

# COVID-19 REFUGEE RESPONSE OPERATIONS

FEB – MAY 2020



COVID-19 Hygiene kits being distributed to members of a semi nomadic community in Nizip, Gaziantep Province.



Door to door delivery of hygiene kits to vulnerable members of both refugee and host communities in Gaziantep province.



The Community Centre in Kırıkkale receives sewing machines to produce face masks to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in Turkey in March, IOM has been responding to the emerging needs of migrants, refugees and host communities. As of May 31, 2020, IOM has distributed over 18,750 hygiene kits and over 40,500 Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) consisting of gloves, thermometers and disinfectant equipment items to Turkish border authorities and municipalities across 13 provinces. Counselling, psychosocial support and referral services have been provided by phone and online to

beneficiaries. More targeted awareness raising about COVID-19 has been done by providing crucial information by phone and online to beneficiaries. Additionally, to address the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, IOM provided cash assistance to 100 affected families as well as food baskets and 30 sewing and locking machines to two municipalities. These new working modalities ensure that service provision and protection of migrants and refugees continue while respecting social distancing measures.

**25,650**  
HOUSEHOLDS  
ASSISTED  
IN TOTAL

## 15 AUTHORITIES SUPPORTED

- ADANA PDMM
- ADANA GOVERNORSHIP
- ADANA METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY
- GAZİANTEP METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY
- HASA DISTRICT GOVERNORATE
- HATAY FLSS
- İSKENDERUN SASF
- İZMİR BORNVA MUNICIPALITY
- KAHRAMANMARAŞ MUNICIPALITY
- KAHRAMANMARAŞ PDMM
- KİLİS MUNICIPALITY
- KIRIKKALE MUNICIPALITY
- MERSİN METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY
- NİZİP MUNICIPALITY
- ŞANLIURFA METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

## 13 PROVINCES COVERED

- ADANA
- ANKARA
- EDİRNE
- GAZİANTEP
- HATAY
- İSTANBUL
- İZMİR
- KAHRAMANMARAŞ
- KİLİS
- MANİSA
- MERSİN
- OSMANIYE
- ŞANLIURFA

 **18,750** Hygiene Kits

 **6,900** Food Baskets

 **9,800** Bottles of Liquid Hand Sanitizers

 **2,620** Face Masks (Boxes)  
(131,000 Pieces)

 **930** Gloves (Boxes)  
(93,000 Pieces)

 **240** Thermometers



## HIGHLIGHTS

### NON FOOD ITEMS (NFI) DUSTRIBUTION

As a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, IOM Turkey procured and distributed critical Non Food Items (NFIs) to support vulnerable populations and local authorities in an effort to contain the virus. The request for support came from local Municipalities, Provincial Department of Migration Management (PDMM), Provincial Governorship, PDFLSS, SASF, and various local authorities throughout Turkey. Items procured and distributed included hygiene kits, gloves, masks, thermometers, sanitizers, disinfectant equipment and food baskets. IOM also provided sewing machines to two municipalities so that they can start initiatives to produce their own masks.

### CASH ASSISTANCE

IOM is working across sectors to help affected communities address their basic needs through cash and in-kind support and provide means for durable recovery in the post-crisis environment. The cash assistance modality for the COVID-19 response was piloted with 100 beneficiaries, each receiving 1,000 Turkish Lira. Plans to expand the assistance to over 10,000 families during the next 6 months is underway. Vulnerable refugee families who are affected by COVID-19 will receive one time cash assistance from IOM after going through an eligibility assessment and selection by DGMM.

### COMMUNITY CENTRES

IOM's Migrant Municipality and Community Centres located in Adana, Gaziantep, Ankara (Keçiören), and Şanlıurfa played a vital role in linking vulnerable refugee, migrant, and host communities with ongoing government and non-governmental services during COVID-19. As its impact restricted complete access to the respective centres, the teams adapted their informational counselling and referral programming to provide a continuation of services through telephone and other online platforms. In total, through the four centres, IOM was able to reach 12,476 individuals with much needed information on COVID-19 protective measures, reducing the risk of infection, and referring to internal IOM units and external partners for more complete service delivery. Additionally, the municipality centres continued to assist the municipalities with identification of vulnerable families and assuring their inclusion in the various IOM-supported distributions of hygiene and sanitation items. Priority was given to seasonal and agricultural workers living in tent areas with no access to clean water and sanitation facilities.

### MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

The Psychosocial Mobile Teams (PMTs) in Gaziantep, Hatay, Izmir, and Şanlıurfa adapted programme delivery due to the impacts of COVID-19. To understand the impact of the pandemic, and the new needs arising from this unprecedeted situation, a Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) for over 1000 households was conducted in the four areas in March and April. The RNA focused on Protection and MHPSS, but also included how basic needs were being met. Following this, in mid-April, the PMTs provided informative phone-calls to existing beneficiaries to explain protection measures and precautions of the virus, and a continuation of activities through online platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp as part of its revised MHPSS programming.

### EMERGENCY CASE MANAGEMENT

COVID-19 has seen a tremendous impact on households being able to meet basic needs, and the ECM team has seen increased referrals to address emergency protection issues that have come about due to the impact of the virus. This has meant prioritizing responses to those in high risk groups that are more vulnerable to COVID-19, but also those that are at risk of losing shelter or not being able to meet basic needs due to job losses. During the reporting period, the ECM team responded to 353 cases assisting 488 individuals with much needed protection assistance.

### HUMAN INTEREST STORY

#### ASSISTANCE IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

Tension, fear and insecurity. This is how many people are currently feeling during this Covid-19 period. Most people's livelihoods have been affected by the virus with many losing their jobs and sources of income, making them more vulnerable.

Yara, a mother of two, is one of the people who has been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. She had been working as a cleaner and an interpreter for a pharmacy as a means to sustain her family. When the pandemic broke out and a nationwide lockdown was declared in Turkey,

Yara's job was affected immediately. She started getting wage cuts until she was completely laid off due to the lockdown restrictions imposed on her employer. With no steady income, it became very difficult for Yara to pay her rent and also for her to feed her family. After an assessment was done, Yara received a one-time cash grant from IOM which she used to pay her rent and buy food for her family. "When I received the money I felt relieved," she said, "the money helped me to provide a temporary solution for my family. I can look for a new job without getting worried about eviction," she added. Yara is in the process of looking for a new job. IOM plans to help thousands more people like Yara to alleviate the impact of COVID-19 on their livelihoods.



IOM is providing hygiene kits to vulnerable members of the community that do not have access to adequate sanitation facilities as way of reducing the spread of COVID-19.

