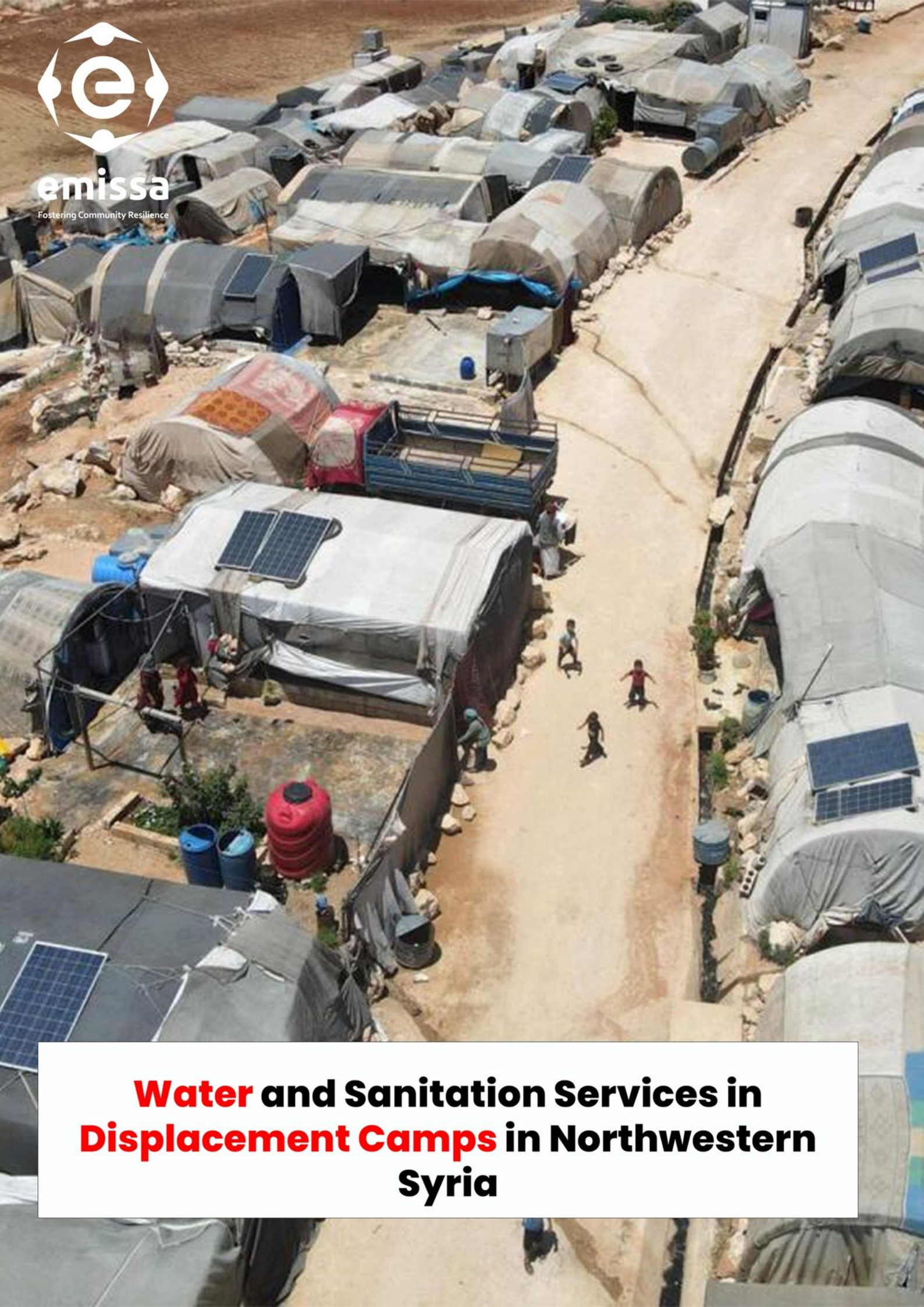




emissa

Fostering Community Resilience



Water and Sanitation Services in Displacement Camps in Northwestern Syria

Introduction

The displacement camps in northwestern Syria, particularly in the countryside of Aleppo and Idlib, are experiencing severe deficiencies in water and sanitation services. These deficiencies disproportionately affect women and children, contributing to widespread health and safety concerns. This report provides an overview of the current situation, identifies key issues, and highlights the urgent need for intervention.

Key Issues

1. Lack of Water and Sanitation Services

Women and other camp residents suffer from a near-total lack of water and sanitation services. Public bathrooms, which are used by women for their needs, are frequently avoided at night due to their distance and the dangerous paths leading to them.

- **Privacy and Cleanliness Concerns:** 57% of women expressed fear of using public bathrooms because they are exposed to the rest of the camp and do not provide sufficient privacy. Additionally, the bathrooms are often unclean due to the lack of water and the presence of insects.
- **Impact on Children:** Similar issues affect children, who fulfill their needs near the tents at night, further increasing the spread of diseases and insects.

2. Polluted and Scarce Groundwater

The region suffers from groundwater pollution and scarcity due to improper sanitary drainage. Drainage is typically limited to technical sinkholes without mechanisms to purify the water before absorption by the soil.

Health Impacts

1. Spread of Skin Diseases

There is a significant increase in the incidence of skin diseases in the camps, exacerbated by rising temperatures and a decrease in available water.

- **Incidence Rates:** Over 488 camps, equivalent to 31% of the total, have reported skin disease cases.
- **Overcrowding:** The high population density within the camps facilitates the spread of diseases, making them incubators for various health issues.

2. Sanitation and Waste Management

- **Open Sewage:** Only 34% of the camps are serviced by sanitation, leaving 66% with exposed sewage, which exacerbates the living conditions.
- **Inadequate Bathroom Facilities:** Many camps have only one bathroom for every 45 people.
- **Waste Transportation:** The absence of waste transportation services has led to increased disease spread. Currently, 716 camps are not served by waste transportation.

Water Accessibility

- **Lack of Clean Drinking Water:** 53% of the camps lack access to clean drinking water, with more than 991 camps affected.
- **High Water Costs:** Displaced families spend approximately 20% of their total income on water, with this percentage rising to 33% during the summer months.

Medical Services

- **Lack of Mobile Clinics and Medical Points:** More than 87% of the camps do not have access to mobile clinics or medical points, making it difficult to address medical issues promptly.
- **Inadequate Humanitarian Response:** Humanitarian organizations' efforts are largely limited to awareness sessions, which are insufficient to treat skin and infectious diseases effectively.

Financial Constraints

The poor financial condition of most displaced people hinders their ability to secure necessary medical treatment. This exacerbates the health crisis in the camps, as many cannot afford even basic medical care.

Conclusion

The displacement camps in northwestern Syria are facing a critical crisis in water and sanitation services, which has severe implications for the health and well-being of their residents. The absence of clean water, inadequate sanitation, and insufficient medical services have created an environment where diseases can spread rapidly. Urgent intervention is required to improve water and sanitation infrastructure, provide medical services, and address the financial constraints of the displaced population.

Recommendations

1. **Immediate Improvement of Water and Sanitation Infrastructure:** Invest in proper sanitary drainage systems and ensure regular cleaning and maintenance of public bathrooms.
2. **Enhanced Medical Services:** Deploy mobile clinics and establish medical points within the camps to provide timely and effective treatment.
3. **Waste Management:** Implement waste transportation services across all camps to reduce disease spread.
4. **Financial Support:** Provide financial assistance to displaced families to help them afford essential services, including clean water and medical care.
5. **Increased Humanitarian Efforts:** Expand the scope of humanitarian organizations' activities to include not only awareness sessions but also direct treatment and support services.