

## BACKGROUND:

World Vision (WV) is a relief, development and advocacy organization that works with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice. Inspired by Christian values, the organization is dedicated to working with the world's most vulnerable people and serves all people regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or gender. As a child-focused organization the prevention, response and protection of children experiencing violence, neglect and all types of exploitation is essential to WV's mandate to bring change and increase the wellbeing of children.

### World Vision Syria Response has been operating inside Syria, Jordan and Turkey since 2011.

We provide life-saving protection, education, WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), livelihoods and health services to refugees and local communities, impacted by the ongoing conflict now in its 10th year. The war has killed 55,000 children within Syria and left 13.4 million Syrians in need of humanitarian assistance. 6.7 million of whom are internally displaced, uprooted from their homes and exposed to continuous attacks and shelling. Almost 6.08 million of those in need are children<sup>1</sup> The COVID-19 pandemic, the economic crisis and the lack of accountability for the grave violations against children and civilians have further compounded the situation of Syrian children, their families and host communities.



### In 2020 alone WVSR:



reached more than **3 million people**



including **456,000** Syrian people with critical health services since the beginning of the year



more than **208,000** Syrian people were provided with child protection services.



More than **70 per cent** were children.

In response to the significant needs created by this humanitarian emergency, WVSR aims to fulfil the following strategic goal: **By 2023, World Vision Syria Response aims to contribute to the improved well-being of 1,700,000 girls and boys affected by the Syria refugee crisis, by addressing their humanitarian needs, promoting and protecting their rights.**



With no end in sight for the ten-year conflict, the needs of the population continue to increase. It is estimated that the number of people in need of health services will increase by 3% in 2021 when compared with 2020. The largest absolute change was seen in Idleb governorate in Northwest Syria (NWS) where the number of people in need increased by more than 220,000<sup>1</sup>. In NWS, there is currently more than 1,170,000 woman and girls at reproductive age, out of which 69,000 are currently pregnant, 8,500 girls and women are giving birth each month in a conflict torn country<sup>2</sup>.

The economic downturn coupled with impact of the COVID-19 pandemic had a tremendous impact on vulnerable Syrians particularly limiting their access to health services. The economic downturn and the ensuing collapse of the currency drove the prices of necessities, such as medicine and food, to a level out of reach for most Syrians. This was also reflected by a multi sectoral needs assessment conducted in 2020 in NWS by WV and our local partners. It was determined that 21% of the interviewed households reported difficulties in accessing healthcare services, 40% struggled with the high cost of transportation and 20% with the lack of or high cost of medicines and health services<sup>3</sup>. These difficulties were more pronounced among women and girls being unable to access essential sexual and reproductive health services<sup>4</sup>.

As of early 2021, the number of people who are food insecure in Syria increased to a new record of almost 60% of the total population of the country; 12.4 million people<sup>5</sup>. This already staggering need has been exacerbated by the ongoing pandemic, significantly increasing the risks of severe malnutrition among the already vulnerable populations, especially in children under 5 and pregnant or lactating women. The situation pushed the already strained and unprepared Syrian healthcare system to the brink of collapse. It overwhelmed the under-equipped health facilities, and disrupted the supply chain of basic medical supplies. According to the data collected by the

June situational report<sup>6</sup> and the Health Cluster Turkey Hub (WHO)<sup>7</sup>, as of the end of May 2021, the number of reported confirmed COVID-19 cases in areas under the government of Syria reached 24,495 cases, with 1,770 COVID-19 related deaths. In NWS, by the end of June 2021, 25,199 confirmed COVID-19 cases with 704 confirmed COVID-19 related deaths were reported. Despite the arrival of the first batch of the COVID-19 vaccines into Syria; which will only cover 20% of the population in NWS. Areas under the Government of Syria will be covered by COVID-19 vaccines allocated under the COVAX vaccine supplies<sup>8</sup>. North central Syria (NCS) is included in neither the independent COVAX allocation for NWS nor through the vaccination plans of the Syrian Government. This would leave most of the population in Northern Syria vulnerable to the pandemic well past 2021.

WV's global objective is: **reducing mortality and morbidity in vulnerable populations affected by humanitarian emergencies and restore access to curative and preventative health and nutrition services.**



## WORLD VISION HEALTH AND NUTRITION PROGRAMMES IN SYRIA:

To achieve this, WVSR adopted the strategic objective of supporting partners who provide critical, lifesaving health services for vulnerable communities affected by the Syrian crisis. WVSR's health and nutrition programs support a network of hospitals, primary healthcare centres, mobile medical units and other health and nutrition related activities through a diverse portfolio of partners. These programmes covers GoS controlled areas, NWS, and NCS. In addition to addressing the health and nutritional needs of the population by essential service provision, WV and partners continue to work on re-organizing and strengthening the healthcare system in Syria to provide a sustainable, efficient, and quality healthcare to the people in Syria. WVSRs health and nutrition programming is focused on ensuring the following:



### Quality essential and emergency healthcare services are available and accessible

WVSR partners with local NGOs and healthcare networks to provide essential lifesaving healthcare services to people in Syria. A special emphasis is placed on addressing the needs of the most vulnerable groups such as IDPs, children, woman particularly those in reproductive age, and the elderly. The medical essential services are provided by a diverse network of WV supported health facilities:

- Seven mobile medical units (MMUs) working in IDP camps
- Three primary health care centers with basic emergency obstetric and newborn care (BEmONC)
- Two referral maternal and children's hospitals with comprehensive emergency obstetric and newborn care capacity (CEmONC)

These facilities, that provide lifeline assistance, include a wide range of critical preventative and curative services including sexual reproductive health, integrated management of childhood illness, immunizations, and management of communicable and non-communicable diseases. Our sexual reproductive health interventions include basic and comprehensive emergency obstetric and newborn care. Thanks to these interventions, medical staff working in these facilities can provide beneficiaries with consultations, diagnostic laboratory services, medications, and procedures free of charge. In 2020, more than 240,000 unique beneficiaries including 117,000 children and 103,000 women benefited from life-saving health services provided by WV supported health facilities.



### Communities are aware, engaged, and mobilized on health issues

As part of the integrated health services, WVSR provides community level health activities focused on community mobilization and awareness raising on relevant health related topics. Activities are conducted with the support of our local partners in Idlib and Aleppo. Our team of trained community health workers (CHWs) engage directly with their communities through different modalities such as home visits, group meetings, and/or local leaders' meetings. In addition, CHWs act as a crucial linkage between the community and the available healthcare services by identifying, referring, and following up on those who are in need of health, nutrition, protection, and wash services among others. In 2020, 65,000 Unique beneficiaries were reached by WV supported CHW.



## Nutritional needs of children and pregnant or lactating women are met

WVSR expanded its nutritional activities to meet the growing needs of the population in Syria. The nutritional services being provided by WVSR and partners include preventative and curative nutritional services such as screening, identification, referral, and treatment of severely and moderately acute malnourished children and pregnant lactating women. Integrated health and nutrition services utilize community-based management of malnutrition (CMAM) models to ensure nutritional activities are included in the routine services of the supported health facilities. The community volunteers also undertake screening, referrals and follow-up activities in addition to their awareness raising messaging and community mobilization. In 2020, 15,780 unique beneficiaries including 8,727 children and 6,104 women were reached by WV supported nutritional services.



## Children are protected against vaccine preventable diseases

In line with WV's global strategy to advocate for access, demand, and uptake for immunization, WVSR utilizes its reach and grassroots connections within the communities to encourage vaccine acceptance and uptake to save lives. In NWS, WV supported facilities providing EPI (Expanded Program on Immunization) services to children and women at reproductive age. In Northcentral Syria (NCS), where immunization coverage is low and many outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases were detected in our latest assessment (2021), WVSR is supporting the set-up of three routine immunization centres covering the much-needed gap in the EPI coverage. This will help protect the 260,000 residents of NCS by reaching 4,900 children and 4,900 women in reproductive age with routine immunizations in the next 6 months.



## Women have healthy pregnancies, safe deliveries, and healthy babies

WVSR and local partners focus on services provided to women, at reproductive age, pregnant or lactating. A wide range of quality primary, secondary and specialized services are offered in WV supported facilities, including timely spacing and planning of pregnancy, basic and comprehensive emergency obstetric and neonatal care (BEmONC and CEmONC), surgeries and consultation by specialists. In 2020, WV supported hospitals provided health services to 13,882 woman and 26,209 children and conducted 3,876 safe deliveries.



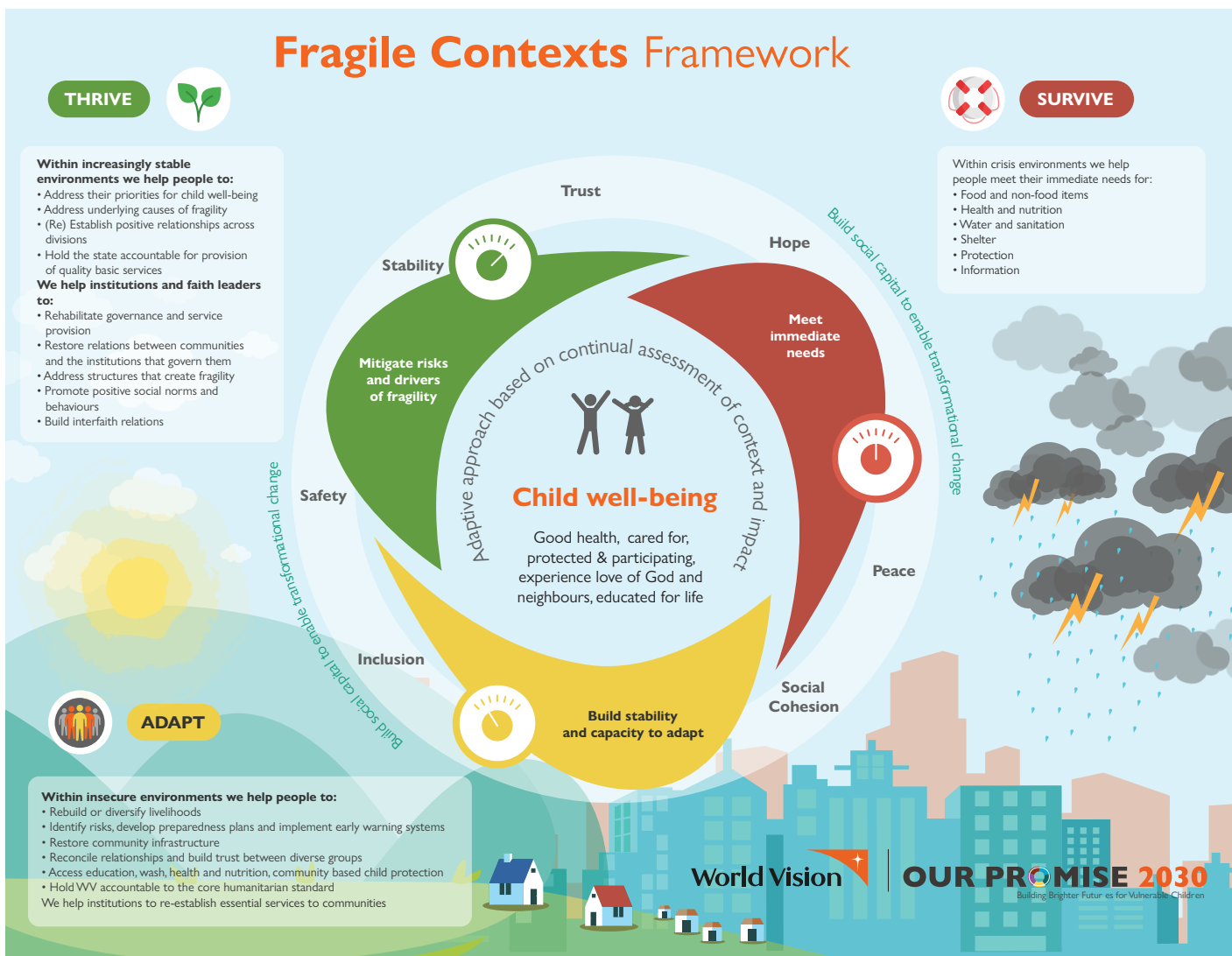
## Adequate response to the COVID-19 pandemic

WVSR and local partners are responding to the COVID-19 health crisis through a multifaceted approach that focuses simultaneously on preventing the spread of the virus while mitigating the impact of the crisis. This is achieved by covering multiple pillars<sup>9</sup> of the approved emergency response plan for COVID-19 in NWS:

- **Case management pillar:** Supporting four COVID-19 dedicated facilities providing different levels of management including intensive care units with mechanical ventilation capacity
- **Infection prevention and control (IPC) pillar:** Providing IPC training for all staff of WVSR, partners and health facilities, and supplying IPC equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE) to both healthcare staff and community
- **Surveillance, rapid response teams and case investigation pillar:** WVSR, in collaboration with WHO, is currently supporting the surveillance network focused on collecting the samples, transportation of samples, confirmation of cases in supported labs, and contact tracing of the COVID-19 cases
- **Laboratories pillar:** WVSR, in collaboration with WHO, is currently supporting COVID-19 laboratories in NWS, resulting in an increase of the overall testing capacity for COVID-19
- **Risk communication and community engagement:** CHWs and healthcare workers provide unified awareness raising messages on topics related to COVID-19 such as hygiene promotion, social distancing, wearing masks, vaccines, and others.
- **Vaccines:** WVSR is supporting the community mobilization campaign that is a part of the vaccine deployment plan. This includes providing tailored community mobilization training to more than 1500 CHWs who will participate in the campaign, for which WVSR is supporting the production of IEC materials that will be used in the campaign.

## TECHNICAL CAPACITY AND IMPACT:

WVSR is working on implementing essential primary healthcare services packages in all supported facilities. As part of WV's fragile context approach, WVSR's health and nutrition services are built around the strengthening of service delivery and the health system. Implementation is achieved by adopting the Collaborative Network Based Integrated Health Service Delivery modality. This collaborative service delivery modality enables health facilities in close proximity to complement each other's services instead of duplicating the services by competition. This approach is aimed at strengthening the primary healthcare system within NWS, adding to its cost effectiveness, resilience, quality, and coverage. With its strong technical and institutional capacity in health, WVSR can undertake a wide range of diverse health projects covering unique gaps in the health system in NWS.



### In 2020, WVSR health programming reached:

- 299,898** (47% children, 42% women) unique beneficiaries with WVSR's health and nutrition programming
- 166,430** (44% children, 45% women) unique beneficiaries with essential primary healthcare services including 35,531 reached by mobile medical clinics in IDP camps
- 3,876** deliveries were conducted in WVSR supported facilities under the supervision of trained staff
- 36,891** received services at WVSR supported hospitals including 5,441 admissions
- 15,781** reached by the different nutritional services
- 9,776** reached by the rapid response teams

## PROJECT PORTFOLIO:

In 2020, WV health and nutrition portfolio was \$10,000,000. Among WV institutional donors for Syria in the health and nutrition sector are USAID, ECHO, Global affairs Canada, Disaster Emergency Committee, WHO, and many others.



## COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION:

WV coordinates with the different stakeholders such as local health authorities, interagency coordination bodies such as the health and nutritional clusters, UN agencies and various donors (for examples ECHO, GAC, DEC, BHA among others) to ensure an effective and collaborative effort in serving beneficiaries. WVSR and partners continue to be active members of different coordination mechanisms and working groups. WVSR continues to engage with partners within Syria and continues to advocate for funding, more effective coordination between the different actors, strengthening and re-organizing the health care system and governance in NWS and developing quality technical standards and guidelines for the response.

**Local health authorities:** WV and partners work closely with local health authorities throughout different project cycles to ensure the programs are aligned with the local needs, avoid duplication of services and to ensure local buy-in and ownership of the interventions. This collaborative effort also aims at building and strengthening the health system including the health information system.

**Interagency coordination mechanisms:** Bilateral exchange of information and the inclusion of best practices and standards to the guidelines, standard operating procedures (SOPs) and the different protocols adopted by the clusters. In addition, WV as a major actor in the health sector in NWS is a leading voice in the different working groups such as the contingency planning group for the cross-border resolution renewal. At the same time, WV continues to advocate for access and funding to services to all Syrians across the different national, regional and international venues.



## WORLD VISIONS GLOBAL WORK IN HEALTH AND NUTRITION:

WV's global health and nutrition strategy 2030 "It's time to thrive" aims to advance health and nutrition initiatives beyond survival, promoting child development and overall well-being, and integration of multi-sector interventions. We believe that this approach will prevent child deaths, reduce illness (especially infectious diseases and mental illness), and improve the nutritional status and holistic well-being of children. Aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015, WV aims to mobilize \$ 7 billion in resources by 2030 to achieve their goals. In addition, WV's fragile context approach (Survive, Adapt, Thrive) provides a conceptual direction for approaches that address root causes of fragility and deepen sustainable impact of work in these contexts. Our fragile contexts framework makes it clear that meeting lifesaving needs in many fragile contexts such as Syria remains essential.

<sup>1</sup> [2021 Humanitarian Needs Overview: Syrian Arab Republic](#)

<sup>2</sup> [UNFPA \(2020\). Regional Situation Report for The Syria Crisis. Issue No. 94](#)

<sup>3</sup> WV and SRD MSNA 2021

<sup>4</sup> [UNFPA \(2020\). Regional Situation Report for The Syria Crisis. Issue No. 96](#)

<sup>5</sup> [WFP Syria: Country Brief June 2021](#)

<sup>6</sup> [SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC: COVID-19 Humanitarian Update No. 26; June 2021](#)

<sup>7</sup> [COVID-19 Response Tracking Dashboard Northwest Syria: Health Cluster Hub \(WHO\)](#),

<sup>8</sup> [Syria Receives Its First Batch Of COVID-19 Vaccines Through COVAX: April 2021](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Covid-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan: 1 February 2021 – 31 January 2022 \(WHO\)](#)



Balsam\* during the check-up. She suffers from asthma but it has gotten worse as a result of her displacement from her town and her own house, she began to suffer due to the living circumstances that exposed her to moisture and mold.  
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