



Situation in northeast Syria - Flash Update

31 January 2026

Distribution of CRIs at a collective center (school) in Qamishli ©UNHCR/ Fredrika Moberg.



Situation Overview

- Northern Syria experienced an escalation of hostilities in early January 2026, triggering displacement across Aleppo, Ar-Raqqa, Deir-ez-Zor and Al-Hassakeh governorates—areas already hosting a large number of displaced persons. Clashes in Aleppo early in the month contributed to a wider deterioration of the security environment in the northeast, resulting in shifts in territorial control, disruptions to basic services and humanitarian access.
- These developments led to widespread displacement from Aleppo to Ar-Raqqa, followed by secondary and onward movements toward eastern governorates, particularly Al-Hassakeh.
- While ceasefire arrangements announced and extended during January contributed to a relative reduction in active hostilities in some locations, the situation remained fragile and unpredictable.
- As of 28 January 2026, the Syrian Government has three active humanitarian corridors, in Ayn al-Arab, along the Raqqa–Hasakah highway, and near Sarin, intended to support civilian movement and aid access under the ceasefire.
- On 30 January, the Syrian Government and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) announced that they had reached a comprehensive agreement to integrate SDF forces with the Syrian army.



Displacement

- According to the IDP Task Force, formed by OCHA, UNHCR and the CCCM Sector, over 190,000 individuals from Aleppo, Al-Hassakeh, and Ar-Raqqa governorates have been displaced since early January. Out of these, 146,000 have arrived in Al-Hassakeh governorate, with 98,000 hosted in Qamishli and 32,000 in Al-Malakiyah.
- Women and children account for **91%** of the total displaced population.
- The vast majority of IDPs (**75%**) are being accommodated by the host community, placing additional pressure on already limited local resources and services.
- Around **36,300** of the displaced people are residing in collective centers, mainly schools and mosques.
- Another **300** families (approximately **1,500** individuals) have arrived in Newroz camp.
- Displacement is taking place under harsh winter conditions, with temperatures dropping below 0°C, leaving families facing acute shortages of shelter, food, non-food items, and heating fuel.
- UNHCR partners report that IDPs are experiencing fear, uncertainty and trauma, driven by repeated displacement and challenges during movement.



UNHCR speaks to newly arrived IDPs outside of Qamishli ©UNHCR/ Azad Bejou



UNHCR Emergency Response

- Despite the fluid and challenging security environment, UNHCR and partners remain on the ground and continue delivering essential services and basic material support to displaced families to ensure people's basic needs are met. UNHCR's response focuses on sustaining protection and life-saving support.
- UNHCR has scaled up core relief items (CRIs) and shelter support across collective centres and camps in north-east Syria, including round-the-clock distribution teams.



CRI distribution to IDPs outside of Qamishli ©UNHCR/ Azad Bejou

- As of 30 January, UNHCR has distributed CRIs, including mattresses, blankets, solar lamps, kitchen sets, plastic sheets, and jerry cans, to **14,160** newly displaced individuals in northeast Syria residing in collective centers.
- **300** family tents have been installed for new arrivals in Newroz camp.
- All UNHCR-supported community centers in Ar-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor remain fully operational, and activities have partially resumed in the Al-Hasakah city community center. UNHCR and partners provide support to newly displaced people and other population groups through protection services delivered via the community centers, mobile teams, and outreach volunteers. Services include psychological first aid, case identification and referral, child protection, awareness-raising on risks such as explosive ordnance, and targeted assistance for persons with disabilities and older persons.
- UNHCR continues to conduct daily missions to displacement sites and maintains leadership of the Protection, Shelter/NFI, and CCCM sectors in Syria.



Al Hol and Roj camps

- As of 1 January 2026, UNHCR assumed responsibility for the management of Al-Hol and Roj camps. UNHCR is placing increased focus on solutions, alongside continued care and maintenance, to enable safe, voluntary and dignified returns or repatriation where feasible.
- In the wake of recent developments, including the Government's assumption of control over Al Hol camp and the surrounding area from the SDF, UNHCR continues to maintain daily access.
- Following a temporary disruption, humanitarian access and service delivery have since expanded gradually and essential services – including bread, water, kerosene and health – have resumed in Al Hol. The progressive re-engagement of partners and regular engagement with the new Camp Administration have helped to improve operational space for humanitarian actors. The environment inside the camp has remained calm throughout.
- The situation in Roj remains calm and services continue.



Challenges

- Overcrowding is a main concern across collective shelters.
- Humanitarian assistance is largely focused on formal collective centers in Qamishli, leaving IDPs living in host communities and several remote centers with significant unmet needs. UNHCR is engaging authorities to ensure these groups are assessed and included in the ongoing response.
- Ensuring secure and reliable supply routes to affected areas remains essential.
- Flexible funding is essential to enable rapid, life-saving interventions for displaced families and to maintain protection services amid evolving needs.