

NGO Forum statement on the escalation of violence in Idleb

Gaziantep, 07 May 2019

The recent escalation of violence from parties to the conflict in Northwest Syria has already impacted negatively civilians and service providers. Between April 29th and May 5th, a movement of 152,210 individuals was reported by the CCCM cluster. The IDP movement was mainly from Northern Hama and Southern Idlib, towards areas closer to Turkish border in the IDP camps and areas of Northern Idlib and Northern Aleppo. The increased use of explosive weapons and airstrikes resulted in at least 80 casualties and over 300 injuries, three health workers with humanitarian organizations are among those reportedly killed by airstrikes. The new displacement and increased violence imply a need to increase humanitarian assistance in concerned areas. In fact, the actual level of humanitarian aid only supports former IDPs and host communities.

In addition to displacement, the recent escalation of violence and the use of explosive weapons in populated areas have an important impact on access to basic services such as healthcare. In fact, 2 hospitals in Hama governorate were targeted and put out of service with one taking considerable damage. 6 healthcare centers in Idleb were also targeted as 3 clinics have suspended work between April 29th and May 6th due to bombardment in close by areas. Thankfully neither injuries nor casualties were reported in these facilities.

The NGO Forum strongly condemns the escalation of violence in Idleb and the use of explosive weapons in populated areas and against healthcare services: parties to the conflict should comply with the law of armed conflicts and international humanitarian law and therefore take all precautionary measures to protect civilians and avoid destroying health facilities, especially when those centers used the deconfliction mechanism.

The NGO Forum calls for actions by the international community to cease hostility, respect the law of armed conflicts and international humanitarian law, and restore the provision of aid and services to displaced civilians and those who need them.