











1. COVID-19 Update

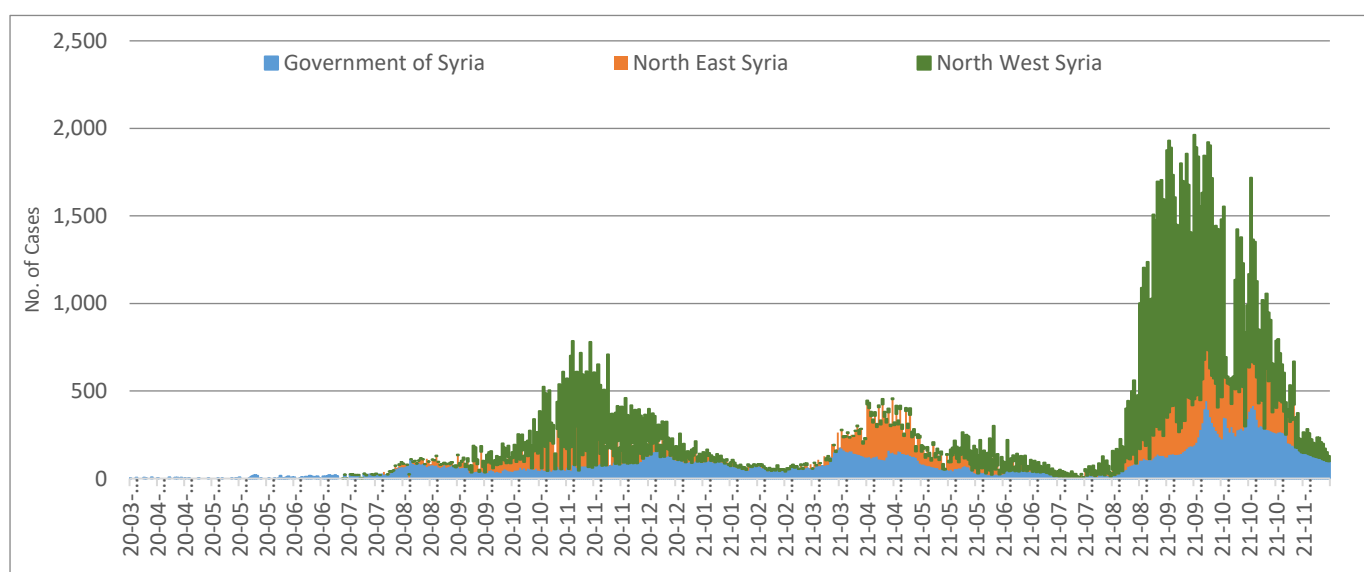
COVID-19 STATISTICAL SUMMARY AT WHOLE OF SYRIA LEVEL

As of 27 November 2021

	176,814	Total cases (including 6492 health workers)
	77,459	Active cases
	92,938	Recovered cases
	6,417	Deaths
	3.6%	Case Fatality Rate (CFR)
	15	COVID-19 functional laboratories
	535,966	COVID-19 tests done
	2,475	Overall testing rate per 100 000 population
	817	Incidence rate per 100 000 population (highest in Al-Hasakeh; 2050)
	33.0%	Positivity rate

COVID-19 situation at Whole of Syria level

22 March 2020 – 27 November 2021



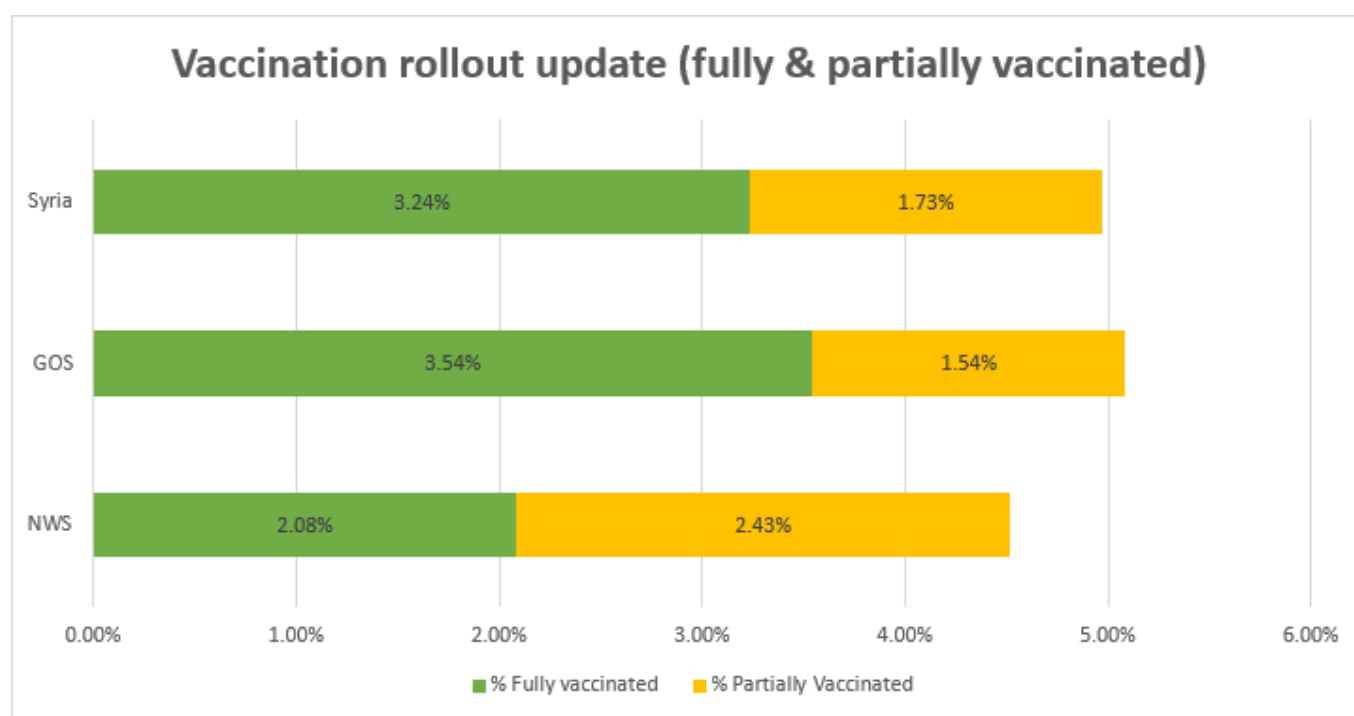
A total of 175 814 cases of COVID-19, resulting in 6 417 associated deaths (CFR 3.6%), have thus far been reported across the whole of Syria since the start of the pandemic.

The number of confirmed cases across WoS was down by 20.6% (n=1 326) in week 47 of 2021 compared to the previous week (n=1 670). Cases are down by 21.93% in areas controlled by GoS, and by 35.72% in NWS. No cases have been reported in NES due to a shortage in laboratory supplies. Meanwhile, 20 000 antigen rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs) have been delivered to Qamishli.

Over the past seven days, an average of 462 confirmed cases and 5 deaths were reported in GoS controlled areas. Most were reported in Damascus (21%), Dar'a (12.8%), and As-Swida (13%).

COVID-19 Vaccination

Vaccination supply status and plan (as of 29 November 2021)



A total of 1 356 000 doses of the Sinovac vaccine were delivered to the Syrian Ministry of Health on 5 November 2021 through the COVAX mechanism. This delivery of vaccines is the largest received by Syria through COVAX since a first consignment was delivered in April of this year. The current vaccines are sufficient to cover 10% of the population, however vaccines in the pipeline will be sufficient to cover additional 28%. There are no predictable dates for the delivery of more vaccines into Syria. All vaccines are administered as part of the ongoing vaccination campaign nationwide.

According to the latest data provided by the Syrian Ministry of Health, **5.1 %** of the population have received at least one vaccine dose, and **3.5%** are fully vaccinated.

In Northwest Syria, **4.55%** of the population have received at least one vaccine dose and **2.11%** of the population are fully vaccinated.

A vaccination campaign run by MoH began in November and will continue through December 2021 in the hope to vaccinate up to 20% of the adult population by the end of the year. Partners are supporting MOH to secure delivery

of vaccines and around 1 466 vaccination teams are deployed at hospitals, PHC centres and mobile units across all Syrian governorates.

WHO-SYRIA RESPONSE

EPI vaccination activities:

A seven-day EPI vaccination drive targeting unimmunized children as part of a ‘catch up’ campaign was launched across all Syrian governorates on 24 November and will continue until 2 December. It includes vaccination at fixed EPI centres as well as at newly established temporary fixed sites in selected areas near target communities. Children aged under two years will be administered with the 10 antigens included in the RI schedule in Syria, namely: BCG, Penta vaccine, MMR, bOPV and IPV, while children aged 24-59 months will receive a booster dose of vitamin A.

Primary Health Care and Non-Communicable Diseases

WHO, in collaboration with a technical officer from MOH, participated in a virtual webinar on legal aspects of WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) implementation in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region.

WHO supported the coordination of a joint EMRO - MOHE meeting to discuss the development of a case study for evidence-informed policy making on COVID-19 that is based on the Regional Network of Institutions for Evidence and Data to Policy (NEDtP).

Secondary and Tertiary Health Care (STHC)

To mark World Diabetes Day 2021, and under the patronage of the Minister of Health, WHO supported a one-day seminar attended by more than 150 specialists from different national entities.

WHO Syria participated in a virtual meeting, supported by the regional office, on the Syria Hospital Country Profile that was developed using the WHO assessment tool.

The CO also prepared for the virtual International Agency for Research in Cancer/Global Initiative for Cancer Registry Development (IARC/GICR) - WHO EMRO course on basic cancer registration that began on 29 November and will continue through to 2 December.

WHO supported MOH in the delivery of an online course titled Virtualization of Hospital Emergency Preparedness and Response to Infectious Diseases Outbreaks (HEPRIDO), and of three workshops on AMR and infectious disease surveillance attended by 50 trainees from DOH Damascus and Lattakia.

Trauma

A total of 125 health workers from As-Sweida, Damascus, Homs and Hama attended training workshops on the management of ICU patients, major incident medical management and support at hospitals, and advanced life



WHO marks World Diabetes Day with a seminar attended by 150 specialists

support for children and adults. Attendees included doctors, nurses and anaesthesia technicians working at isolation centres and ICU and emergency departments.

A total of 75 health workers from Damascus, including prosthetics and orthotics technicians, physiotherapists and psychiatrists, attended training workshops in the fields of disability and rehabilitation at the MOH centre of prosthetics and rehabilitation in the capital.

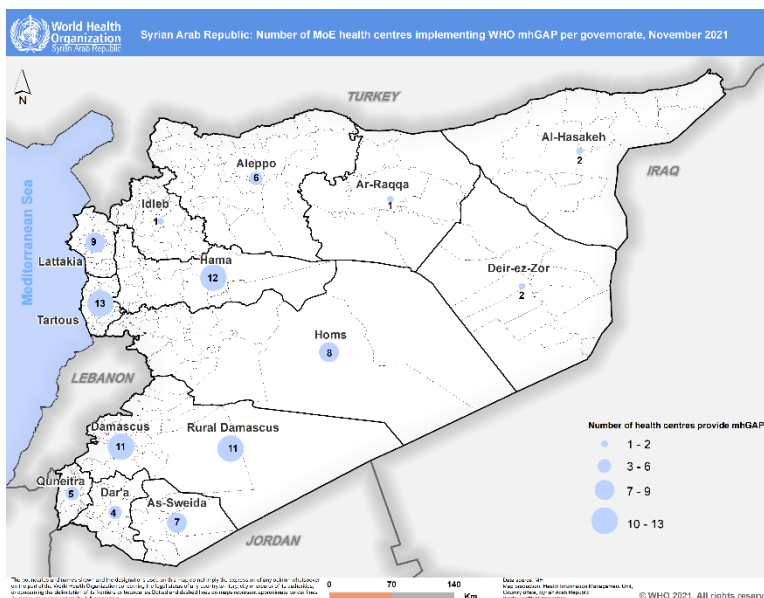
Over 5 000 treatments of life-saving medicines were delivered to health partners in Aleppo, Hama and Al- Hasakeh. An additional 61 pieces of medical equipment, including ICU and patient hospital beds, and a clinical chemistry analyser, were delivered to isolation hospitals in Homs, Lattakia, Tartous, Damascus and Deir-ez-Zor. 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.

Mental Health (MH)

WHO continues to support 20 ongoing mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) projects across the country, which are being monitored by the MH unit and a team of experts. Plans for the technical supervision for all MHPSS workers have been designed and are being implemented to ensure the provision of quality services. More than 112 349 services have been delivered at 914 locations since the beginning of 2021.

Several risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) activities related to mental health are underway. Four campaigns focused on women’s health and which include components related to COVID-19 and MHPSS are being run as part of a package of activities underway during the 16-day of activism campaign that began on 25 November. Campaign activities were preceded by training workshops for 130 health and community workers, focus group discussions and the development of a Q&A handout.

WHO is following up closely with the Ministry of Education and its related directorates (including those of school health, research, and planning) in 14 governorates to draft: a strategic framework to systemize integrated MHPSS for school-aged children, in coordination with other national partners; an extended global action plan for 2013-2030; and regional guidelines for SMHP, all of which will consider multi-layered services, strategies for prevention and promotion, and the development of an information system to document outcomes. At present, 93 health centres are covered by the mhGAP programme and 932 schools are covered by a specialized package of mental health services for schools.



The Organization is also supporting the emergency response for Dar’a, in partnership with two NGOs, which has included delivery of 3 865 life-saving interventions by health and community workers who have been trained and retrained in psychological first aid and delivery of mhGAP consultations.

Points of Entry (PoE)

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.

Environmental Health

WHO supports the monitoring of water quality in Rural Damascus, Aleppo, Deir-ez-Zor and at IDP camps in NES. During the reporting period, tests were conducted on 79 water samples from three villages in the northern part of Aleppo, 16 samples from six districts in Rural Damascus and 958 samples from the NES governorates of Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa, and Deir-ez-Zor, including from 11 IDP camps and 29 collective shelters in Al-Hasakeh. Among them, contaminants were found in 52 water sources (65.8%) in rural Aleppo, 13 sources in Rural Damascus (72.2%), 35 sources in NES (3.1%) and three sources in Deir-ez-Zor (12.5%).

In response to the spike in cases of watery diarrhoea observed in Deir-ez-Zor since April 2021, WHO has been supporting the Ministry of Local Administration and Environment (MOLAE) to conduct advanced laboratory analysis of water specimens collected from Deir-ez-Zor on a weekly basis. On 1-15 November, a total of 20 samples (12 from the water network, seven from a water treatment station, and one from a well) were collected in the districts of Mouhesen and Khasham in Deir-ez-Zor, of which 18 samples were found to be contaminated with E. coli and salmonella.

WHO provided 180 000 chlorine tablets (NaDCC 67g) to the Nearous camp in Al-Hasakeh to ensure the safety of drinking water sufficient for two months.

Non-Communicable Diseases

WHO has delivered TB medicines to the National TB Programme to support the treatment of approximately 1 400 sensitive TB adult patients throughout 2022.

TB mobile clinics in Aleppo and Rural Damascus are still functioning, at which a total of 1 273 beneficiaries have attended 19 awareness sessions. Of 93 suspected cases tested for TB, 11 have been confirmed as positive.

In collaboration with EMRO, WCO and MOH, the National TB Programme has begun to update the national strategic plan for the coming five years, in addition to developing a framework for the implementation of standardized and context-appropriate TB prevention, care, and control services, including TB/HIV collaborative activities across MER countries for refugees, IDPs, and returnees. Two consultants will support the finalization of these activities.

Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs)

WHO continues to support the National Leishmaniasis Programme and responses to other NTDs. To this end, training sessions were delivered on laboratory diagnosis of protozoa by microscopy and serological rapid tests for visceral leishmaniasis. RDTs were distributed to hospitals and leishmaniasis centres to support prompt diagnosis of VL.

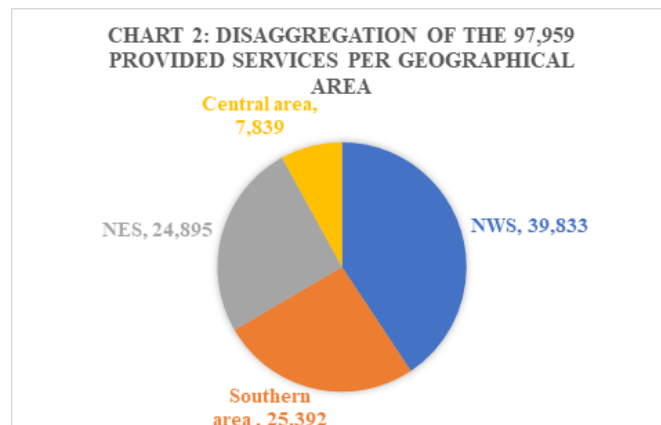
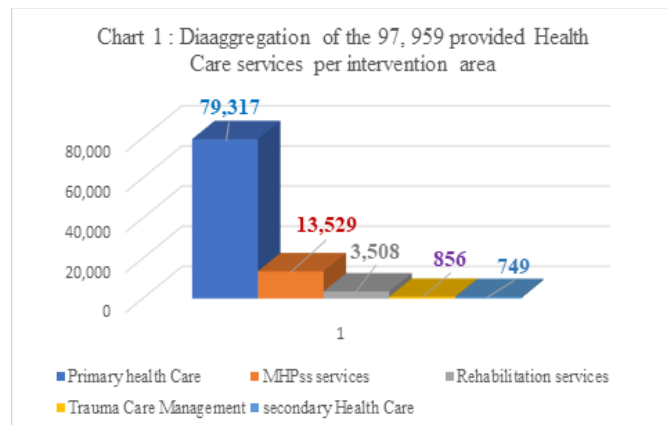
Nutrition

WHO met with FAO to prepare a proposal for Codex Alimentarius in cooperation with the with Syrian Standards Committee.

Data collection within the IMCI programme is ongoing. Data was collected throughout October from 450 health centres catering to 100 children, 16 458 received special care for diseases and 249 were referred to hospitals.

Community Engagement (NGOs)

WHO supports 18 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, two in Homs and one in Hama.



Coordination

Syria Health Cluster Coordination

WHO Syria:

- Arranged bilateral meetings with health sector partners (UN agencies, donor agencies), including USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, Syria GBV sub-sector and the Johns Hopkins Center for Humanitarian Health.
- Organized and facilitated a Health Sector coordination meeting, with COVID-19 and COVAX updates as a standing agenda item.
- Attended the HCT meeting and co-presented data on COVID-19 needs and gaps as well as funding requirements for 2022.
- Attended several meetings at the Whole of Syria level, including the Whole of Syria bi-weekly 3LC call and an all hubs meeting to discuss final HNO and severity scale changes.
- Organized a series of meeting with UN agencies in preparation for a mission from WHO New York Office. Attendees included representatives from WFP, OCHA, UNFPA, UNICEF.
- Organized a field mission to north-east Syria.

North-east Syria Cluster Coordination

WHO Syria:

- Provided health sector inputs during the Al-Hol camp coordination meetings organized by UNHCR held on 16, 23 and 30 November, and at the camp coordination meeting for formal and informal camps.
- Organized and facilitated the Al-Hol camp health sector coordination meeting held on 18 and 25 November, and a north-east Syria inter hub call that brought together major health sector partners in NES on 16 November.
- Attended the Area HCT meeting held on 25 November at which the inter-sector severity and PiN estimations at sub-district level in NES were discussed.

- Followed up with partners on issues related to health sector activities at camps in NES.

Crossline Supplies (NES and NWS)

- A joint meeting between WCO Syria and WHO Gaziantep was held on 23 November at which operational planning for crossline supplies to north-west Syria were discussed.
- A crossline convoy of five trucks delivered supplies to north-east Syria, including haemodialysis sessions for adults and children, different types of insulin, RDT COVID-19 kits, trolleys, autoclaves, oxygen cylinders, real-time PCR machine Rotor Gene Q, a refrigerator and different types of medicines. The delivery weighed 50 tons and included supplies sufficient to provide 96 199 courses of treatment courses.

External Relations and Communication

WHO continues to address rumours and misinformation through the amplification of messages on social media networks.

The Organization also addressed the public health threat of antimicrobial resistance and marked World Antimicrobial Awareness Week 2021 (18-24 November) by lighting up hospitals in Damascus and Aleppo to raise awareness of drug-resistant infections that can affect anyone everywhere.

WHO Country Office conducted two sessions for training of trainers that targeted more than 70 health professionals from governorates across Syria. The workshops, led by an RCCE regional consultant, addressed identification and management of varying levels of vaccine acceptance, different skills used to respond to COVID-19 and approaches for increasing vaccine uptake among different community groups. Attendees were also encouraged share and discuss mental health challenges associated with COVID-19.



The facades of hospitals in Damascus and Aleppo were lit up to mark World Antimicrobial Awareness Week2021

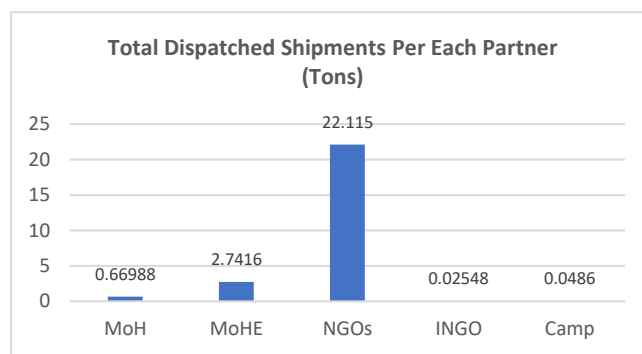
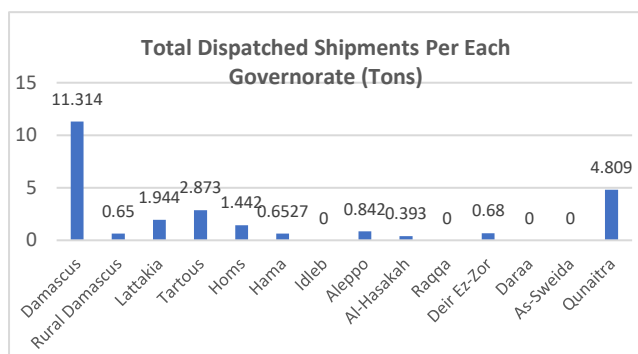
Information Products and Related Activities

WHO produced and shared:

- Flash update # 65 (22 Nov 2021) about the recent incident against As-Sweida public hospital (Zaid Ash-Shariti).
- Information about site visits to public hospitals and health districts in the governorate of Hama affiliated to MoH 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.

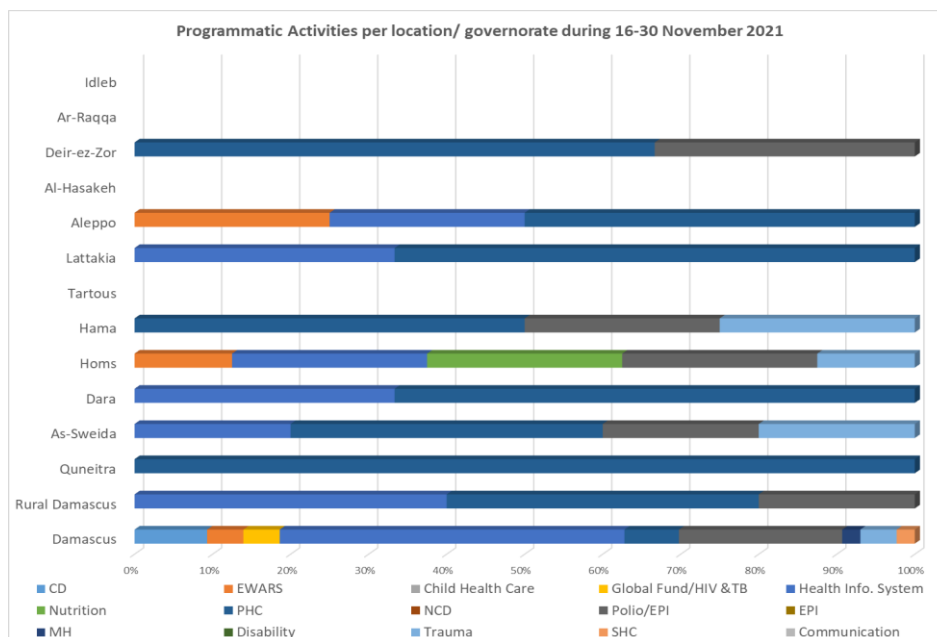
Operations Support and Logistics

WHO dispatched 25.6 tons of medical and lab supplies, kits and equipment to 10 of Syria's 14 governorates. They were received by 15 MoH facilities, three MoHE facilities, two NGOs, ICRC and the Blumont-Nawroz camp.



Capacity Building

A total of 80 capacity building activities attended by 2030 participants were supported by WHO during the reporting period.



WHO Syria Suboffice Response

Aleppo Suboffice

The number of cases of COVID-19 confirmed each day has decreased slightly during the reporting period. During November, 421 cases were reported by Aleppo DoH.

Occupancy rates at the public isolation centre are however still high, at 80-90%, as are occupancy rates in private sector hospitals.

A COVID-19 vaccination campaign began in the governorate of Aleppo on 01 November 2021. Vaccines have been

delivered daily at 65 health centres. 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.

On the occasion of World Anti-Microbial Awareness Week, WHO supported the delivery of an awareness workshop at the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Aleppo. Attendees included 300 medical students from the faculties of medicine, pharmacy and dentistry. The workshop included a series of lectures on the importance of the rational use of medicines.

WHO, through four ongoing grants, is supporting the work of implementing partners at eight PHCs, 11 MMTs and two trauma and rehabilitation centres. During the reporting period 44 089 health care services were provided.

TB mobile clinics continue to provide health care services in Aleppo, where a total of 563 beneficiaries attended one of 14 awareness sessions. Of 61 suspected cases of TB tested, nine were confirmed as positive.



WHO provides health cases services in rural Aleppo

Lattakia Suboffice

WHO, in collaboration with Tartous DOH, supported a one-day workshop targeting eight NGOs operating in Tartous, with the aim of enhancing the capacity of community health workers in strategic planning in order to strengthen their role as part of the health response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On the occasion of World Anti-Microbial Awareness Week, WHO, in cooperation with Tishreen University in Lattakia, conducted a one-day workshop attended by medical students from the faculties of medicine, pharmacy and dentistry. The workshop included a series of lectures on the importance of the rational use of antibiotics.

With WHO support the first public COVID-19 laboratory in Lattakia was officially opened. WHO provided all necessary equipment and supplies, in addition to training the lab technicians, while UNDP supported the rehabilitation works.

To increase vaccination uptake in Tartous governorate, WHO, in collaboration with Lattakia DoH, delivered an awareness session for 90 frontline community workers to strengthen their capacity to advocate for COVID-19 preventive measures, combat rumours and respond to vaccine hesitancy.



WHO supports launching the first public COVID-19 lab in Tartous governorate

Homs Suboffice

WHO participated in an intersectoral mission on 24 November 2021 to southern Idleb, areas of Maar Shamarin, Jarjanaz and Tah municipalities to assess the health situation, needs and gaps. Returnees in these areas amount to

approximately 450 families. Two WHO-supported mobile medical teams are now providing primary health services in rural areas of eastern Hama. During the reporting period, 630 primary health services, 2 335 PSS and 196 health awareness sessions were delivered.

WHO conducted field monitoring visits to three health centres in Albarodiyah, Assad Medical Complex and Hay AlNasr PHC to monitor the COVID-19 vaccination process. Acceptance rates are improving, with 64 % of medical staff in DOH Hama currently vaccinated.

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, has 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 6 230 beneficiaries, of which five were secondary, 175 were for trauma, and 773 were mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services.



WHO – supported mobile medical teams provide PHC services in rural Hama.

Deir-ez-Zor Suboffice

The Organization supported the Faculty of Education at Al-Furat University in Deir-ez-Zor to conduct an interactive session under the initiative 'Non-Smoking Universities' that was attended by more than 30 students.

WHO conducted field visits to the following partner NGOS in November to assess and evaluate their work:

- Al Ber & Al Ihsan, at the Tebni medical mobile team.
- The medical centre for Al Ber & Al Ihsan in Abu Kamal.
- The medical centre for Al Ber & Al Ihsan in the village of Hatle.
- Health Promotion Charity, at the Tebni medical mobile team.



WHO supports AL Furat University to deliver an awareness session under the initiative 'Free Smoking Universities'.

WHO conducted a field visit to Al-Hussainiya village in rural Deir-ez-Zor to monitor the process of the COVID-19 vaccination campaigns.

Quamishli Suboffice / North-east Syria (NES)

The monitoring of water quality is ongoing through regular visits to eight camps and 20 collective shelters and the provision of bacterial, F.R.C, T.D.S, EC, PH, and Turb tests. Of 966 samples taken from the camps and tested, 3.1% were found to be contaminated at the jerry can level.

WHO is providing life-saving treatment to the malnutrition cases identified within the camps and local communities. During the reporting period, 24 patients were admitted to the malnutrition treatment centres at Al-Hikmeh Hospital and Ar-Raqqa Treatment Centre, while 20 cases were discharged after full recovery.

WHO works to cover the gap in secondary health care in NES and ensures timely referral and interventions for those most in need within the community and camps through partnerships with two organisations. During the reporting period, 775 secondary and trauma cases were admitted to Al-Hikmeh Hospital.

A polio immunization campaign that began on 24 November will conclude through 2 December. The campaign targets 18 224 children aged under 5 years, in addition to 3 800 drop-out children, through 334 vaccinators stationed at 41 fixed centres and 39 mobile centres.

WHO supports 18 health provision points in delivering health care services to the most vulnerable groups in camps and rural areas across north-east Syria (NES).

Several field visits were conducted by WHO on 10 November to monitor the quality of health services delivered by WHO partners at Al-Hol camp.

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



WHO-supported mobile teams providing PHC services in Al Hol camp

WHO joined a visit by the UN Resident Coordinator to Al-Hol camp on 23 November during which a comprehensive update on the COVID-19 vaccination drive at the camp level was delivered and the vaccination site at the camp was visited.

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 as part of last resort coverage and will consider supporting and continuing to support a few more PHCs.

STHC

WHO continues to support the Medina Association MNCH Hospital and mobile clinic.

The Organization participated in the health cluster workshop on prioritization criteria for primary and secondary healthcare services and participated in the Whole of Syria KPI review for EPI, secondary health care, and COVID-19 indicators.

With the support of IOM, WHO is mapping SHC facilities that provide oxygen therapy, as well as current oxygen production equipment.

Tuberculosis

During the reporting period, a total of 210 beneficiaries visited one of the three TB centres, seven of which were diagnosed with TB. One of 12 samples sent to Antakya for GeneXpert testing came back positive.

A first training workshop on the operation of the Molbio / Truenet machine was delivered. A company representative held a virtual session for lab technicians in Idlib.

COVID-19

The positivity rate is decreasing compared to previous weeks, with the weekly positivity rate now below 30%. The transmission level however remains high, still classified as community transmission level 4. The highest incidence rates are recorded in the districts of Idleb, Ariha and Afrin. Fewer than 1 000 tests are performed per day due to a decrease in the number of suspected cases. Current stocks and orders will be reviewed to plan for the procurement process for the upcoming period based on the epidemiological situation.

MoH has agreed to do 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, following a recent decline in the number of cases. The occupancy rate at hospitals is 42%, at ICUs is 74% (16% intubated), and at CCTCs is 40%.

The case management working group has discussed the sustainability of haemodialysis services for patients with COVID-19. Two centres are currently providing haemodialysis services for COVID-19 patients with WHO support.

Due to reports of suspected cases of mucormycosis, a case management protocol has been prepared and circulated by partners with technical support from WHO GZT and WHO EURO. The case management working group has also conducted a training workshop for clinicians on COVID-19 case management with a particular focus on the use of corticosteroids, which is associated with mucormycosis among COVID-19 patients. The IPC working group has also developed IPC SOPs with a particular focus on fungal infections among hospitalized COVID-19 patients.

The number of vaccines delivered to NWS has reached 686 200, and another half a million is expected by the end of the year. Vaccination coverage however is low. As of 17 November 2021, a total of 267 702 doses have been administered. Of the 4% of the population that have received at least one dose, almost half have received two.

The number of vaccination teams has increased to 61, of which 20 are at fixed sites and, supporting a shift to a semi-fixed approach, 41 are at mobile units catering to access hard-to-reach areas.

A COVID-19 monitoring campaign indicates an improvement in team supervision performance, however community hesitancy remains a major challenge.

Immunization

All of the current 93 routine immunization teams and sites remain active and functional.

WHO, SIG, UNICEF and health partners are working to finalize the preparatory phase of an upcoming polio vaccination campaign. This week, the campaign micro-plan was received, reviewed, finalized, and shared with supervisors for endorsement, and a field visit was conducted to facilitate polio campaign training for supervisors, vaccinators, and mobilizers. The verification of cold chain and mobilization of logistics and supplies required for the campaign have also been completed.

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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