



Collapsed building under rain in Sarmada, north-west Syria, following the 6 February earthquake near the Türkiye-Syria border. Credit: OCHA/Bilal Al-hammoud

Situation Overview

At least 317 aftershocks have been reported since an earthquake of 7.7 magnitude struck southern Türkiye on 6 February. Since then, more than 6,000 deaths have been reported in both Türkiye and north-west Syria.

The situation remains grave where hundreds of people are reportedly trapped under the rubble in cold winter conditions. Today, 4.6 million people live in the north-west of Syria of whom close to 90 per cent (4.1 million people) rely on humanitarian assistance to meet their most basic needs. The UN cross-border response, [authorized by the Security Council](#), has served as their humanitarian lifeline. Last year, trucks loaded with aid crossing from Türkiye to north-west Syria reached on average 2.6 million Syrians each month through this operation.

Bab Al-Hawa at the Türkiye-Syria border is the single remaining border-crossing authorized by the Security Council for UN aid delivery. Local sources report that the road conditions to the border-crossing are impaired and therefore the cross-border response is temporarily disrupted. In particular, the road connecting Gaziantep to Hatay, the most affected district in Türkiye by number of deaths, is reportedly not accessible. Hatay is also home to UN Transshipment Hub where aid is monitored, verified, and loaded into trucks as part of a UN monitoring process before crossing to Syria. The UN and partners are currently exploring other routes and conducting feasibility assessments.

The first two days of the emergency have added enormous pressures to an [already overstretched](#) response in north-west Syria, compounded by snowy weather and electricity cut in many areas. The Syria Cross-border Humanitarian Fund (SCHF), which allocated \$138 million in 2022, is currently depleted and requires donors to further support 2023 activities with a focus on the earthquake response. On 7 February, a [\\$25 million grant](#) was

released by United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to help “kick-start” the earthquake response.

Updates in Türkiye

Impact and humanitarian needs

- At least 4,544 deaths and 26,725 injuries have been confirmed by the Government of Türkiye. The top three most affected districts by number of deaths are Hatay, Kahramanmaraş and Gaziantep.
- Deaths have so far been reported in the provinces of Kahramanmaraş, Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Diyarbakır, Adana, Adıyaman, Osmaniye, Hatay, Kilis and Malatya.
- At least 5,775 buildings have reportedly collapsed in the country.
- Airports in Kahramanmaraş and Hatay remain closed due to damage. Airports in Gaziantep and Şanlıurfa are open to humanitarian flights. Airports in Malatya, Adana, Diyarbakır, Adıyaman Airports are open to flights.
- Gas flow through pipelines has been stopped in Kahramanmaraş and Gaziantep to mitigate risks of explosions.
- Schools in the affected provinces remain closed for at least one week.
- A number of key transportation routes have been closed.
- The Government of Türkiye issued a Level 4 alarm on 6 February calling for international assistance.

Humanitarian response

- According to [AFAD](#), the total number of search and rescue personnel assigned in the region is 25,693, including 2,769 expert international personnel from 65 countries.
- United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC), International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) response teams and Emergency Medical Teams (EMT) are being mobilized to Türkiye.
- An UNDAC team, dedicated to the response in Gaziantep, is expected to arrive in Gaziantep on 8 February.

Updates in north-west Syria

Impact

- According to local authorities, more than 1,500 deaths and 3,000 injuries have been reported in north-west Syria. The numbers are expected to continue to climb by the hour as hundreds of people remain stuck in debris.
- More than 500 buildings have been partially damaged and 200 were completely destroyed according to local statistics.
- Preliminary assessments indicate that the sub-districts of Harim, Atmeh, Sarmada, Atareb, and Kafr Takharim are among the worst hit areas.

Humanitarian needs

- Primary needs identified include: 1) heavy machines for debris removal, 2) cash distribution, 3) tents, isolation sheets and NFIs, 4) heating materials, 5) emergency food and bread assistance, 6) water trucking and garbage removals, 7) ambulances and medicines, 8) fuel for hospitals and health centers, 9) rental trucks and vans to transport people, 10) reception centers for IDPs and 11) safe spaces for women and girls.
- The Health Cluster report that urgent medical needs in hospitals include serums, gauze bandages, painkillers, medical plaster and blood bags. Other urgent needs include fuel for generators and heating

as well as burial bags. At least 20 hospitals have registered a request for blood units and at least two hospitals are out of service in the Idleb governorate.

- Homelessness and onward movement exacerbate protection risks including those related to unexploded ordinance. It is anticipated that the earthquake will force people onto contaminated land, bringing them into contact with explosives and mines.
- OCHA's Syria Cross-border Humanitarian Fund (SCHF), having completed its second Standard Allocation valued at \$28 million, is in urgent need of new contributions for the launch of a Reserve Allocation dedicated to the earthquake response.

Humanitarian response

- The response capacity in north-west Syria is particularly dire as community-based rescue teams are fully occupied in their continued search for and rescue of people trapped under the debris of collapsed houses. According to the civil defense, only five per cent of the need for search and rescue operations is currently being covered.
- The lack of heavy machines to remove rubble and bad weather conditions complicate these efforts.
- A [\\$25 million grant](#) was released by United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to help “kick-start” the earthquake response. A Whole-of-Syria Flash Appeal will be published over the coming days to map gaps, needs, and financial requirements for an initial period of three months until 10 May 2023. Other UN agencies have activated their internal emergency funds.
- Assessments of humanitarian needs and gaps in north-west Syria are on-going. Partners have reported that their offices and warehouses have been damaged. Hospitals are overwhelmed. Schools in Idleb and Aleppo have been suspended for one week.
- UN pre-positioned aid is accessible in north-west Syria but fails to meet the needs of affected people.
 - ✓ IOM and UNHCR partners have a total stock of 2,000 tents and approximately 1,700 Non-Food Item (NFI) kits pre-positioned inside north-west Syria. An additional 1,800 NFI kits are available through Mercy Corps. However, partners report that there are urgent needs for additional tents and NFIs, blankets, heating fuel, stoves and plastic sheets.
 - ✓ UNHCR report that 1,000 additional tents are available in its warehouse in Gaziantep and discussions are ongoing to mobilize regional stock.
 - ✓ The World Health Organization (WHO) has released trauma kits from their stocks to at least 16 hospitals in north-western Syria.
 - ✓ Nutrition partners are ready to start distribution of High Energy Biscuit for children under five. More information about the locations of distribution and coverage will be gathered and shared.
- Earthquake and continued aftershocks caused displacements.
 - ✓ Available information indicates that at least four interim shelters are being established to host families from Idleb.
 - ✓ Partners have established reception centers in the Sheikh Bahr area with capacity for 200 families in need of shelter, in Maaret Tamsrin community that can host some 160 families and two other centers in Idleb governorate.
- The Early Recovery Cluster is coordinating with partners in Idleb region and with the Emergency Road Rehabilitation Committee to assess road interruptions and impediments to access requiring urgent interventions, such as rubble and debris removal.
- Access to water and sanitation services in north-west Syria is extremely challenging according to the WASH Cluster, aggravated by harsh weather, a cholera outbreak and other gaps. The cluster expects a significant internal wave of internally displaced people from communities to camps.

To contribute to the Syria Cross-border Humanitarian Fund (SCHF), please [click here](#).

Contact

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