

Northwest Syria Update

1-7, December, 2019

Introduction: Syrian Civic Platform will monitor the situation in the Northwest of Syria from November 2019 – January 2020 and will update the Syrian and international actors on the situation. This will respond to the concerns that the Syrian civilians have in those areas because of the escalation by the Syrian regime and Russia.

This report monitors the humanitarian and field conditions in the North-West region of Syria during the period of 1 – 7 December, 2019. The areas covered include areas outside of the Syrian regime control (Idlib, Southern and Western Aleppo, the Latakia countryside and the Western area of the Hama countryside) which encompasses a population of more than 3.5 million people.

Fuel prices continued to rise significantly in the North-West as this process affected the fuel transmission lines from the Eastern regions, where a liter of diesel recorded the price of 750 SP, while the price of domestic gas pipe rose to 8500 SP, in addition to the continued decline of the Syrian pound against the US dollar. The exchange rate of the Syrian pound has reached to 850 SP per dollar.

This decline in currency has led to an increase in prices of most commodities, weakening in economy, poverty, unemployment and difficulty purchasing heating fuel with the upcoming winter. This has severely impacted the population increasing the suffering of the Syrian population.

Education

The education sector continues to suffer from weakness due to security for children, lack of qualified teachers, and a mass exodus of professionals who left the province or country. The formal education process has almost been completely suspended, especially after the European Union stopped their grant to support education in Idlib, which covered 65% of the total grant for education in the region (reference: Manahel project).

Some activists at the district level have launched initiatives to support the education sector. These initiatives aim to collect the costs of the educational process from the people in these regions.

Displacement Movement

Rural villages in the southern and eastern areas of the province of Idlib, which are close to regime controlled areas, are still mostly abandoned.

The Southern countryside of Ma'arrat al-Nu'man witnessed a movement of displacement towards the Northern regions near the Syrian-Turkish border after the battles between the opposition factions and the Regime Forces in the western Sinjar areas in the Eastern Countryside of Ma'arrat al-Nu'man. The Regime Forces, supported by the Russian Forces, have regained control of the areas they recently lost, west of Sinjar, where this operation was accompanied by a very violent bombardment of most of the areas of the Eastern and Western countryside of Ma'arrat al-Nu'man.

On Saturday, December 7, 2019, this region witnessed the bloodiest events during the recent period, as the Syrian and Russian warplanes targeted most of Idlib governorate with the heaviest bombing in months, causing massacres and a large number of wounded.

These events led to a new wave of displacement from areas close to the clashes.

IDPs in the Northern areas suffer from difficult humanitarian conditions, especially with the onset of winter arriving and the weak response of organizations to the humanitarian needs of the displaced, especially shelter, food, education, water, sanitation and heating fuel, where many of them are still homeless, or live in tents on agricultural land.

Victims

The Russian and Syrian warplanes focused on bombing popular markets during this period, as 5 popular markets were targeted at the level of Idlib Governorate.

The number of victims during the period from December 1 – 7, included 55 dead and 117 injured. In some cases of serious injuries, the number of victims may be increased.

55 Dead		
Men	Women	Children
25	17	13

117 Wounded		
Men	Women	Children
56	27	34

Field Conditions

Southern Idlib: Regime warplanes targeted the Southern Countryside of Idlib with artillery shelling stationed in the Khan Sheikhoun area.

Southern Idlib Countryside: The Targeted Areas Bombed by Warplanes					
Heesh	KafrNabl	Tehtaya	Kararoma	Kafarsajna	Marret Nuaman
Tarmala	Eblin	Hass	Benin	Sheikh Mustafa	Marret Hurma
Bsaqla	Maar Zita	Armanaya	Jbala	Hzarin	Kursaa
Bsaamis	Heesh	Albara	Maesroni	Tall Dabas	Balyoun
Balshoun	Kanayis	Dwela	Sheikh Bahr	Ehsem	Kafar Mous
Ebdita	Bzabour	Sheikh Idris	Saraqib	Kafar Ammim	Kafar Shlaya
Eshtabraq	Marret Sin	Barisa	Alkhuba	Alramy	Mhambil
Hantoutin	Kansafra	Alfattira	Dar Kabira	Sehian	Jisr Shughur

The Regime Forces also continued to shell several areas South of Idlib daily.

Southern Idlib Countryside: The Targeted Areas by Regime Ground Forces' Shelling						
Alteh	Armanaya	Kafarsajna	Hzarin	Marret Hurma	Jarjanaz	Jisr Shughur
KafrNabl	Maar Zita	Erinba	Sheik Mustafa	Alfattira	Dar Kabira	Heesh

East of Idlib: Due to the fighting that took place in the Eastern Countryside of Ma'arrat al-Nu'man, the shelling was heavily concentrated on this area. Most of the villages in the Eastern Countryside were also targeted by warplanes, helicopters and rocket shelling.

Eastern Idlib Countryside: The Targeted Areas Bombed by Warplanes					
Talminnis	Jarjanaz	Maarshorin	Bernan	Farwan	Maasran
Hlubba	Alteh	Alsurman	Qatra	Alharaky	Babolin
Alfrija	Rasm Alward	Sheikh Idris	Alghadfa	Kanayis	Abo Makki

Eastern Idlib Countryside: The Targeted Areas by Regime Ground Force Shelling					
Albarsy	Alriffa	Jarjanaz	AlBrissa	Hlubba	Albarsy

West Idlib:

Western Idlib Countryside: The Targeted Areas by Regime Ground Forces' Shelling				
Eshtabraq	Arab Said	Jisr Shughur	Alnajya	Alnahr Abyadh

North East Lattakia: Russian warplanes continued their daily shelling of the Kabina area Northeast of Lattakia. There has been mutual ground shelling between Regime forces and Opposition forces without any change to the map of control of the land.