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SOUTH TURKEY
FOOD SECURITY & LIVELIHOODS
CLUSTER

VOICES FROM THE FIELD

With some 60 active implementing partners, the Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster (FSLC) South Turkey Hub coordinates support for IDPs and the most vulnerable people in northwest Syria. These operations are made possible through the Syria-Turkey cross-border programme under UN Resolution 2533, enabling NGOs to reach 3.3 million people in need.

STORY 4

UM SALLOUM

Despite financial hardships and the impacts of climate change, agriculture remains the primary source of livelihoods and self-reliance for many in northwest Syria.

This is the story of Um Salloum, who lives in a tent with her family overlooking the Al-Rouge plain.

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Um Salloum has been displaced since 2017, and supports 17 family members who all live in a tent by the Al-Rouge plain in the Idlib countryside. Due to financial struggles, the family only have one tent to sleep in and another they use as a kitchen.

"We can't afford a new tent. Life is hard," says Um Salloum as she sits with her grandchildren. Heavy boulders and rough ropes secure the tarpaulin so it doesn't fly away during the next storm. The extended family sleep at night on thin carpets and mattresses, the tent divided into small compartments by threadbare cloth in an attempt to create some privacy.



Um Salloum, pictured here with her grandchildren, is supported through a programme that provides agricultural inputs, promoted by [Welthungerhilfe](#) and implemented by [Hand in Hand for Aid and Development](#), FSL Cluster partners on the cross-border programme in northwest Syria.

After her two sons came back from Turkey, growing vegetables was the only work available for Um Salloum's family to earn a living under the harsh conditions of war and displacement.



Um Salloum's tents, where 17 of her family members live.

Um Salloum started a partnership with one of the landowners of Al-Rouge plain and received 110 Euros in agricultural support vouchers to grow summer vegetables through a project by FSL Cluster partner Hand in Hand for Aid and Development, promoted by the NGO Welthungerhilfe. The project provided productive support for hydrocarbons, pesticides, fertilizers, seeds, and agricultural advice.



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Um Salloum's sons start work early in the morning, watering, planting, weeding and harvesting in the fields. Just before sunset, they will come home with beans, peppers, tomatoes or eggplants. In the past, they usually only had flatbread and lentils to eat in the evening – barely enough to feed the family and

certainly not varied enough to stay healthy.



Khassim, one of Um Salloum's two sons in the field holding peppers that they have harvested.

Khassim says:

"We get vegetables from our field for our daily needs and this decreases our living expenses, thanks to God our conditions are better now."



Um Salloum's second son at the agricultural field he is cultivating with his family.

With many families relying on food assistance in northwest Syria, agricultural projects offer a sustainable income and form of self-sufficiency for displaced families. Long-term planning allows FSL Cluster partners to shift beneficiaries from food assistance to agricultural and livelihoods projects, which provide opportunities to use their farming skills and create resilient communities.

[Click here](#) to read our latest monthly report, "Insights on Northwest Syria" and learn more about the FSL Cluster South Turkey hub's activities and our partners' work.



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