











COVID-19 Update

COVID-19 STATISTICAL SUMMARY AT WHOLE OF SYRIA LEVEL

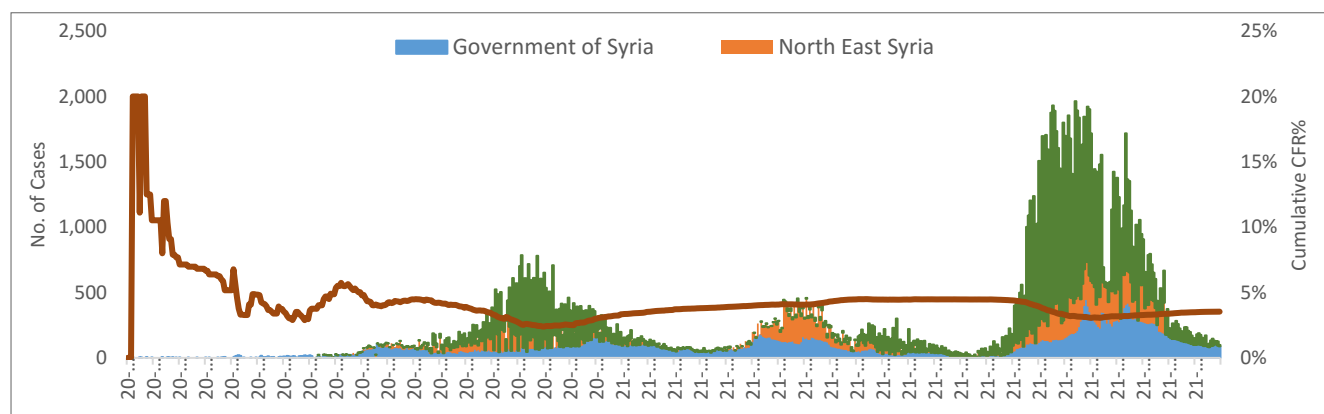
As of 12 December 2021

	178,778	Total cases (including 6,506 health workers)
	74,263	Active cases
	97,954	Recovered cases
	6,561	Deaths
	3.7%	Case Fatality Rate (CFR)
	15	COVID-19 functional laboratories
	559,180	COVID-19 tests done
	2,582	Overall testing rate per 100 000 population
	826	Incidence rate per 100 000 population (highest in Al-Hasakeh; 2,052)
	32.0%	Positivity rate

COVID-19 SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

A total of 178 788 cases of COVID-19, resulting in 6 561 associated deaths (CFR 3.7%), have thus far been reported across the whole of Syria since the start of the pandemic. Most were reported in Damascus, Deir ez Zor and Tartous.

Out of 178 778 COVID-19 confirmed cases 54.8% of cases (n=97,954) reported recovered, 41.5% (n=74 263) reported as still active cases, and 3.7% of cases (n=6 561) reported as deceased cases. The number of confirmed cases across WoS was down in week 49. No cases have been reported in NES due to a shortage in laboratory supplies. Recently, 20 000 antigen rapid diagnostic Tests (RDTs) have been delivered to Quamishli.



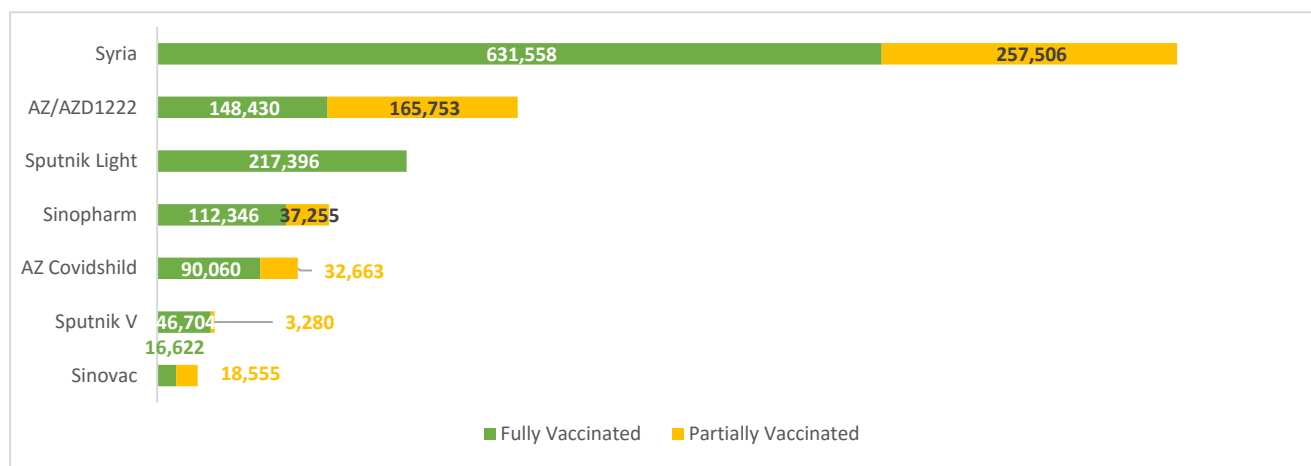
COVID-19 VACCINATION

As of 12 December 2021, in GOS controlled areas

According to the latest data supplied by the Ministry of Health, a total of 1 303 226 individuals (5.5% of the population) have received at least one vaccine dose and only 3.9 % of the population are fully vaccinated.

A vaccination campaign run by MoH began in November and will continue through December 2021 with the goal of vaccinating up to 20% of the adult population by the end of the year. Partners are supporting MOH to secure delivery of vaccines and 1 466 vaccination teams have been deployed at hospitals, PHC centres and mobile units across all Syrian governorates.

Administration of different vaccines in Syria



WHO-SYRIA RESPONSE

EPI VACCINATION ACTIVITIES:

A seven-day EPI vaccination drive targeting unimmunized children as part of a ‘catch up’ campaign was concluded across all Syrian governorates on 2 December. It included vaccination at fixed EPI centres as well as at newly established temporary fixed sites in selected areas near to target communities. Children aged under 5 years were inoculated with the 10 antigens included in the RI schedule for Syria, namely: BCG, Penta vaccine, MMR, bOPV and IPV, while children aged 24-59 months received a booster dose of vitamin A. Preliminary data indicates that at least 48 326 children were vaccinated though, as some areas are still collating data, the actual figure is likely higher.

Supported two EPI workshops that targeted all Syrian governorates and aimed at finalizing identification of needs and expectations related to the immunization programme and COVID-19 vaccination campaign for 2022. Each governorate submitted a list of objectives and a detailed plan of action for the year, which were shared with the PHC Directorate in Damascus.

Conducted an end of year coordination meeting with UNICEF to review the current situation vis-à-vis the EPI, COVID-19 vaccination activities, future plans and anticipated delivery of vaccines to Syria in 2022. A delivery of cold chain equipment is expected imminently and will include both EPI and COVID-19 vaccine storage facilities for all 14 governorates of Syria. WHO will support both capacity building activities and operations for EPI and COVID-19 vaccination activities.

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE AND NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Supported four central MOH committee meetings that facilitated a review and update of clinical guidelines on blood inherited disorders (such as thalassemia) and autoimmune diseases (such as multiple sclerosis), as well as on arthritis and dermatological, gastrointestinal, and renal diseases.

Delivered training to 120 MOH health care workers on non-communicable disease guidelines for CVDs and chronic respiratory diseases. A further 275 health workers and government officers from all Syrian governorates received training on the WHO framework for tobacco control (FCTC), while a total of 275 HCWs and tobacco coordinators received specialized training in communication skills at tobacco cessation clinics in the 11 Syrian governorates of Damascus, Rural Damascus, Dar'a, Quneitra, As-Sweida, Tartous, Lattakia, Homs, Hama, Aleppo and Deir-ez- Zor.



WHO supports training on guidelines for non-communicable diseases

Supported MOH in conducting supervisory visits to rural Damascus and As-Sweida to monitor and evaluate the quality of NCD health services and identify and address gaps. The Organization also delivered training to 100 cancer registrars on coding using WHO ICD O-3 and on the Surveillance, Epidemiology and End Result (SEER) programme.

SECONDARY AND TERTIARY HEALTH CARE (STHC)

Visited the Children's Hospital in Aleppo to oversee progress and assess readiness for the installation of medical equipment, including an oxygen generator, donated by WCO.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

To be provided in the next report.

TRAUMA

A total of 50 doctors, nurses and anaesthesia technicians working at isolation centres and ICU and emergency departments in As-Sweida and Damascus received training in ICU patient management and major incident medical management and support at hospitals.

Meanwhile 25 prosthetics and orthotics technicians, physiotherapists and psychiatrists in Damascus attended training workshops in the field of disability and rehabilitation at the MOH centre for prosthetics and rehabilitation in the capital.

Over 16 043 treatments of life-saving medicines and 20 PPE kits were delivered to health partners in Damascus, Lattakia and Al-Hasakeh. These deliveries aim to enhance the capacity of public health facilities in the delivery of timely and appropriate responses to emergency cases, including cases of COVID-19.

HIV/TB

To be provided in the next report.

MENTAL HEALTH (MH)

Three campaigns supported by WHO were launched to address women's health and GBV during the '16 days of activism'. The campaigns, which include COVID-19 RCCE and MHPSS components, will continue to run in Homs, Hama, Lattakia and Aleppo throughout December. Campaign activities are being run by 130 health and community workers who received training in advance and are being supported by a WHO technical team. A total of 21 824 beneficiaries have attended one of 1 095 sessions delivered to date.

WHO is also supporting the emergency response for Dar’a. Implemented in partnership with two NGOs, the response has included the delivery of 4 111 life-saving interventions by health and community workers who have been trained and retrained in psychological first aid and delivery of mhGAP consultations.

IHR

MoH and WHO are equipping the medical point at Abu Kamal in Deir-ez-Zor with medical devices and furniture to enable the provision of health services to travellers in line with IHR (2005). WHO is also establishing a medical point at Jubousiya ground-crossing in Homs and another at Judeidet Yabous in Rural Damascus, rehabilitating spaces and equipping them with medical devices. The three medical points will be operational by the end of the year.

MoH and WHO organized and held a workshop in Damascus on public health emergency contingency planning at points of entry in Syria on 12-14 December attended by 40 national stakeholders from the ministries of health, transportation, agriculture and interior. The workshop facilitated enhanced alignment among stakeholders at national and sub-national levels to ensure optimal emergency response at designated PoEs, as well as the production of a draft public health emergency contingency plan for designated PoEs to strengthen emergency preparedness and response.

MCH / REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

To be provided in the next report.

NUTRITION

Data collection within the neonatal resuscitation programme is ongoing. Data collected from 51 hospitals across 12 governorates indicates that more than 5 399 services were delivered throughout the month of October.

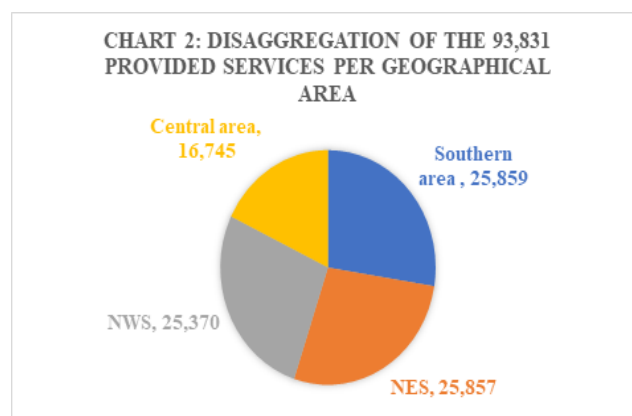
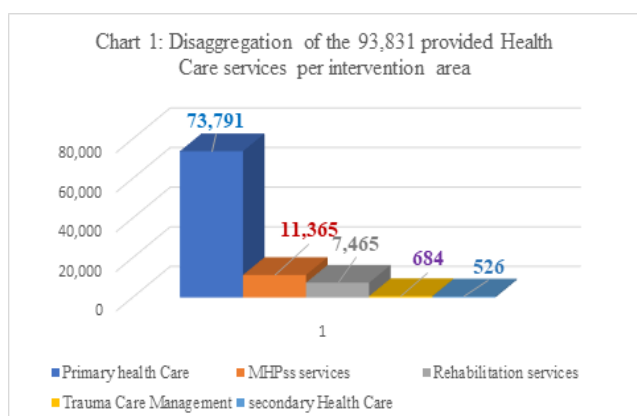
Data collection within the newborn care at home programme is also ongoing and indicates that 1 930 home visits were conducted across 12 governorates in October, 29 of which resulted in referrals to specialized care facilities.

HEALTH SYSTEM

To be provided in the next report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (NGOs)

WHO supports 19 implementing partners and four community initiatives to strengthen health responses across Syria. Two are in Damascus, two in Dar’a, three in Rural Damascus, four in Aleppo, four in NES, one in Qunitera two in Homs and one in Hama.



COORDINATION

- Attended a joint MoH and health sector technical consultation in Damascus on 9 December to discuss key achievements, challenges and plans related to the COVID-19 response and preparedness.
- Launched a 10-day regional level assessment of the capacity of health sector partners on 6 December.
- Began to fully inventory health sector projects (HRP and non HRP).
- Presented on behalf of the Syria Health Sector at the EMRO technical workshop on attacks on health care initiatives in FCV countries, held in Istanbul, Turkey.
- Participated in a two-day WoS Health Cluster meeting (all hubs) in Amman, Jordan on 13-14 December to address key components of the 2021 and 2022 Humanitarian Program Cycle.
- Presented on behalf of the Syria Health Sector at a technical meeting held in Amman, Jordan on 7-8 December within the framework of the joint project with Johns Hopkins Center for Humanitarian Health on improving monitoring capacity in humanitarian and fragile settings in the eastern Mediterranean region.
- Updated the health sector contact list, which is comprised of: one national authority, nine UN agencies, 13 international INGOs, 87 national NGOs, eight observers and four donors. There are five sub-national sector coordination groups and three sub-sector WGs.
- Followed up on a request by MoFA to support Jasim National Hospital; the coordination of health supplies via planned XL convoys to NWS; the establishment of EOC in Damascus; the availability of essential medicines among health sector partners, including in NES; the lack of testing kits in NES.
- Provided health sector inputs at the Al-Hol camp coordination meeting organized by UNHCR.
- Organized and facilitated the Al-Hol camp health sector coordination meeting.
- Followed up with partners on issues related to health sector activities at camps in NES.
- WHO joined a WFP convoy delivering a crossline shipment of 13 tonnes of PPE supplies on 9 December 2021. Supplies were delivered from Aleppo to a WFP warehouse in Sarmada, Idlib and will be distributed to various PHCs and communities.

INFORMATION PRODUCTS

- Information about site visits to public hospitals and health districts in the governorate of Hama to monitor civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) for deaths, births, primary health care and COVID-19 vaccination.
- Updates to the COVID-19 dashboard and online item tracking system.
- Key information on health facilities, based on HeRAMS.
- Updated maps for health sector interventions.

COMMUNICATION

A UN interagency technical meeting was held on 2 December 2021 with the aim of enhancing delivery of messaging related to the safety and efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines to all target groups in order to generate vaccine demand and improve uptake. The meeting was attended by WHO, UNICEF and other UN sister agencies, as well as the Ministry of Health and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, all of which reinforced their commitment and discussed means of increasing coordination through the mapping of RCCE activities on the ground.

To raise awareness among and enhance partnership with other stakeholders, a series of meetings were held with local NGOs, governorate focal points and influencers in a bid to amplify messaging about the efficacy of vaccines and the significance of each partner's role in generating demand among various target groups.

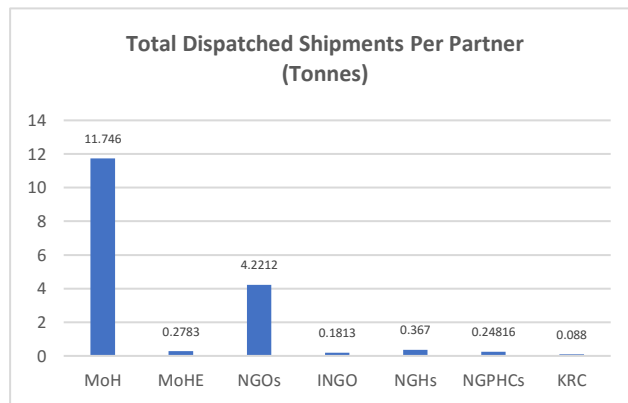
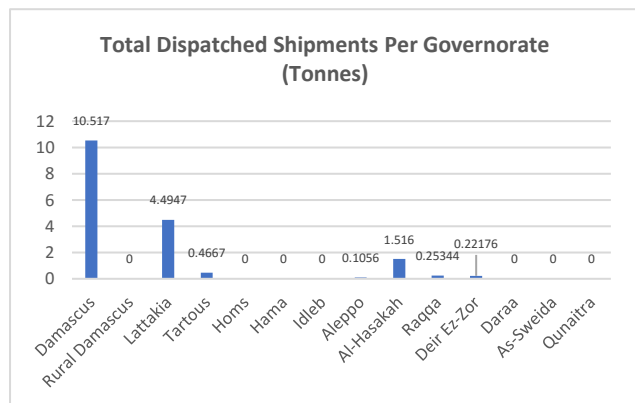
WHO continued to address rumours and misinformation related to COVID-19 and vaccines through social media networks, including those related to Omicron, the newly identified variant of concern.



WHO-MOH joint meeting with Influencers to generate demand on COVID-19 vaccines among various target groups.

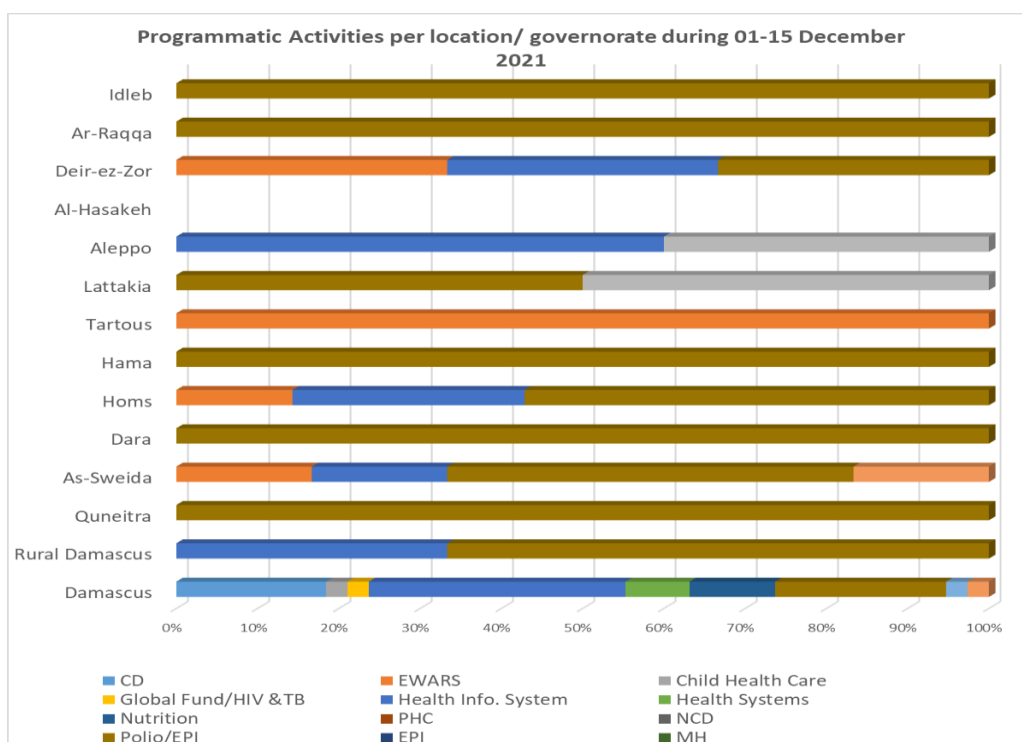
OPERATIONS SUPPORT AND LOGISTICS

WHO dispatched 17.13 tonnes of medical and lab supplies, kits and equipment to seven governorates. They were received by 10 MoH facilities, two MoHE facilities, 20 NGOs, three INGOs, KRC, four NGHs and two NGPHCs.



CAPACITY BUILDING

A total of 81 capacity building activities attended by 2 025 participants were supported by WHO during the reporting period.



WHO SYRIA SUBOFFICE RESPONSE

ALEPPO

A COVID-19 vaccination campaign began in the governorate of Aleppo on 1 November 2021. Vaccines have been delivered to 65 health centres daily. An additional 42 mobile teams were mobilized on or after 9 November to provide vaccination services 12 days per month. Vaccination activities are also conducted at the hospital level.

WHO, through four ongoing grants, is supporting the work of implementing partners at six PHCs, eight MMTs and two trauma and rehabilitation centres. During the reporting period, they provided a total of 35 890 health care services.

Active identification of cases of TB began at the central prison in Aleppo governorate targeting around 3 000 male, female and juvenile prisoners. By 12 December, 1 000 prisoners had attended awareness sessions and 30 suspected cases had been tested, of which seven came back positive.

The Ministry of Health, in cooperation with WHO Syria, organized a one-day workshop in Aleppo governorate under the slogan ‘Get back on track, focus on outreach and testing’ that invited different community representatives to discuss delivery of essential HIV health services, particularly within the context of COVID-19.

LATTAKIA

Within the ‘16 days of activism’, WHO held an awareness campaign in partnership with eight NGOs in Lattakia that primarily targeted women and focused on coping mechanisms against stress, wellbeing and GBV.

To enhance IPC measures at health and community level, WHO delivered 100 000 PPE items to the DOH and 50 000 to NGOs in Lattakia and Tartous.

The COVID-19 vaccination campaign is ongoing in both Lattakia and Tartous. DOH deployed teams, which include communication officers, to all HFs and health districts. Mobile teams supported by NGOs have been promoting vaccine uptake and vaccinating people unable to visit HFs.



WHO supported campaigns in various governorates during the ‘16 days of activism’

Homs

Two WHO-supported mobile medical teams are providing primary health services in rural areas of eastern Hama. During the reporting period, 2 363 primary health services, 841 PSS and 328 health awareness sessions were delivered.

WHO is supporting two organizations, Alber and Social Services Association, to deliver services in Homs, at three static points in northern rural Homs (Ar-Rastan, Talbiseh and Taldu) and through two mobile medical clinics in rural areas in the north, south-east and south-west. Both primary and secondary health care services are being delivered, as is mental health and psychosocial support to people suffering from psychological distress and domestic violence. During the reporting period, medical consultations were attended by 7 664 beneficiaries, of which two were for trauma and 423 were for mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS).



WHO-supported raising awareness session in rural Hama

The non-governmental organization Lamset Shefa, with the support of WHO and in cooperation with the Family Wellbeing Center in Dar Al Kabera and two mobile medical teams in the north and east of Rural Homs, have been providing primary and secondary health care services and mental health and psychosocial support to people suffering from psychological distress and domestic violence. Medical consultations were attended by 7 240 beneficiaries, of

which five were secondary, 129 were for trauma and 773 were for mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services.

A 35-day campaign focused on COVID-19 and GBV awareness began in Homs and Hama on 21 November. Campaign activities include engagement with the community through social listening, focus group discussions and individual consultations that are being carried out by 48 well-trained community workers. The campaign aims to: raise awareness about violence against women; promote gender equality, women’s human rights and women’s rights on health; deliver RCCE messages on mental health and combat stigma; promote MHPSS for children, the elderly, care givers and families using different WHO and IASC adapted guidelines; and provide the community with stress coping skills and self-care strategies. During the reporting period, 9 181 beneficiaries attended at least one of 413 sessions delivered.

DEIR-EZ-ZOR

WHO visited health centres and hospitals in the city of Deir-ez-Zor as part of an evaluation of health information systems in the province and to monitor needs.

A WHO team visited the COVID-19 vaccination centre in the governorate to follow up on work processes and identify and monitor primary difficulties and challenges.



WHO team conducting field visit to the COVID-19 vaccination centre in DZ governorate

QUAMISHLI HUB / NORTH-EAST SYRIA (NES)

The COVID-19 vaccination campaign is still ongoing in the governorates of Al-Hasakeh and Ar-Raqqah through 23 fixed health centres and 14 mobile teams in Al-Hasakeh and eight mobile teams and five fixed centres in Ar-Raqqah.

The monitoring of water quality is ongoing through regular visits to 11 camps and 28 collective shelters and the provision of bacterial, F.R.C, T.D.S, EC, PH, and Turb tests. Of 943 samples taken from the camps for testing, 1.16% were found to be contaminated at the jerry can level.

The seven-day EPI vaccination drive targeting unimmunized children as part of a ‘catch up’ campaign that began on 24 November ended on 2 December. A total of 17 447 children (96% of the target) were vaccinated, of which 4 869 had partially dropped out (128% of target) and 224 had fully dropped out of their immunization schedule.

To ensure that people have access to safe water and to identify sources of pollution, WHO visited districts of Deir-ez-Zor east of the river on 7-10 December to monitor and assess issues of concern to environmental health. Of 51 samples collected for testing from 23 areas, 1.96% were found to be contaminated at the level of HH tanks.



A WHO team monitors the polio immunization campaign held in Al-Hasakeh governorate

WHO is providing life-saving treatment to cases of malnutrition identified within camps and local communities. During the reporting period, 21 patients were admitted to the malnutrition treatment centres at Al-Hikmeh Hospital and Ar-Raqqah Treatment Centre, while 16 cases were discharged after full recovery.

NORTH-WEST SYRIA

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE (PHC)

All three integrated health service delivery networks in Harim, Afrin and North Aleppo are fully functional.

WHO supports 14 PHCs in Idleb as part of last resort coverage and will consider supporting and continuing to support a few more PHCs.

TUBERCULOSIS

During the reporting period, a total of 114 beneficiaries visited one of the three TB centres, seven of which were diagnosed with TB. Five of 20 samples sent to Antakya for GeneXpert testing came back positive.

With WHO support a training course on innovations in treatment and management of DR-TB was initiated and attended by Syrian doctors.

EWARN

The outbreak of leishmaniasis in Ras Al Ain, Tel Abiad continues to be of concern as case numbers remain high and supplies, consumables and medications for treatment remain scarce.

COVID-19

The number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 has declined significantly in the past week as the positivity rate has decreased to 15%. While Afrin, Harim, Idleb, Ariha and Jebel Saman are considered high risk areas, other districts have been classified as medium or low risk.

Fewer than 1 000 tests are being conducted per day in NWS, due to a decline in both suspected cases and demand for testing. A gradual increase is however expected as testing has now begun at new sample collection sites at isolation centres. The continuation of screening activities will be discussed with partners next week.

MoH has agreed to run genomic sequencing for samples from NWS. Each week, 20 samples from NWS will be sent to the Ankara Reference Laboratory.

Occupancy rates are also decreasing in line with a recent decline in the number of cases. The occupancy rate at hospitals is 21%, at ICUs is 38 % (19% intubated) and at CCTCs is 33%.

A WHO partner has allocated a haemodialysis room, at the dialysis centre in Daret Ezza, to patients with COVID-19 in an attempt to limit the spread of the virus, taking the total number of WHO supported dialysis rooms dedicated to COVID-19 patients up to three.

A total of 92 585 confirmed cases were reported in NWS during the reporting period (36 676 in Idleb, 55 909 in Aleppo). The overall daily positivity rate in NWS is therefore 4.37%, as of 09 December 2021.

WHO continues to support 61 COVID-19 vaccination sites in NWS, of which 20 are fixed and 41 are outreach and mobile clinics.

A total of 217 356 people in NWS (5.1% of the population) have received at least one dose of the vaccine. Of them, 104 983 (2.4%) are fully vaccinated.

IMMUNIZATION

All 93 routine immunization teams and sites remain active and functional.

WHO and technical partners participated in the EOC measles vaccination campaign conducted by MSF in partnership with the Al Ameen organization in Tel Abiad and Ras Alain. The campaign targeted more than 156 000 children aged between 6 months and 10 years and took place between 6 and 22 November 2021, achieving overall coverage of 79%.

Vaccine Updates

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

Useful Links

- [Syria Interactive Dashboards](#)
- [Syria Page in Health Cluster Site](#)
- [WHO Syria Site](#)
- [EMRO Dashboard](#)
- [COVID-19 Situation in EMRO Region Reports](#)

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