facilities to deliver timely and appropriate responses to emergency cases, including cases of COVID-19, as well as part of the WHO rapid response to the current emergency situation in Dar'a.

150 health workers from Homs, Damascus, Ar-Raqqa, As-Sweida, and Hama were trained in first aid, basic life support and the management of ICU patients. They include doctors, nurses, and anaesthesia technicians working in isolation centres, intensive care units and emergency departments.

One hundred prosthetic and orthotic technicians, physiotherapists, and physiatrists in Damascus and Homs received training at the MOH centres of prosthetics and rehabilitation. The training focused on energy expenditure in amputated patients during walking, rehabilitation of spinal cord injuries, stress and conditioning strategies, and use of orthosis and assistive technology.

2.10. Tuberculosis (TB) / HIV

A total of 583 participants benefited from 15 awareness sessions on TB during the reporting period. 32 suspected cases were tested for TB, of which 18 were confirmed as positive.

2.11. Mental Health (MH)

Around 18 166 MH consultations have been provided by WHO-supported implementing partners since the beginning of the year through community-based projects in 68 locations across the country including hard to reach areas.

A tele-mhpss basic services programme is being piloted, through ongoing awareness raising campaigns at the community level in Homs, Hama and Aleppo governorates. Two training packages in basic and advanced tele-MHPSS were developed for this purpose. Training packages are currently being developed for ToT training and adaptation processes.

WHO has been following up on action points discussed at the national consultative workshops held last month with MoH/MH and PHC directorates programme managers, in order to establish a systematized workflow for integration with different programmes. Smoking cessation integration has begun, and guidelines for MH consultation and motivational interviews, in addition to a self-help book, are currently being finalized.

The MH team has conducted an in-depth assessment, using WHO-UNHCR assessment tool, of the Ibn Khaldoun mental health hospital in order to estimate current capacity and support the facility manage a surge in cases.

The team has also been disseminating MHPSS updates and new guidelines through MHPSS TWG and assessing the usability of IASC MHPSS COVID19 adapted guidelines.

Sixteen capacity-building activities were conducted with MoH, MoE and IPs, targeting the health cadre, school health workers and community workers. The workshops focused on the Mental Health GAP (mhGAP GUI and community toolkit) programme, psychological first aid, basic psychosocial skills for COVID-19 responders, first line support, and tele-mhpss basic counselling in the COVID-19 context.

2.12. Nutrition

Data on nutrition surveillance for June 2021 collected from 926 health centres indicates that a total of 79 748 nutrition related services were provided. Data from 21 stabilization centres for the same month indicates that 138 patients were admitted for nutrition related treatments, of which 41 in Aleppo.

9 142 home visits were conducted in June as part of the new-born care at home programme in 12 governorates. They resulted in 89 referrals for specialized care.

2.13. External Relations and Communication

A COVID-19 myth buster social media campaign was launched across WCO social media platforms.

Three visibility products were developed and posted on the WHO Syria web page <https://bit.ly/3zQlnsk> to highlight:

- A new contribution from Kuwait to support the availability of essential health systems in Syria
- The WHO response to the ongoing conflict in Dar'a, south Syria
- COVID-19 vaccination update in Syria

Two infographics are being developed to emphasize the importance of adapting COVID-19 preventive measures and the importance of taking a COVID-19 vaccine.

2.14. Community Engagement (NGOs)

WHO is supporting 14 implementing partners to strengthen health responses in areas of Syria with severe health challenges. These include two partners in Damascus, two in Dar'a, three in Rural Damascus, three in Aleppo, three in NES and one in Homs.

Together with NGO partners, WHO has strengthened the provision of lifesaving and life-sustaining referral-based health care services in north-east Syria. 190 recipients benefited from trauma care services, 160 from advanced

surgical intervention and 2 844 from primary health care services. Most beneficiaries were living in IDP camps and informal settlements.

WHO also boosted the delivery of primary health care services, including medical consultations and medication for child health, reproductive health and chronic diseases, together with NGOs. 29 709 health services were provided in Damascus, Rural Damascus, Dar'a, Homs and Aleppo, while 808 lifesaving and life-sustaining health services, and 386 trauma care services were supported on a referral basis. Additionally, 669 assistive devices were delivered to persons with visual, mobility and hearing impairment, including 64 hearing aids following hearing tests on 122 patients. 270 speech and language sessions and 669 physical rehabilitation sessions were also delivered.

Community social workers received training on MH guidelines, tools and other evidence-based protocols and delivered 6 304 MHPSS services.

The ongoing conflict in Dar'a governorate has resulted in the displacement of a huge number of families from Dar'a al Balad to schools and shelters in Hetan and Zat Al Netaken. In response, WHO deployed two medical mobile teams, through its engagement with Nour Foundation for Relief and Development, to provide essential health care services at IDP sites. Each medical mobile team is composed of a gynaecologist, a paediatric, an internist, three nurses, a pharmacist and community social workers. 201 medical consultations and medications have been provided on child health, acute and chronic diseases and gynaecology, while 50 diagnosis investigations have been carried out and 95 MHPSS services delivered.

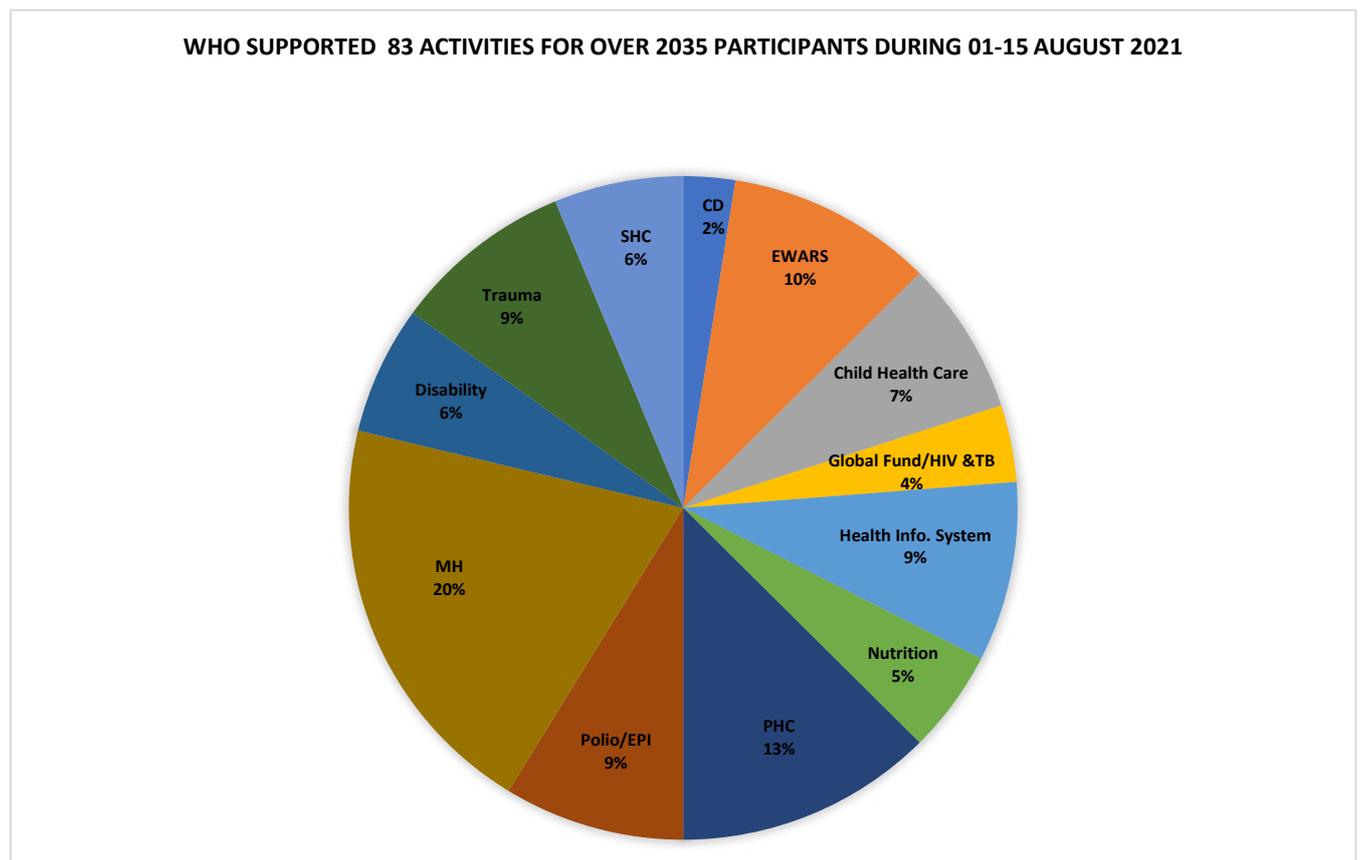
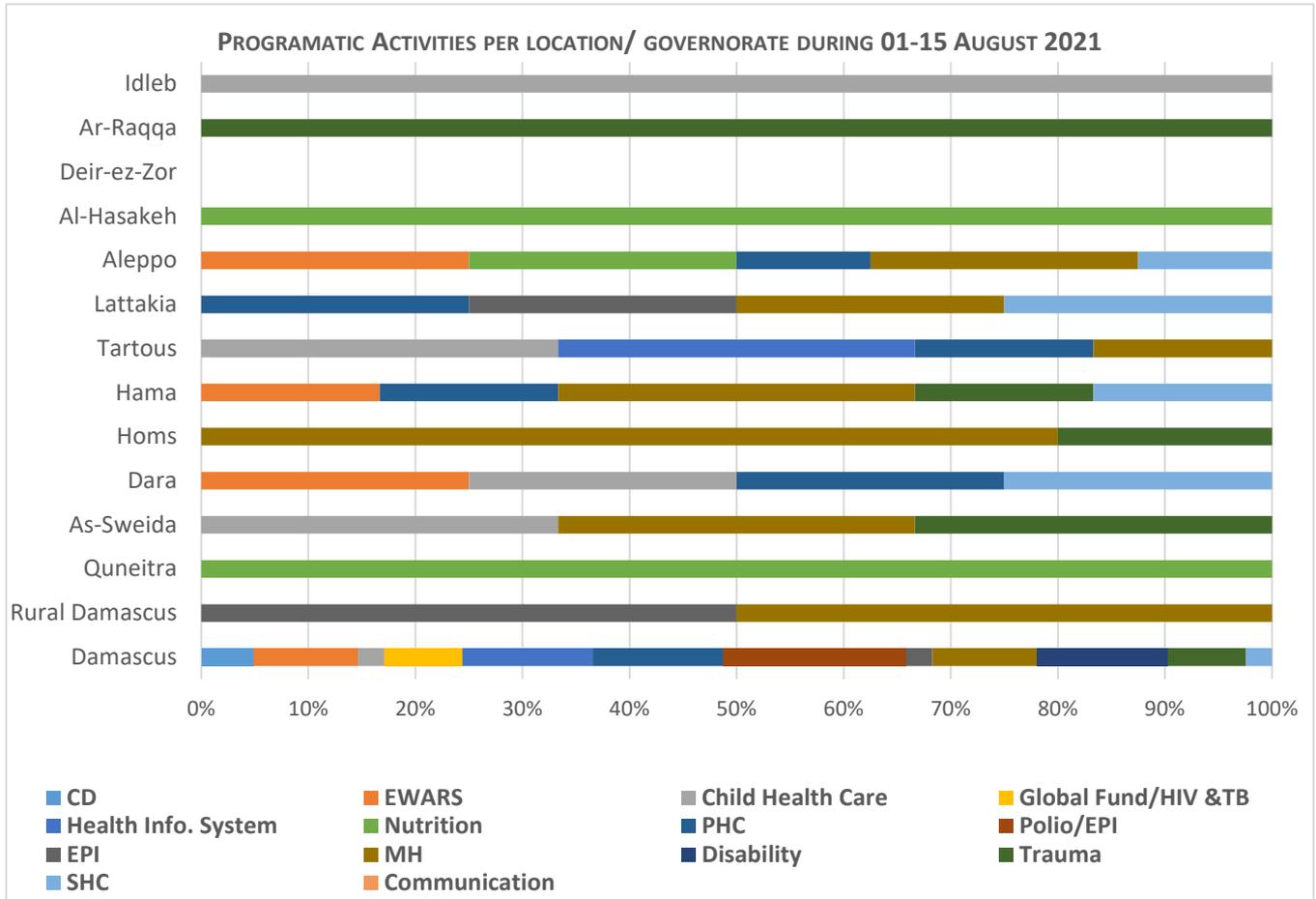
c	PHC	SEC	Trauma care	Assistive devices	MH	Hearing evaluation test	Speech & language session	Hearing aids	Total
Southern area	11552	181	240	18	914	122	265	64	13292
NWS	13908	481	1	651	4392	0	0	0	19433
Central area	4249	146	145	0	835	0	5	0	5380
NES	2844	160	188	8	163	0	0	0	3363
Total	32553	968	574	677	6304	122	270	64	41468

2.15. Information Products and Related Activities

Information products and activities delivered include:

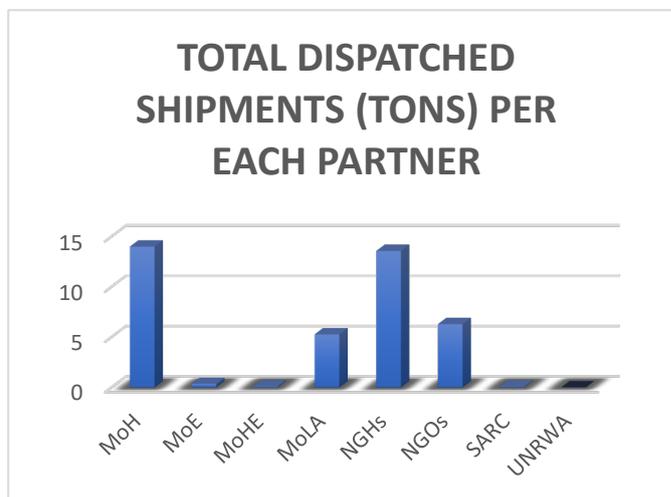
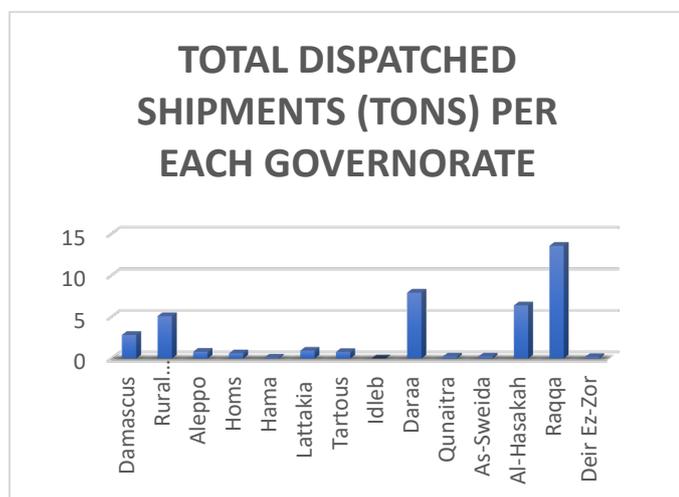
- Flash Update # 53 on a recent burglary incident involving UNFPA-supported clinic in Al-Hol camp (14 July 2021)
- Flash Update # 54 on the recent attacks on Dar'a National Hospital (29 Jul 2021)
- Health Sector COVID-19 response monitoring for the period from 1 January to 30 June 2021
- Revision and Harmonization of Whole of Syria Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), 2nd meeting with HQ, EMRO, GZT, and WCO
- Updated COVID-19 Dynamic Infographic Dashboard for Syria
- Updated the online item tracking system for COVID-19 in Syria
- Key information on health facilities based on HeRAMS
- Updated Maps for health sector interventions

2.16. Capacity Building



2.17. Operations Support and Logistics

WHO dispatched 39 652 tons of medical and lab supplies, kits, equipment, haemodialysis sessions and plastic dustbins to 13 governorates (all bar Idlib). They were received by nine MoH facilities, MoHE, MoE, MoLA, nine NGOs, two NGH, SARC and UNRWA and supported a total of 68 146 treatments and 1 210 trauma cases .



3. WHO Syria Sub-Office Response

3.1. Aleppo Hub

The number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 has remained stable. COVID-19 public isolation centres have however reported occupancy rates of 30 - 40%.

WHO-supported implementing partners, including five PHCs, eight MMTs and two trauma & rehabilitation centres, provided 14 764 health care services during the reporting period.

WHO provided 270 haemodialysis sessions to Al-Ihsan NGO to address the shortage of haemodialysis sessions in Aleppo city.

The Aleppo hub conducted meetings with Ibn Khaldoun mental health hospital to discuss implementation, needs assessment and current capacity.

Two capacity building activities – related to mhGAP community, and MHPSS & RCCE, were conducted with different partners.

Preparations are being finalized with DoH and community members for the upcoming MHPSS & RCCE campaign to provide basic MHPSS services, tele-counselling, raise awareness and conduct different social listening activities.

TB mobile clinics in Aleppo are still functioning, A total of 483 beneficiaries attended 10 awareness sessions on TB. 27 suspected cases were tested for TB, 17 of which were found to be positive.

An IPC session was held online for doctors who will engage in the MHPSS & RCCE campaign in Aleppo governorate. The main objective of the session was consolidation of the sources of COVID-19 health messages for beneficiaries through doctors and community workers.



WHO-supported mobile medical teams provide PHC services in Ballas city in rural Aleppo

3.2. Lattakia Hub

A continuous decline has been observed in the number of COVID-19 cases reported daily in both Lattakia and Tartous governorates, with nearly no new cases reported for several days. Total reported cases remains at 3 948 in Lattakia and 1 869 in Tartous, resulting in 225 deaths in Lattakia and 203 deaths in Tartous.

WHO supported a training workshop on integrated management of childhood illness (IMCI) for the benefit of DOH staff, and conducted a series of workshops under mhGAP phases 1 & 2 for the directorates of health and school in both Lattakia and Tartous.

WHO marked world breastfeeding week by conducting several awareness sessions to encourage breastfeeding, improve the health of babies, and promote the importance of family-friendly policies to enable breastfeeding and help parents nurture and bond with their children in early life.



WHO-supported IMCI capacity building training

3.3. Homs Hub

With WHO support, the NGO Lamset Shefa, in cooperation with the Family Wellbeing Center in Dar Al Kabera and two medical mobile teams in the north and east of Rural Homs, has been providing primary and secondary health care services and mental health and psychosocial support to people suffering from psychological distress and domestic violence. 4 249 beneficiaries received medical consultations, of which 146 were secondary, 145 were for trauma and 835 were MHPSS services.

WHO facilitated the training of 25 doctors from Homs DoH on Mental Health GAP. The Main topics discussed were depression, psychosis, bipolar disorder, suicide, stress disorders, epilepsy, psychopharmacological treatments, self-care and psychological first aid.

Four medical mobile teams supported by WHO started providing primary health services and medicines for the most vulnerable people in areas within the South Hama district: Hur benafseh, Zara, Taqsis, Tulef, Labelh; six slum neighbourhoods in Hama's East Salmiya district: Alsaan, Abo Dali, Sheikh Helal, Eqerbaat villages and Sahl Alghb in northwest Hama: Shatha, Orzelat, Naorat Joreen, Rasm bet Gazi. 3 300 beneficiaries have been reached to date, with 1 067 gynaecology services, 976 internal, 1 275 paediatric, 1 042 PSS, and 1 079 health awareness sessions delivered.



Raising awareness campaign in south Hama district

A two-month awareness raising campaign has begun at community level in Homs and Hama that aims to promote adherence to COVID-19 precautionary measures, as well as MHPSS. The campaign is targeting about 80 communities in east and north rural Salmiya; 24 locations in north Hama and south Idleb, a newly accessible area; and six locations with official camps and 12 villages in east Homs area, home to many Rukban returnees. The campaign includes multiple visits to each location, to cover the huge gap of MH and health awareness services in the locations mentioned, as well as in the west Homs district of Quseer which is home to many returnees from Lebanon. 2 500 families, 5 000 children, and 1 000 elderly persons are estimated to benefit from this campaign.

All 44 volunteers in 11 teams were trained on MHPSS prevention and promotion, and informed of messages to be delivered to the community through in-depth awareness raising sessions that will be conducted for individuals and groups.

3.4. Deir-Ez-Zor Hub

WHO supported a two-day training workshop on Legislative Decree No. 62 of 2009 on tobacco control. 25 participants from the health directorate, the education directorate, the government executive office, the religious affairs directorate and the municipality in Deir-ez-Zor governorate attended the workshop, which aimed to promote the implementation of the legislative decree that prohibits smoking in public places in Syria. Participants also benefited from an RCCE session that was presented by WHO sub office in Deir-ez-Zor.

Another two-day workshop provided training to 25 health workers from primary health centres and health districts in Deir-ez-Zor on the peripheral national COVID-19 pre-registration online platform. The health workers received training in online and offline registration, documenting data of vaccinated persons on the level of primary health centres and health districts, and dealing with and solving common errors.

With WHO support, Deir-ez-Zor DoH began vaccinating people with a second dose of AZ. The campaign will run for 25 days and began on 31 July in areas controlled by the Self Administration and a day later in area under GoS control. Three fixed vaccination centres and four mobile teams have been deployed in GoS areas, while 11 fixed centres are administering vaccines in Self Administration areas.



WHO-supported COVID-19 vaccination campaign

WHO is supporting an ongoing initiative of the environment directorate of Deir-ez-Zor through the provision of operational support to field workers collecting and testing water samples from the city and rural areas. The initiative began on 5 June, and a total of 402 samples have been collected and tested since, only 27% of which were found to be safe to drink.

In cooperation with DoH and local NGOs, WHO is preparing to launch a campaign on hygiene promotion, safe drinking water, and protection from water and food borne diseases. The 12-day campaign, which will include distribution of 400 000 chlorine tablets and 30 000 IEC materials in rural areas of Deir-ez-Zor governorate, will target about 10 000 households and be supported by 110 community health workers and 12 supervisors who will attend a four-day workshop ahead of the campaign.

3.5. Qamishli Hub / Northeast Syria (NES)

The WHO team in Qamishli is monitoring and supporting administration of second doses of the AZ COVID-19 vaccine as part of a campaign that began in Al-Hasakeh on 25 July, in Eastern DEZ on 1 August, and in Ar-Raqqa SA/areas on 7 August.

WHO conducted a training workshop on IPC between 1 and 5 August that covered several topics including testing the quality of the sterilization process, germ isolation, and performance of bacterial sensitivity tests. The workshop engaged staff at Qamishli National Hospital. Another IPC workshop was held between 4 and 6 August for SOH staff in Al-Hasakeh.

The Qamishli sub-office continues to support the implementation of awareness-raising campaigns in camps to enhance and promote concepts of personal hygiene and environmental sanitation and raise awareness of camp residents in NES of the importance of hygiene and rational and safe use of drinking water in a bid to limit water born diseases during the summer. The campaign comprises several community sessions and tent by tent visits and reached 5 210 IDPs during the reporting period.



Raising Awareness campaign in the camps

WHO conducted a field visit to Al-Hasakeh DoH to assess public health lab capacity.

WHO donated several items in August, including:

- Five dialysis machines, 600 sessions;
- 2 500 standard Q COVID-19 Ag test kits, delivered to DOH Al-Hasaskeh on 5 August;
- Lab supplies for PCR testing;
- Essential medicines, delivered to partner NGOs depending on needs and requests;
- 272 units of F-75 therapeutic milk CAN 400g and 422 units of F-100 therapeutic milk CAN 400g, delivered to al Hikmah Hospital to support treatment of malnutrition.

WHO focal points are following up on the process of COVID-19 case management at Al Hol camp and the functionality of the CTF inside the camp, providing technical support.

The mental health focal point provided MH consultations to 23 patients. WHO began distributing psychotropic medications to health partners in NES, while mhGAP training is ongoing and as scheduled. WHO provided technical support for eight GBV cases in collaboration with UNHCR.

Regular visits continue to be conducted to 8 camps and 20 collective shelters to monitor water quality. Samples are tested using Bacterial, F.R.C, T.D.S, EC, PH, and turb tests. Of 1 178 samples collected from jerry cans and tested, 8.1% were found to be contaminated.



Water quality monitoring in the camps

The centre for malnutrition treatment received six new cases of children suffering from malnutrition. Five have since been discharged after recovery. A total of 12 cases are still at the centre in Al Hikmah Hospital receiving treatment.

4. Northwest Syria

4.1. Primary Health Care (PHC)

WHO is supporting 77 PHCs through three networks, covering gaps in salaries and operational costs, and is supporting an additional 15 PHCs indirectly through activities such as trainings. Of the 77 PHCs, 23 are completely supported through integrated service delivery networks, while others are partially supported. In addition to the networks, 8 PHCs are supported as a last resort coverage.

4.2. Referral System

The Referral System in North Aleppo, Afrin and Idleb is almost fully functional. A meeting was held with the main partner and the local health directorate to harmonize the work of all partners supporting the referral system through several donors (WHO, OCHA and GIZ).

COVID-19 referral and POEs are also functional, with some gaps and partial functionality in IDA covered areas. The staff at Bab Al-Hawa border crossing was not allowed to work from the north-west Syrian side and Turkish authorities suggested they host team operations within the Turkish territory.

4.3. Secondary Health Care

Salquin Maternity New-born and Child Health Hospital became active two weeks ago.

4.4. Non-Communicable Disease (NCD)

40 doctors and 80 nurses received PHC Network- NCD/PEN training. 465 were trained in perinatal depression.

NCD TWG with SIG are coordinating to create specific COVAX messages to encourage NCD patients and health workers to take the AstraZeneca vaccination. Draft messages were shared during the TWG meeting and can be categorized as follows:

- A. *Updating the WHO explainer about COVAX- AstraZeneca*
- B. *COVAX messages for health workers*
- C. *COVAX messages for NCD patients*
- D. *Benefits of COVAX to those fully vaccinated*
- E. *Q&A about COVAX*

The Thalassemia International Federation (TIF) delivered a training workshop in June for clinicians working at the eight thalassemia centres and made recommendations to improve the quality of care for the 997 thalassemia patients. Among their recommendations were: the development of a patient registry for all of all patients with thalassemia and sickle cell disease; the establishment of a central blood bank in NWS; centralization of the distribution of thalassemia medications and supplies; annual examination of patients by a cardiologist; preceptorships for healthcare professionals; continuous provision of psychosocial support; and the creation of a reference laboratory.

4.5. Tuberculosis

WHO will receive two Truenat (Molbio) machines, for the rapid diagnosis of TB and COVID-19 cases through PCR technology. 2 000 tests for COVID-19 will be received first, followed by 2 000 tests for TB a few months later. This system will replace the GeneXpert one and, with no embargo issue, will be installed at the TB centres in Afrin and Idlib cities. Lab technicians will be trained by the company producing this system. This support, provided by IOM, is the result of effective coordination and collaboration activities.

273 beneficiaries have visited a TB centres, of which there are three, during the last week; 10 have been diagnosed with TB

27 GeneXpert tests have been sent to Antakya; Five have been confirmed as positive.

12 sputum samples were sent today to Gaziantep university for DST and culture testing.

4.6. EWARN

Continued support of leishmaniasis activities through MENTOR is still under process.

Work on lab, surveillance, and contact tracing with WV- ACU (phase 4) is ongoing.

A meeting was held with ACU on 30 July during which the distribution of RDTs and VoCs, quality assurance for COVID-29 labs and PCR requirements for travellers from NWS to Turkey were discussed.

4.7. COVID-19

The COVAX vaccination campaign began on 1 May 2021. By 10 August, 54 666 front line health and community workers had been vaccinated, 468 in the past 24 hours.

As of 10 August, 27 002 confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been detected in NWS since the start of the pandemic. Of these, 22 333 are recovered and 727 were deceased.



COVID-19 vaccination campaign in NWS

4.8. Mental Health & Psycho-Social Support (MHPSS)

With new funding from FCDO, we will resume the 3 MHMCs with QRCS and the 2 MHMCs with UOSSM for four months from mid-August, focusing on non-specialized MHPSS services for areas where there are no MHPSS services and PHCs without MHPSS services.

WHO funded Azzaz Asylum Hospital, a specialized MH facility, for 3 months, while advocating to HC and OCHA to fully support this hospital from October 2021.

A number of funding gaps are of concern. Funding for Sarmada MHC will end by 30 September 2021 and funding for the MHPSS Helpline will end by 31 Aug 2021. A lack of funds is preventing capacity building in MHPSS, directly impacting planned ToT on School Mental Health, Suicide Prevention (a training manual tailored to NWS has been prepared), and mhGAP supervision. WHO is supporting doctors at the Azzaz Asylum Hospital through mhGAP.

Between January and March 2021, 186 people had suicidal thoughts, 142 attempted suicide and 31 committed it. In the past four days alone, four people have committed suicide in Azzaz city.

5. Vaccine Updates

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

6. 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](#)

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