



The White Helmets Monthly Activity Report

February 2024





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Executive summary:

The White Helmets played a critical role in saving lives and alleviating suffering across northwest Syria throughout February. Our dedicated volunteers provided essential services in 486 communities and 634 camps, focusing on search and rescue, health, protection, and community resilience activities.

Search and Rescue:

- White Helmets volunteers responded heroically to 85 military attacks, rescuing 24 wounded individuals (including 2 women and 4 children) and recovering 3 deceased civilians.
- Firefighting teams extinguished 109 fires, rescuing 28 injured people, and recovering 1 deceased child.
- Additionally, they responded to 117 traffic accidents, rescuing 97 injured people (including 11 women and 15 children).

Health Services:

- Over 10,000 individuals benefitted from emergency medical services, including 4,570 women and 2,393 children.
- White Helmets' Women and Family Centers conducted medical examinations for 14,238 beneficiaries.
- Community health teams also organized 668 awareness activities that benefitted over 4,200 people.

Community Resilience:

- 1,696 community resilience activities ensured vital services reached all community members, with a particular focus on women, children, and people with special needs.

Protection:

- The protection program delivered 214 sessions, reaching over 2,400 participants.
- UXO final disposal ordnance teams carried out 68 disposal operations of unexploded ordnance in 42 communities.
- Mine/UXO awareness teams carried out 314 awareness activities, benefiting almost 6700 people.





Section One:

Search and Rescue Program

● Emergency Response to Military Attacks

The search and rescue teams persisted in delivering quality emergency responses to military attacks targeting northwest Syria during February. The response included life-saving first aid for the wounded both at the site of injury and during their immediate transport to medical facilities. This also included retrieving the deceased and conducting technical interventions for victims trapped under the rubble. Moreover, our firefighters extinguished fires caused by bombardments or explosions, ensuring the safety of the sites.

The White Helmets teams conduct their life-saving operations with strict compliance with the International Humanitarian Law, and full respect for neutrality as a core value, ensuring that all victims receive assistance based only on their humanitarian needs, without any discrimination.

The White Helmets
volunteers responded to

85

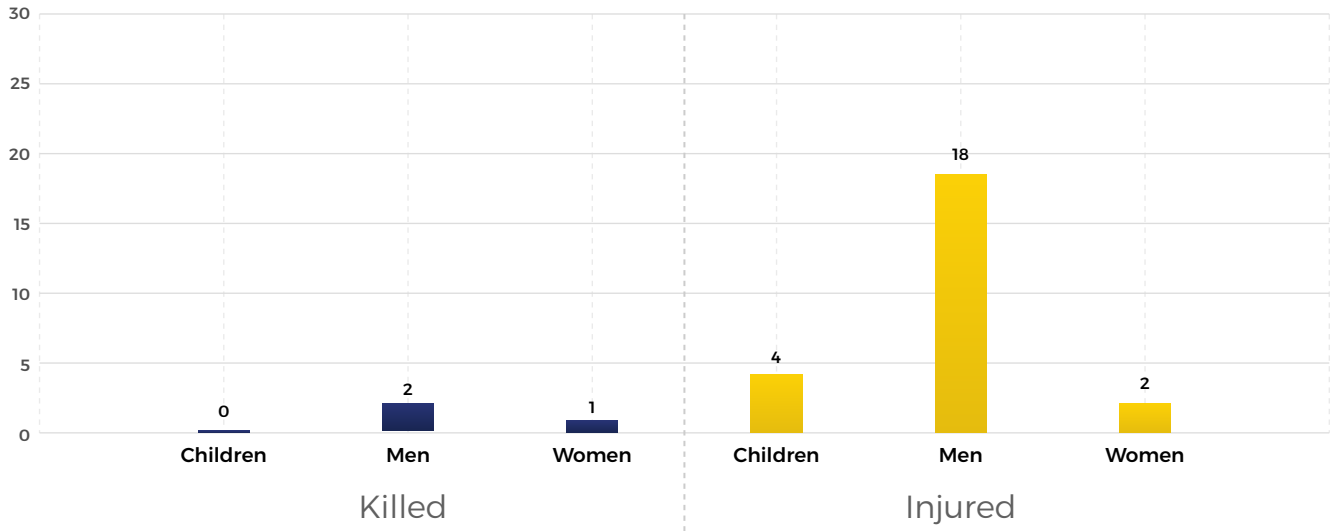
Military attacks

During February

During response operations they recovered three deceased individuals, including a woman, and rescued 24 injured persons, including two women and four children.



Figure 1: Civilian casualties during responses to military attacks



● Noteworthy Operations

A motorcycle bomb exploded near the Newroz roundabout in the city of Afrin in Aleppo northern countryside on February 6, injuring four civilians, including a child.



Syrian regime forces targeted civilian homes in the town of Afs in Idlib eastern countryside on February 20, killing a woman and injuring her sister and her elderly mother.



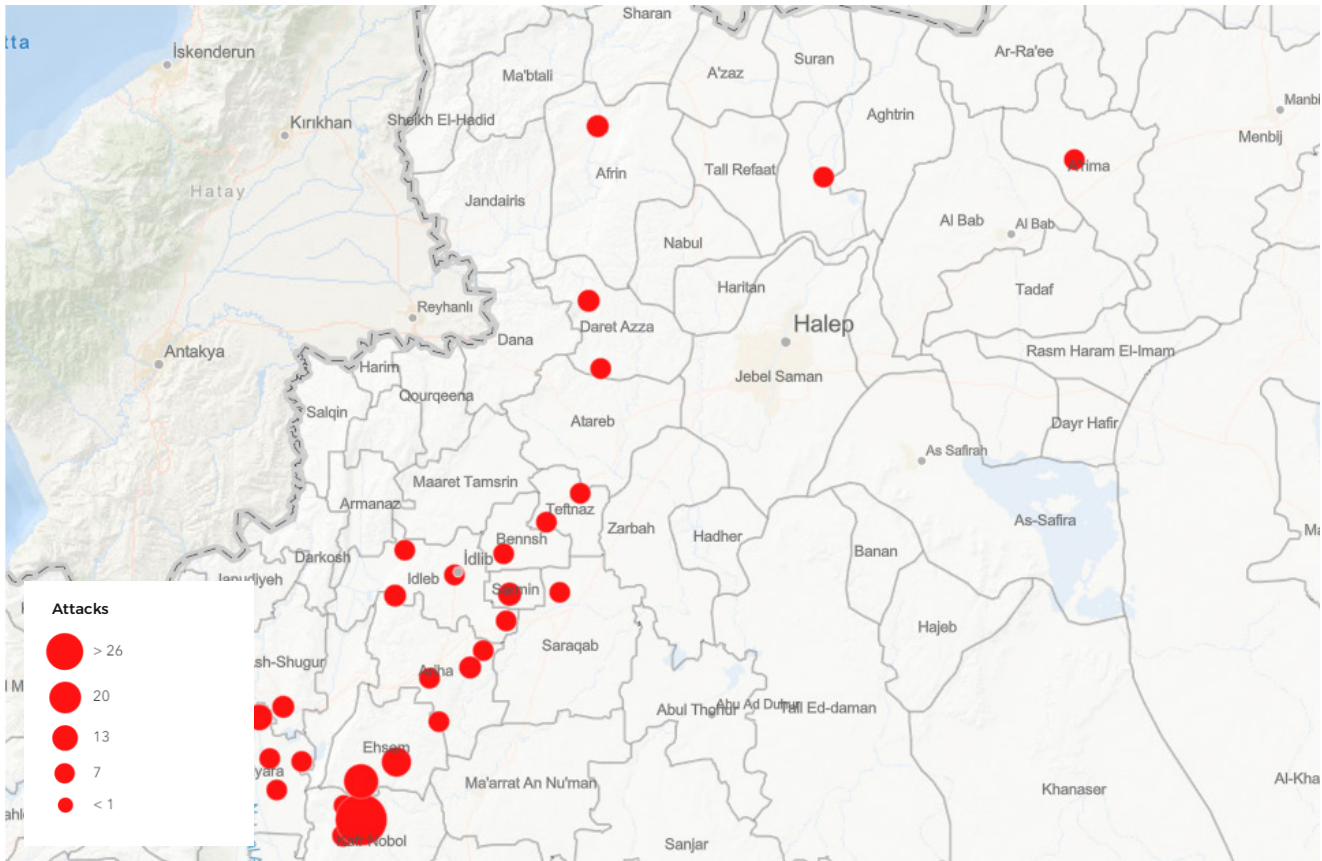
Russian warplanes carried out two consecutive airstrikes on a wood workshop on the outskirts of the city of Idlib on February 29, killing a man and injuring five other civilians, including a child.



February witnessed an increase in the number of attacks by drones and suicide drones, most of which took off from areas controlled by Syrian regime forces. They specifically targeted cars and motorcycles in areas near the front lines in Idlib and Aleppo countryside. Our teams documented ten attacks by these drones, which resulted in the injury of seven civilians, including two children.

Search and rescue operations in response to the military attacks covered 30 communities spanning cities, towns and villages. Notably, the village of Ftireh experienced the highest number of attacks (26), followed by the village of Kansafra (12) and the village of al-Bara (8) attacks.

Map: Military attacks during February



The vast majority of the targets were agricultural lands and fields, with 47 attacks, followed by civilian homes with 20 attacks, and 12 attacks on main and secondary roads. The attacks also included two factories, a mosque, a fuel station, a shop and a stone quarry.

All necessary measures have been taken to respond to the different attacks in these various places by adhering to the established standard work procedures that ensure the provision of timely and professional life-saving responses, taking into account the unique challenges and logistical considerations imposed by different environments.



- **Firefighting operations:**

WH volunteers extinguished 109 fires in 50 communities and six camps. Of these, the city of Al-Bab experienced the highest number of fires (12), followed by the city of Idlib (10 fires), and then the village of Tarhin (seven fires). The volunteers extinguished 63 fires in civilian homes, nine fires in makeshift refineries, eight fires on roads, seven fires in shops, six fires in camps, and four in poultry farms.

WH firefighters
extinguished

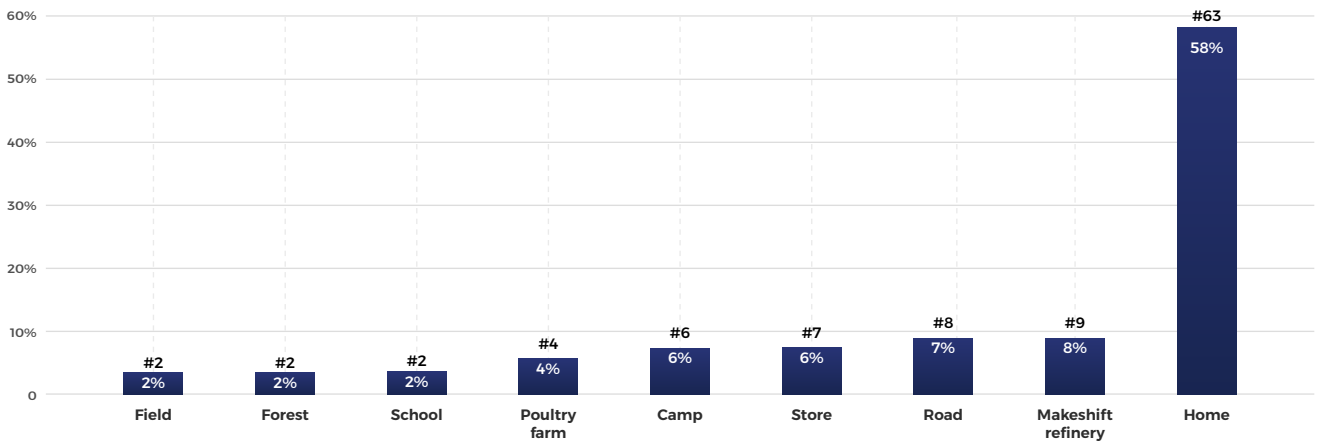
109

Fires

During February



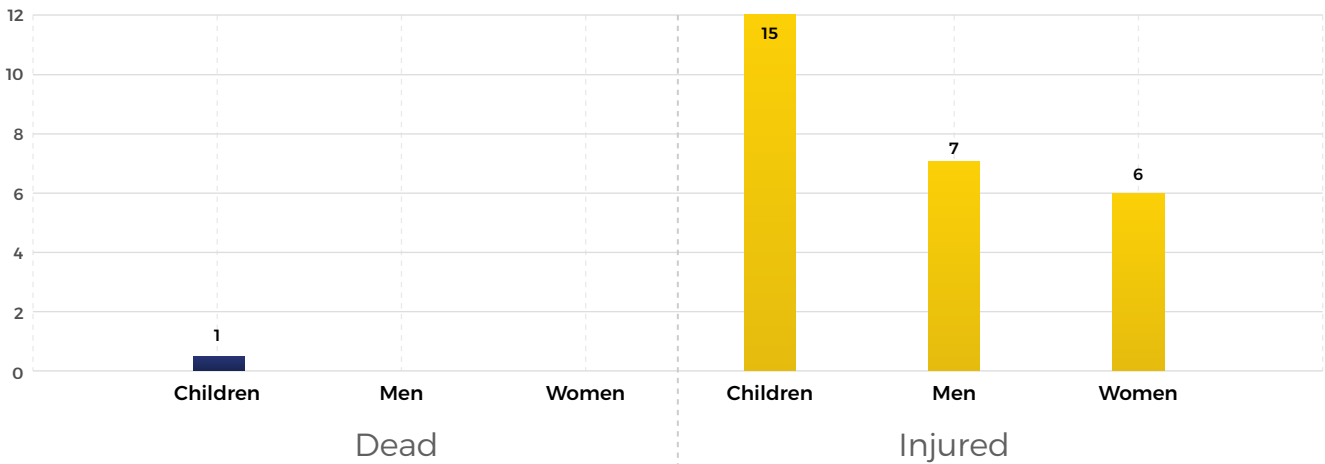
Figure 2: Firefighting operations by location of the fire



During these operations, 28 injured people were rescued, including six women and 15 children. The fires also claimed the life of a boy.

The majority of the fires, %37 were caused by fuel leaks, while %28 were due to unidentified causes, %25 were caused by electrical short circuits, and %9 were caused by gas leaks.

Figure 3: No. of people rescued during firefighting operations





Response to traffic accidents:

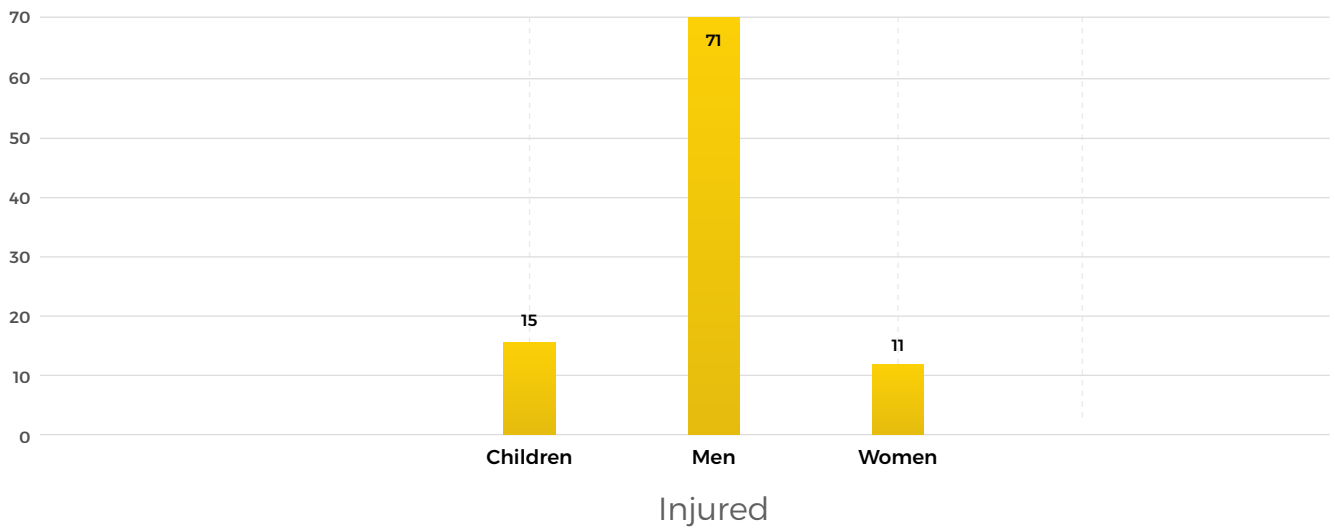
The White Helmets teams responded to

117

traffic accidents
in 75 communities

During response operations they aided 97 civilians, including 11 women and 15 children. Notably, the highest number of traffic accidents was recorded in Daret Izza (six), five in Ghazawiyet Afrin and four in Ras Al-Hosn.

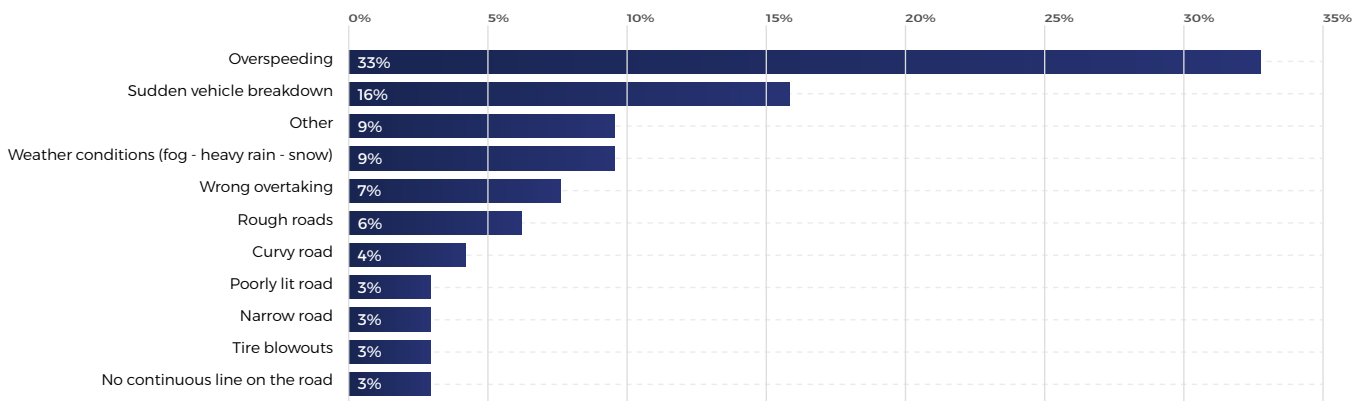
Figure 4: No. of people rescued during traffic accident response operations



Car accidents accounted for the highest percentage of accidents at %46, followed by motorcycle accidents at %37, while truck and heavy machinery accidents accounted for %17.

The causes of traffic accidents varied. The most common cause was speeding, at %33, followed by sudden vehicle breakdowns at %16, weather conditions at %9, wrong overtaking at %7, and rough roads at %6.

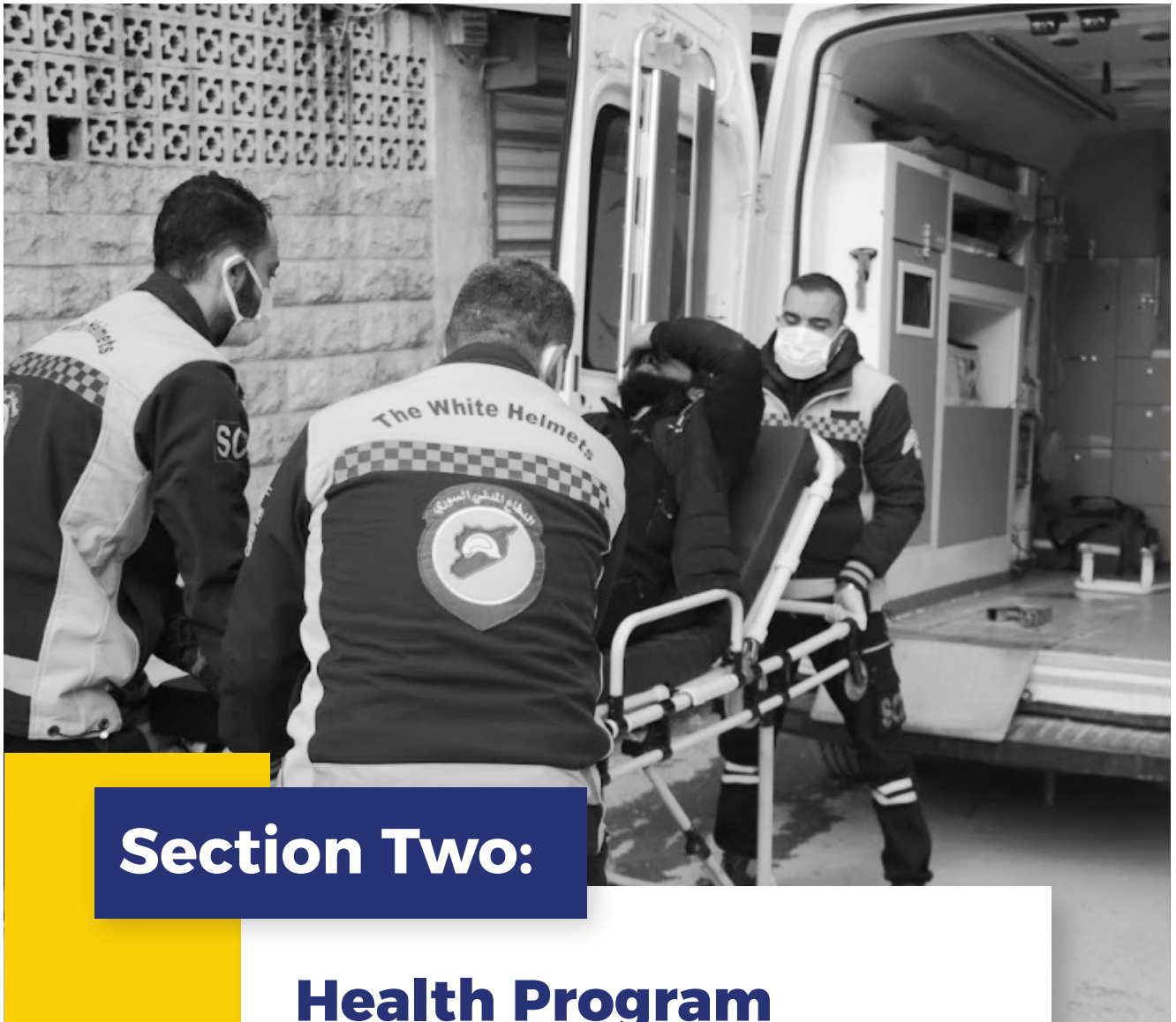
Figure 5: Causes of traffic accidents



● Response to Drowning Incidents:

The White Helmets water rescued three children and retrieved the body of a drowned man.






Section Two:

Health Program

- **Ambulance Services**

The White Helmets ambulance service reached 10,150 patients, including 4,570 women and 2,393 children in 407 communities and 537 camps in northwest Syria.

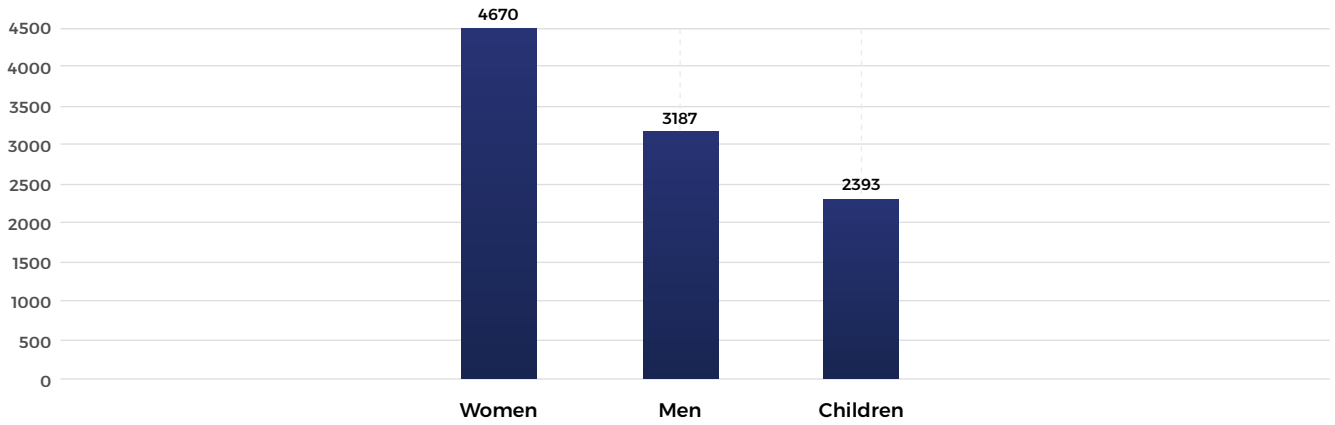
A photograph of three individuals standing outdoors in a rural setting. On the left, a person wears a white hard hat, a white face mask, and a dark blue and yellow high-visibility jacket with a 'White Helmets' logo. In the center, a person wears a dark hoodie with a colorful graphic. On the right, a person wears a dark jacket and a black cap. They are standing on a dirt path with a stone wall and trees in the background. The entire image has a semi-transparent red overlay.

The White Helmets
ambulance service reached

10,150

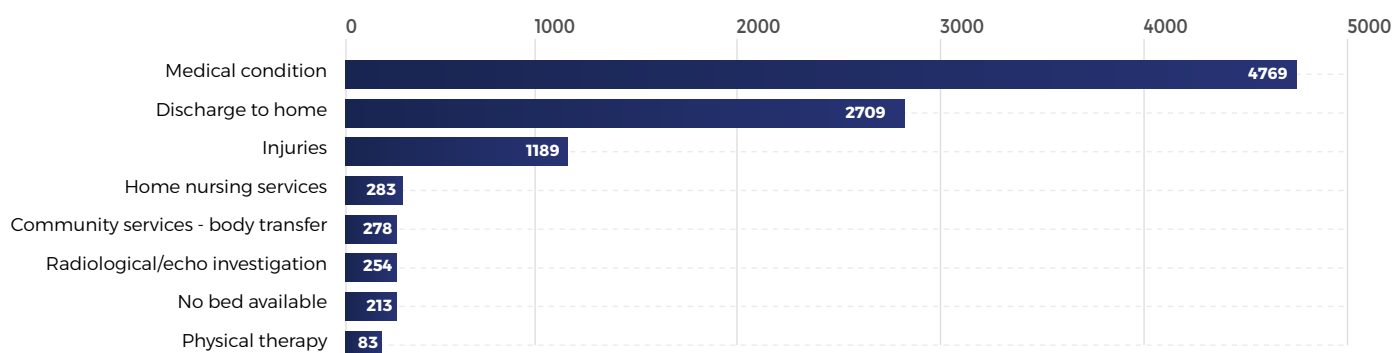
Patients

Figure 6: No. of ambulance service beneficiaries by gender and age



In terms of diagnostics, the number of ambulance operations reached 9,787. Medical cases topped the list with 4,769 operations. The volunteers also carried out 2,709 operations, including returning patients to their homes after receiving treatment, and 1,189 operations to transport patients with injuries and bruises.

Figure 7: No. of ambulance operations by type of ailment

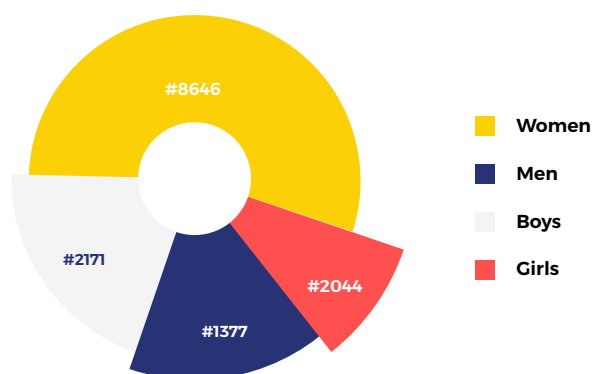


The volunteers also continued to transport patients, injured people, and those in need of ongoing medical care, such as kidney failure patients for dialysis, and to return them to their homes. It is important to note that a number of kidney failure patients need dialysis several times a week. In some cases, volunteers transport more than one dialysis patient in the same operation. In this context, our volunteers carried out 1,141 dialysis patient transport operations and 1,145 discharge operations for dialysis, thalassemia, and physiotherapy patients, and returned them to their homes after receiving treatment.

● Health Services at Women and Family Centers

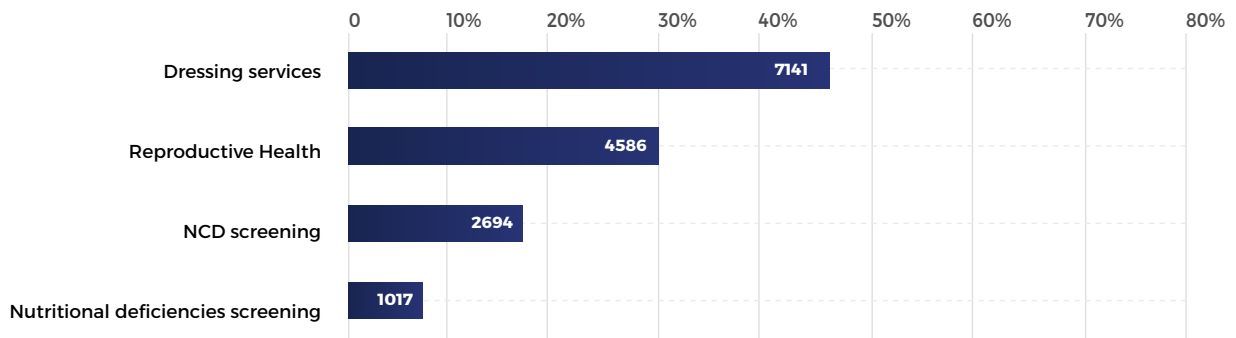
The Women and Family Centers continued providing primary health services, catering to general community health and specialized maternal and child care. These centers provided health checks and consultations for 14,238 beneficiaries, including 8,846 women, 2,171 boys, and 2,044 girls.

Figure 8: No. of beneficiaries at Women and Family Centers by age and gender

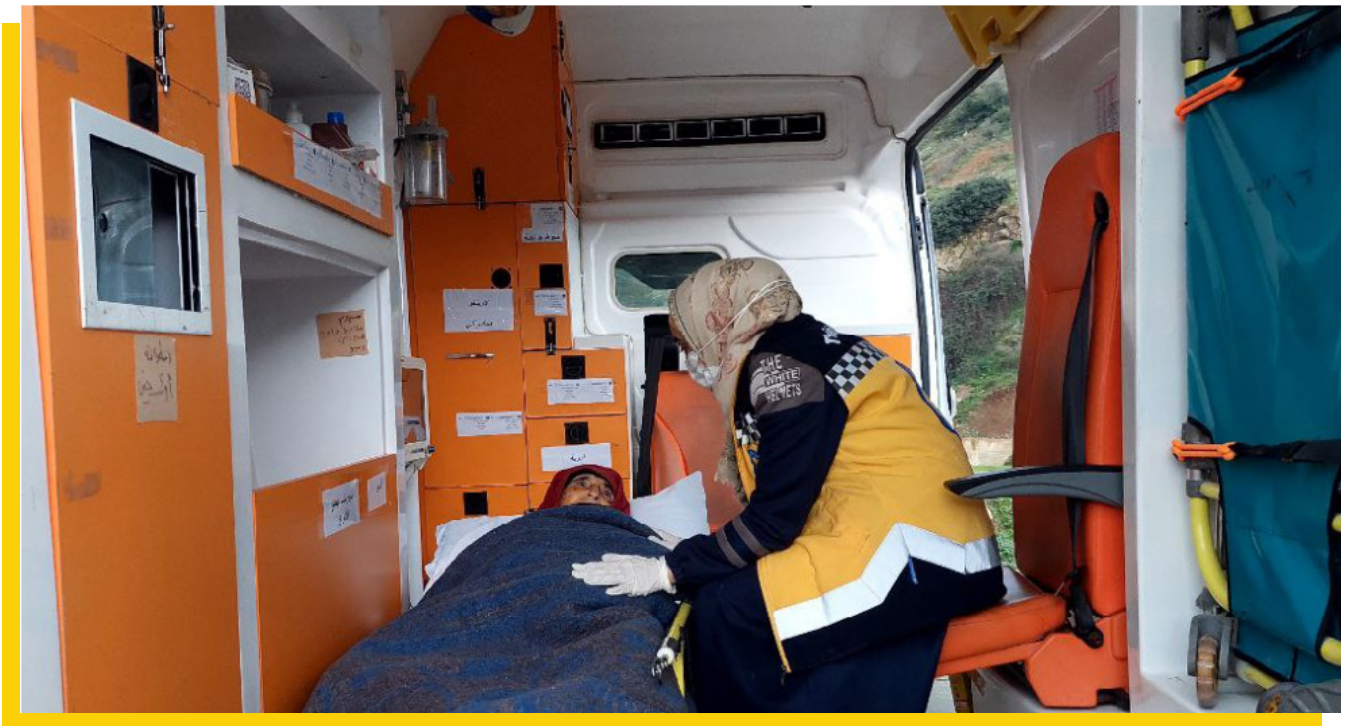


Dressing services were the most provided health services, reaching 7,141 patients, including 2,468 women, 2,140 boys, and 1,729 girls. This was followed by reproductive health services, which were provided to 4,586 women, including 255 under the age of 18. NCD screening also covered 2,694 patients, including 2,048 women, 11 boys, and 32 girls.

Figure 9: No. of beneficiaries of medical interventions at Women and Family Centers by type of ailment



The majority of the health examinations, %95 were conducted in Women and Family Centers, while %2 were conducted in camps as part of regular visits by our female volunteers to check on cases that are unable to reach the centers. In the same context, %3 of the services were provided in the homes of patients, including the elderly and those with mobility difficulties due to their health condition, including dialysis patients.

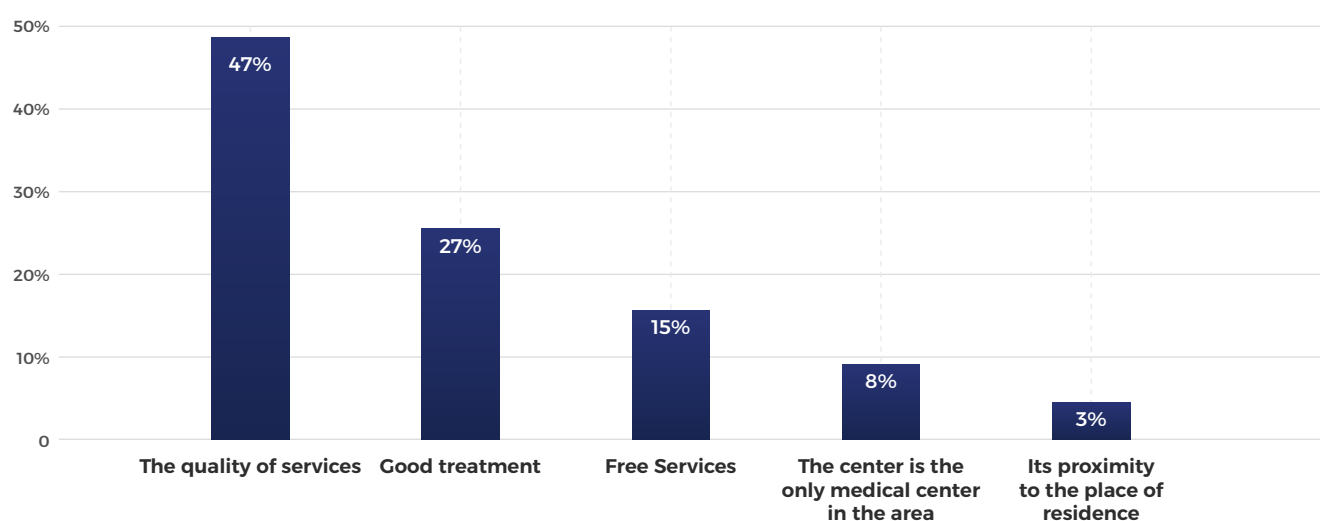


3,632 people, including 1,432 women, 707 boys, and 1,475 girls, benefited from psychological support sessions, through individual and group sessions that included psychological first aid, individual psychological education, awareness sessions, PSS structured sessions for children, and various activities and events. Moreover, 262 people also benefited from physical rehabilitation, including 155 women, 43 boys, and 64 girls.

The Women and Family Centers surveyed their beneficiaries to measure satisfaction with the health services provided, aiming to continually improve their service delivery mechanisms.

The findings revealed that the main factor influencing the choice of these centers was the high standard of services offered at a rate of %47, followed by the positive interactions experienced by beneficiaries with the female staff at these facilities at %27. Other factors included the availability of free services and the fact that the center serves as the sole medical facility in the area.

Figure 10: Survey results illustrating the reasons for beneficiaries choosing Women and Family centers



● School Health Care

White Helmets volunteers continue providing comprehensive healthcare services in schools. The program involves deploying mobile health teams equipped with first aid and hygiene supplies, in addition to conducting thorough medical examinations for students. The aim is to promote a culture of health within the school community and create a safe and healthy learning environment for students and staff alike.

521 female students and teachers and 410 male students and teachers within 31 schools benefited from the healthcare services in schools during February. Respiratory diseases were the most common diagnoses, followed by skin diseases and digestive diseases.

● Community Health Activities

Community health teams organized 668 awareness-raising activities that benefited 4,281 people, including 986 women, 1,244 boys, and 1,976 girls. These awareness-raising activities aim to strengthen the role of the centers within the community. The centers utilize their effective reach to community members, especially women and children, to deliver awareness messages in the areas of preventive health care. This is done through specialized training kits that are constantly updated. The awareness-raising activities included individual awareness, group awareness, household visits, and school awareness.

The centers continued to monitor the most important issues on the ground and select topics according to priorities. The awareness topics included infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases, family health, healthy lifestyle, and a nutrition guide.



Section Three:

Community Resilience Program

This section includes the White Helmets' operations executed as part of the humanitarian response projects in the WASH sector and early recovery, aimed at bolstering local community resilience. It also covers other logistical activities supporting public facilities. In this context, the volunteers conducted 1,696 community resilience activity across 297 communities and 195 camps in northwest Syria.

The White Helmets volunteers conducted

181

Diverse logistical community services in 74 communities and 34 camps.



108

Road opening operations spanning 39,000 meters in length in 68 communities and 16 camps.



159

Excavation operations that included digging sewage lines, technical trenches, and foundations within 71 communities and 26 camps.



368

Ground leveling and graveling operations, covering 364,300 square meters across 131 communities and 71 camps.



316

Vehicle towing operations across 117 communities and 35 camps.



Map 2: Community resilience activities in February

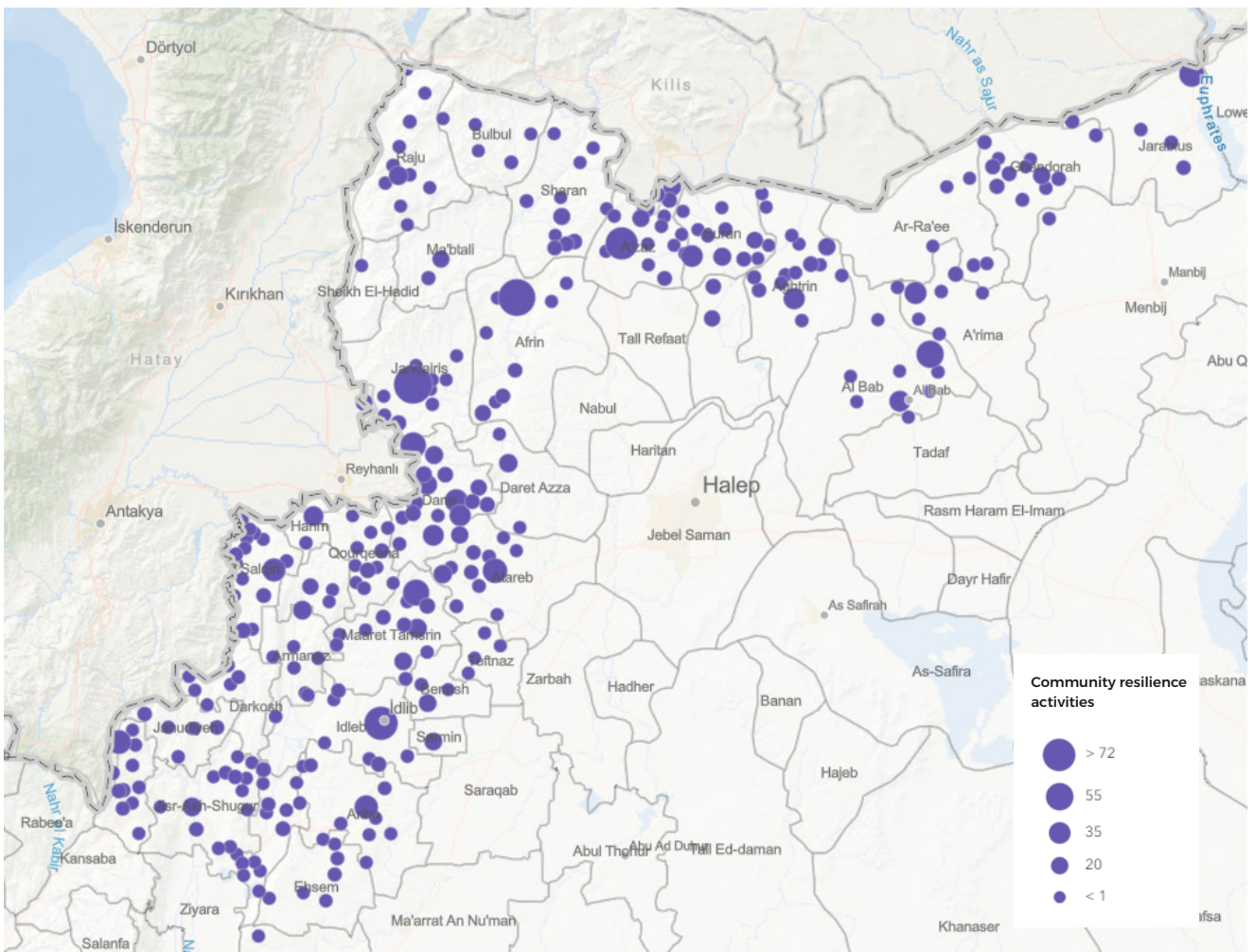
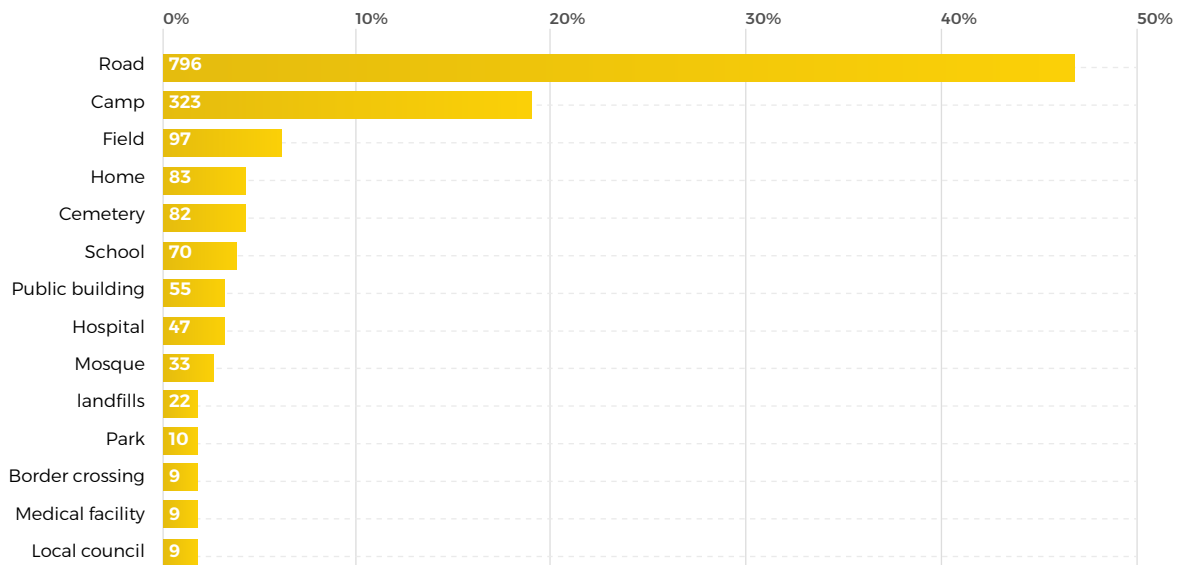


Figure 11: Distribution of community resilience by location



White Helmets volunteers completed the following infrastructure projects:



Rehabilitation of a community center in Afrin.



Rehabilitation of the Faculty of Economics in Al-Bab city, including the supply of technical equipment.

White Helmets volunteers also continue working on the following projects:



External and internal cladding work on the Al-Maland Mosque.



Rehabilitation of 15 health centers (hospitals and primary care centers) damaged by the earthquake.



Excavation the foundations of the cancer center in Afrin.



Construction of the Khalid bin Al-Walid School in Jandairis, pouring a reinforced concrete foundation.



Winter response work, including land leveling and graveling in more than 50 camps affected by floods.



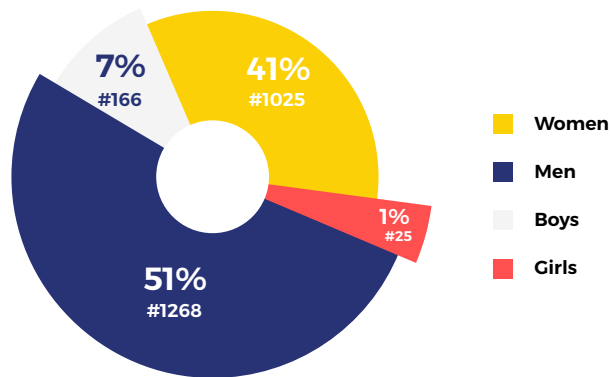
Section Four:

Protection Program

- Awareness Activities

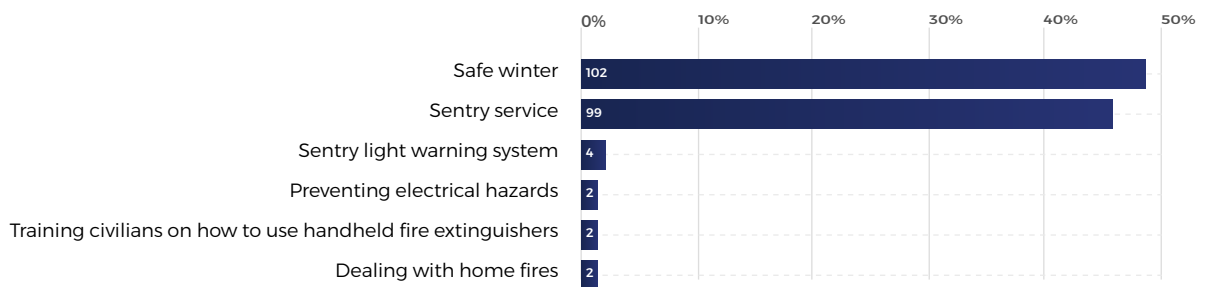
The protection program conducted 214 awareness sessions that were attended by 2,484 people, including 1,268 men, 1,025 women, 166 boys, and 25 girls.

Figure 12: Number of beneficiaries of protection sessions by age and gender



The volunteers continued to monitor the most important issues and select topics according to priorities. Therefore, %48 of the activities were dedicated to the topic of safe winter considering the prevailing weather conditions and the storms in northwest Syria, while %46 of the activities were dedicated to raising awareness of the Sentry service.

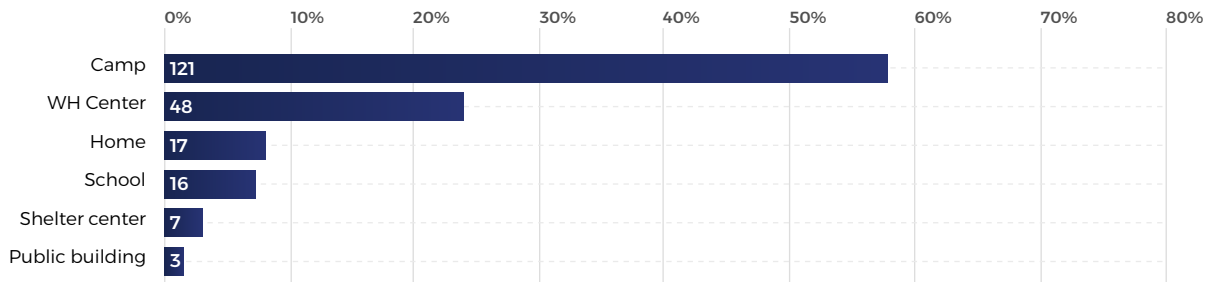
Figure 13: Topics of awareness activities



The locations where the protection sessions varied to ensure the widest participation from all segments of society. %57 of the activities were directed to displaced people in their camps, where the focus was on topics that are a priority within those camps, while %22 of the sessions were also held in White Helmets centers and Women and Family centers. The locations also included civilian homes, schools, and shelters.



Figure 14: Protection activities according to the location of the activity



Radio Al-Raseed

Over the past years, humanitarian workers have been targeted by double tap airstrikes while responding to emergencies. On February 27, the White Helmets launched Radio Al-Raseed, a radio station that broadcasts 24 hours a day instant flight views live warnings about airstrikes and military aircraft movement to first responders and humanitarian workers.

The radio broadcasts warnings about air traffic sightings only when they occur and does not contain any additional content to ensure that warning messages are not delayed for humanitarian workers and first responders during their response.

راديو الراسد

إلى العمال الإنسانيين و منظومات الإسعاف سيبلغكم إلى معرفة التحذيرات المتعلقة بحركة الطيران أثناء الاستجابة

على الترددات التالية

MHZ 88.3 FM	حسب الشفور وما حولها
MHZ 89.0 FM	مدينة ادلب وما حولها
MHZ 106.5 FM	جبل الزاوية وما حوله

مرصد سوريا

Mine Action

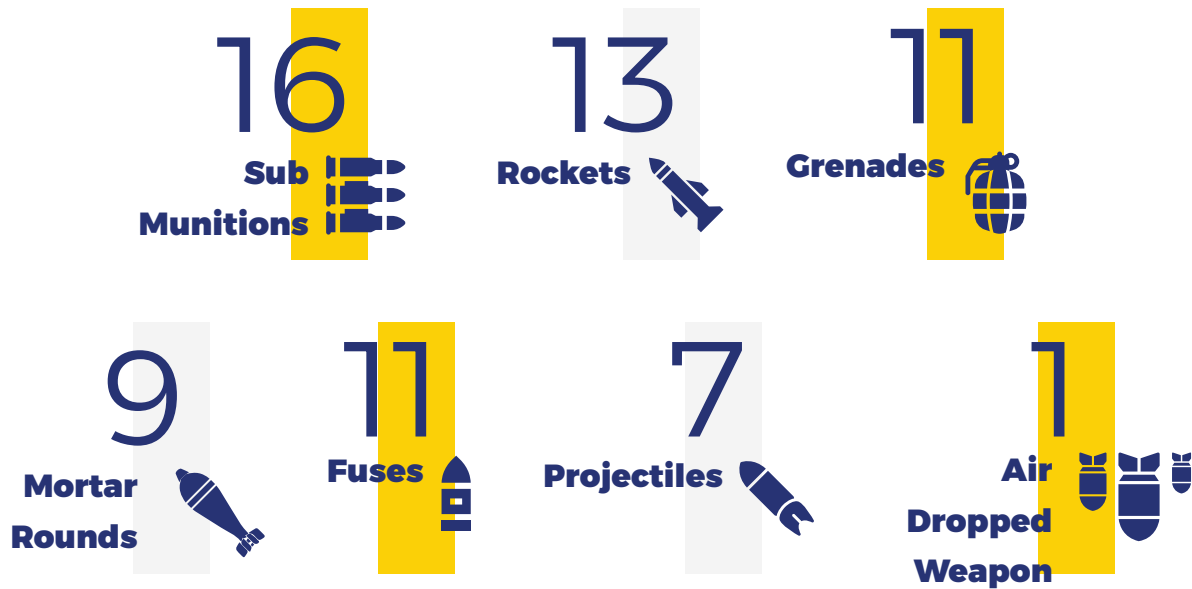
● Non-technical Survey Operations

Non-technical survey operations contribute to the protection of civilians by identifying areas contaminated with unexploded ordnance. Non-technical survey teams work to identify the locations of ordnance in contaminated areas and inform final disposal teams of their locations, who carry out the final disposal and secure these locations.

UXO clearance teams carried out 106 non-technical survey operations in 99 communities, confirming the presence of 29 areas contaminated with UXO. These areas included 23 within agricultural lands. In addition to urban areas (public squares and residential buildings), a factory, a forest and a roadside. This proactive identification and mapping of contaminated areas helps protect civilians and guides UXO removal efforts.

● UXO Removal

Based on non-technical survey operations and civilian reports, final disposal ordnance teams carried out 68 disposal operations of unexploded ordnance in 42 communities in northwest Syria, during which they safely and successfully disposed of 68 unexploded ordnances. This count included 16 submunitions (cluster bombs), 13 rockets, 11 grenades, 11 fuses, nine mortar rounds, seven projectiles, and an air-dropped weapon.



● Breakdown of UXO Removal by Location

UXO removal operations included 56 operations in agricultural lands, four operations in homes, two operations in the drainage system, two operations on roads, one operation in a factory, one operation on the side of the road, and one operation in a forest. The efforts of the survey and removal teams helped enable hundreds of farmers to safely return to their land and resume their agricultural activities.



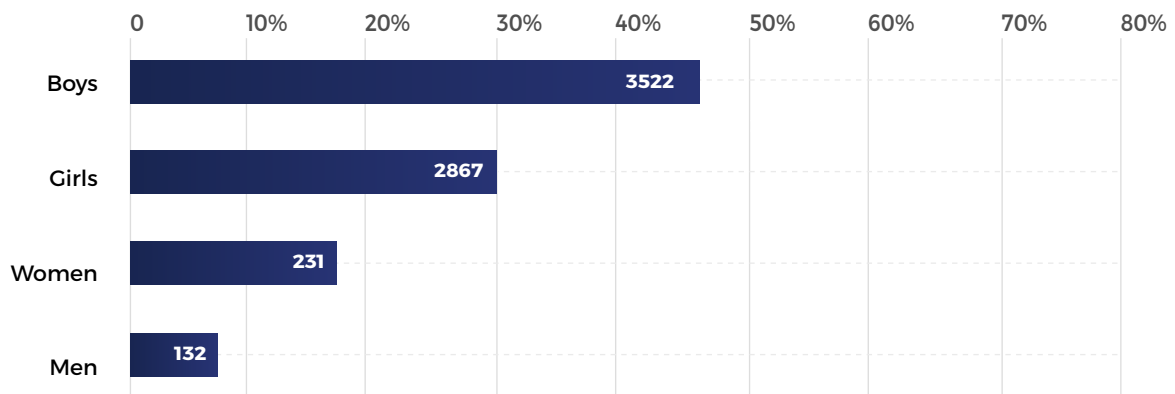
● Mine Action Awareness Raising

Awareness-raising teams on the dangers of mines and unexploded ordnance carried out 314 awareness-raising activities to educate the community about the dangers of remnants of war and unexploded ordnance. These sessions, which focused on school students, aim to reduce the number of victims by teaching participants the appropriate procedures for dealing with unexploded ordnance, and providing them with the knowledge they need for the standard procedures for dealing with explosive remnants of war (ERW) to reduce casualties and to be able to report the presence of unexploded ordnance to the UXO teams.

A total of 6,752 people benefited from these awareness-raising activities, including 3,522 boys, and 2,867 girls. The awareness-raising sessions targeted children because of the great risks to their lives due to playing with or approaching these objects or unexploded ordnance. The sessions provided included 252 sessions in schools, including schools inside the camps.



Figure 15: No. of the beneficiaries of the awareness activities led by the UXO teams





Section Five:

Advocacy Activities

White Helmets staff participated in 31 meetings in Gaziantep, Jindaris, London, Berlin, Paris, the Netherlands and online. This included meetings with UN OCHA, the UK Special Envoy to Syria, the Chair of the UK Foreign Affairs Committee, members of the UK Shadow Cabinet, the British Minister of State for the Middle East, the German Federal Foreign Office, members of the Green Party in the German Bundestag, and Members of the Dutch Parliament. We also met with CSO and NGO partners in the UK, in Europe and with the NGO Forum for Northwest Syria.

Our meetings focused on the situation one year on from the earthquake, advocating towards concrete steps to ensure preparedness in the event of future sudden onset disasters, the impact of the military escalation at the end of 2023 and also touched on our key campaign for the establishment of an international tribunal for the use of chemical weapons. We spoke with representatives in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands about the need to tackle impunity and uphold the international prohibition on the use of chemical weapons.

We supported increased internal coordination and positioning by developing organisation-wide talking points for staff participating in meetings and events.

The White Helmets participated in seven events throughout the month, including a virtual event with Atlantic Council, a panel discussion at the School of Oriental and African Studies in the UK, a virtual briefing of German members of parliament, a conference on Shelter at Georgetown University, as well as in person vigils in remembrance of victims of the earthquake in the US, the UK, the Netherlands and in Syria.

We shaped the statements and key messages of Syrian CSOs' joint communications on the earthquake, as well as statements by the Syrian Networks League and the NGO Forum for Northwest Syria. We sent a briefing detailing the situation in NW Syria after the earthquake and the recent military escalation to our advocacy contacts.



The White Helmets organised a virtual event with The Atlantic Council featuring Raed Al Saleh, Alex Mahoney (USAID), Amany Qaddour (Syria Relieve and Development) and Qutaiba Idlibi (Atlantic Council)

