



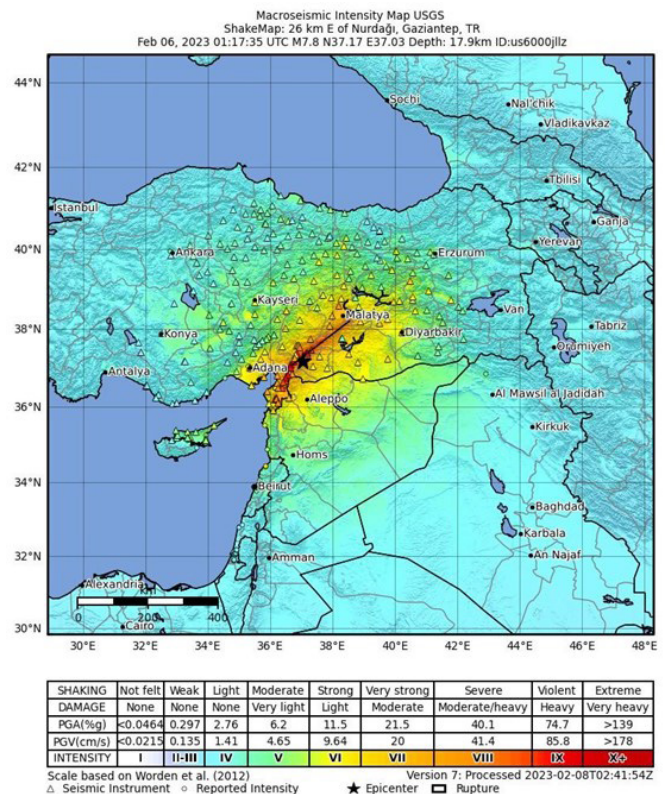
# Türkiye and Syria Earthquake

## EMERGENCY SITUATION UPDATE #2

### OVERVIEW

Following 7.8 and 7.5 magnitude earthquakes on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, in central Türkiye and Northwest Syria, over 23,000 people have been confirmed dead (19,000+ in Türkiye, 4000+ in Syria), tens of thousands more are injured, and thousands remain buried under the rubble as rescuers are working against the clock to find those still missing. World Health Organization has indicated that the death toll is likely to continue to climb. The quakes and aftershocks were felt across the region in Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan and Iraq; in the past five days at least 1,206 aftershocks have been reported.

In **TÜRKIYE**, the epicenter of the first earthquake was in Pazarcik, about 33km east of Gaziantep - a provincial capital from where the majority of Syria cross-border humanitarian aid coordination is managed. Official figures confirm that while





6,444 buildings collapsed, more than 11,340 buildings destroyed. At least 150,000 people are homeless due to the quakes.

In **SYRIA**, where 90% of the population relies on humanitarian assistance, the Northwest (NWS) region of the country was impacted heavily. UNHCR is reporting that as many as 5.3 million people across Syria may have been left homeless. This is specifically in the areas of Northern Aleppo (Azaz and Afrin) and Idlib, and the Government of Syria-controlled governorates

of Latakia, Hama and Tartus. The implications on infrastructure already decimated by years of conflict and neglect are expected to be extensive, exponentially increasing the likelihood of further large-scale protracted displacement. The vast majority of the NWS population has been grappling with economic decline and chronic lack of livelihoods opportunities even before the earthquake, and there was already a funding gap of 48 per cent for the humanitarian response needed to meet needs identified prior to the earthquake, as of the last quarter of 2022.

## RELIEF INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

RI deployed an emergency surge team to establish a temporary response hub in Adana, Türkiye until re-operationalization of the offices is possible. The emergency team is engaging with coordination groups and donors in Adana to better streamline efforts and avoid duplication.

### TÜRKIYE

The country team is very determined to scale up current programming and provided the support needed on the ground. RI is participating in coordination groups, government reach out, assessments, and donor engagements to position for a response. RI is procuring non-food items as a first step of the emergency response; winterization items will be distributed in Gaziantep, Kilis, and Hatay, in partnership with three local partners and in coordination with governorates and AFAD. The distributions are planned to begin as early as February 13<sup>th</sup>.

RI continues to receive, compile and prioritize the requests for support from different government bodies, and is mobilizing resources to respond. The requests include food, non-food items, shelter basics and medical supplies for health facilities. The Türkiye country team and partners launched a multi-sectoral needs assessment in Hatay, Gaziantep and Kahramanmaraş, in an effort to better understand the immediate needs on the ground and the general gaps in services.

### SYRIA

Of 20 RI-supported health facilities in Aleppo and Idlib, 17 continue to operate (6 hospitals – including 2 maternal hospitals, 7 primary healthcare centers, and 4 mobile clinics). Health

facilities are under increased pressure to provide necessary services. Currently, a facility and WASH assessment for each of RI's supported facilities is being conducted to assess the safety of each facility and identify any critical needs to be addressed to ensure continued functionality. Concurrently, RI team is identifying equipment and consumables needs, to enable the facilities to accommodate the surge in needs and account for damage done by the earthquake.

All protection activities were suspended since the earthquake. Protection centers will remain closed for now, but RI's protection team will start providing psychosocial support during the week commencing 12<sup>th</sup> February from health facilities. A rapid needs assessment is concurrently being conducted to inform the next stages of planning, including considerations such as mobilization of additional/relocation of existing medical clinics, repurposing intact protection centers, procurement of tents (to function as additional space for HFs or as shelters for those displaced), and provision of food and non-food items.

All partners under existing awards in both countries are either operational or semi-operational, although it is unclear to what extent. An assessment will be done to determine their capacity to respond and to identify their needs.



## UPDATES FROM THE FIELD

### TÜRKIYE

All RI staff both in Türkiye and Syria cross-border mission are safe, although many have lost families members. Partners inside Türkiye reported staff deaths as well. Many of RI's staff based in Türkiye sought refuge and warmth in personal vehicles, sports facilities and mosques. While some local staff have left Gaziantep, trying to get their families to safety in Mersin, Istanbul or Ankara. RI has also provided the support needed for others to leave, should they choose to do so. However, many are staying and handling the day-to-day challenge of staying warm, safe and operational. RI's office is still temporary closed; however, a team of structural engineers have started assessing the structural integrity of the building.

### SYRIA

The majority of Syria cross-border colleagues have left Gaziantep to seek safety in Adana, Mersin, Istanbul and Ankara, while a portion of staff remain in Gaziantep. Inside NWS, RI has suffered loss of team members, while the situation of several staff remains a concern. The key challenge for most remains shelter, access to fuel and cash, as well as trauma from earthquake impact while managing emergency response and bereavement over loss of (multiple) family members.

Bab al-Hawa (BaH) - the only border-crossing authorized by the Security Council for UN aid delivery – has opened for humanitarian



A doctor at Ras Elhisen primary healthcare center treating a patient wounded in the earthquake.

shipments, it is likely to remain closed for crossing of people from Syria to Türkiye and, including the wounded and those with chronic illnesses. Regarding other border access points, Bab al Salamah, Al-Rai, and Karkamis (Jarablus) remain open albeit without either commercial or humanitarian transshipments, while Afrin is closed and the status of RAATA is unclear.





Syrian Civil Defence (White Helmets) working to rescue people trapped under the rubble in the village of Ezmareen in Northwest Syria.

## EMERGING NEEDS ON THE GROUND

WHO's emergencies chief, Dr. Mike Ryan, indicated that the impacts of these earthquakes will require sustained response for months to come, especially for those who were already in need of humanitarian aid. Access to clean water is expected to be a challenge, which brings the risk of waterborne illnesses such as cholera. This is a particular concern given the recent cholera outbreak (September 2022) in Syria.

### TÜRKIYE

Search and rescue continues to be a critical need. Additionally, increased resources to address the surge in trauma care is paramount, as the needs are compounded with a potentially weakened health system due to damage to health infrastructure. Turkish Red Crescent has also indicated the need for blood donations, encouraging Turkish citizens to make donations. Prior to the earthquake, Türkiye was already facing an economic crisis, with inflation rising exceedingly quickly, the currency weakening against USD, and living standards declining as a consequence. Further complication to the economic situation is expected to be among the many impacts of the earthquake. Critical needs include the following:

- Supplies and consumables for health facilities and mobile medical units.
- Shelter (tents), isolation sheets, and NFIs (incl. Hygiene and dignity kits).
- High-energy biscuits/other dry food for at least 10,000 people with more needed as access to survivors grows.
- Water trucking to shelters and reception centers.
- Thermal clothing, heaters, and blankets to protect from the cold.



### SYRIA

All health humanitarian actors are reporting urgent need for medical staff, medications (especially for treatment of trauma) and lab supplies, as health facilities face a large influx of injured and distressed people. It has been difficult to communicate inside Syria, which has limited the functionality of the referral system to send patients to other facilities. One of the key challenges remains availability of cash to purchase food, water, fuel and other urgent items, as agencies normally in charge of money transfers between Türkiye and Syria remain closed. The situation remains largely chaotic, as operational coordination system is just kicking off. Critical needs include the following:

- Medical staff, ambulances, medications, especially trauma supplies and medical consumables.
- Heavy machines (and fuel to run them) and personnel for removal of rubble and search and rescue operations. Chances of survival for those under the rubble significantly diminishes as time passes.
- High-energy biscuits/other dry food for at least 5000 people (numbers expected to increase exponentially as aid gets delayed through border crossings), with more needed as access to survivors grows.
- Water trucking and garbage removals from temporary reception centers.
- Shelter (tents), isolation sheets, and NFIs (incl. dignity kits).
- Thermal clothing, heaters, and blankets to protect from the cold.
- Heating materials (fuel and coal) and cash for winterization.
- Fuel for hospitals and health centers. Extended power outages have exacerbated the drain on fuel, causing shortage in hospitals treating the injured.
- Cash distribution (multi-purpose cash assistance).
- Renting trucks and vans to transfer affected people.
- Reception centers for IDPs and affected HHs (2-3 centers are already available).
- Women and girls' safe spaces (WGSSs) equipped with basic needs.

## DONOR MESSAGING

RI would like to thank donors for their continued flexibility under existing funding agreements, to enable quick deployment of resources to where they are most urgently needed. In order to mobilize a full-scale response, additional resources will continue to be required, and RI appreciates donors continued and elevated support as we as a humanitarian community work together to prevent further loss of life and aid in the recovery of survivors.

In this critical time where communities are in urgent need of life-saving support, immediate support is needed to enable response to meet the aforementioned urgent humanitarian needs across Türkiye and NWS. As we approach the one-week mark past the occurrence of the disaster, the most critical and time-sensitive needs are provision of non-food items, basic shelter supplies, first-aid kits and medical consumables to meet the surge in needs that are compounded by pre-existing vulnerabilities – especially for those in NWS.

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