



A mobile health team from WHO partner Syria Family Planning Association work daily at the Adra Schools shelter. Jiyana (right), a midwife from Deir-ez-Zor, said "I work very hard here every day. I understand the situation of the people here, because I'm also displaced. I want to do everything I can to help them."

Photo: WHO Syria

44,000

People hosted in 8 collective shelters near Damascus, as of 1 April

47,000

People transported to north-west Syria, as of 1 April

780

Patients referred to hospitals from 11 March - 1 April

8,700

Children vaccinated from 11 March - 1 April

2,575+

Average number of WHO-supported consultations each day from 29 March - 1 April

SITUATION

- The UN estimates that from 11 March to 1 April, 130,000 people have fled East Ghouta: 83,000 are in or have passed through collective shelters near Damascus, and 47,000 have been transported to north-west Syria.
- An overall decrease has been reported in the number of people hosted in collective shelters near Damascus. As of 1 April, 44,000 people were hosted in eight shelters in Damascus and Rural Damascus.
- The two largest shelters remain Harjallah (16,497 people) and Dweir (8,989 people). Though there has been a decrease in the number of residents in both locations, the populations still exceed the capacities of the shelters.
- With support from WHO's hub in Gaziantep, Turkey, health partners are providing medical care for IDPs arriving in northern Hama and in Idlib Governorate.

WHO RESPONSE

I. IMMEDIATE INTERVENTIONS

Coordination

- Coordination with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), national health authorities, and health partners is ongoing

Essential outreach services

- Seven health partners are providing services in the collective shelters in Rural Damascus on a daily basis, through 12 mobile medical teams and 3 mobile health units. From 29 March to 1 April, these partners together provided an average of 2,575 consultations each day.
- In addition, incentives are being provided to over 100 staff from the Rural Damascus Department of Health (DoH), who are providing vaccinations, psychosocial support, disease surveillance, and nutrition surveillance in 20 teams in the shelters and in newly-accessible areas in Rural Damascus.
- Since 11 March, WHO staff have participated on more than 20 health assessment and follow-up missions to the shelters.

Mental and psychosocial health support services

- With WHO support, 60 trained community psychosocial support workers are currently active in the collective shelters. From 29 March to 1 April, the workers provided basic psychological interventions to more than 1,150 people in the shelters. In addition, 650 children participated in recreational activities during which 82 children with behavioral and emotional problems (hyperactivity, hostility, depression, fear and anxiety) were identified and referred to receive further psychological interventions.
- In total, from 20 March to 1 April, the teams have conducted more than 1,650 mental health and psychosocial first aid sessions.
- This week, a group of school counselors from Rural Damascus will receive training on the School Mental Health Programme in order to prepare them for when schools re-open in East Ghouta.

Immunization and communicable diseases

- From 29 March to 1 April, 1,383 children were vaccinated in the shelters and in Harasta city (115 children) and Saqba city (164 children)
- In total, more than 8,700 children have been vaccinated in the collective shelters and in newly-accessible areas of Rural Damascus since 11 March.
- Acute diarrhea, upper respiratory infections, and lice are still the most reported communicable diseases in shelters.
- To reduce the risk of an outbreak in the shelters, on 30 March disease surveillance teams from the DoH visited the mobile teams at the shelters and oriented healthcare workers about priority diseases, thresholds, and reporting mechanisms. A DoH rapid response team also collected sewage samples from the shelters to check for *Vibrio cholerae* in the environment.
- 4 cases of leishmaniasis were detected in Harjellah (from previous IDPs from Deir-ez-Zoir). Treatment will be provided by the DoH. One suspected TB case was reported by the Adraa medical team.

Nutrition

- 7 nutrition surveillance and screening teams are active covering Harjellah, Adra (2), Dweir, Najha, Harasta, and Sakba.

II. HOSPITALIZATION OF CRITICAL CASES

- Monitoring of the hospitalization of patients from East Ghouta continues. As of 01 April, 780 patients have been referred to public hospitals. Emergency wards in the public hospitals in Damascus are now reportedly at capacity.

The ongoing response to East Ghouta involves 13 health partners, including the Syrian Ministry of Health, WHO, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA, International Medical Corps, Syrian Arab Red Crescent, Monastery Saint James the Mutilated, Syria Family Planning Association, Association for Poor Charity, Al Sham and Circassian Charity Association, and The Youth Charity Association of Dummer.