

Türkiye and Syria – Earthquakes

FEBRUARY 9, 2023

SITUATION AT A GLANCE

20,723

Earthquake-related Deaths Reported in Türkiye and Syria

Media – February 2023

88,300

Earthquake-related Injuries Reported in Türkiye and Syria

Media, Aid Actors – February 2023

8,400

Estimated Number of Buildings Collapsed due to the Earthquake

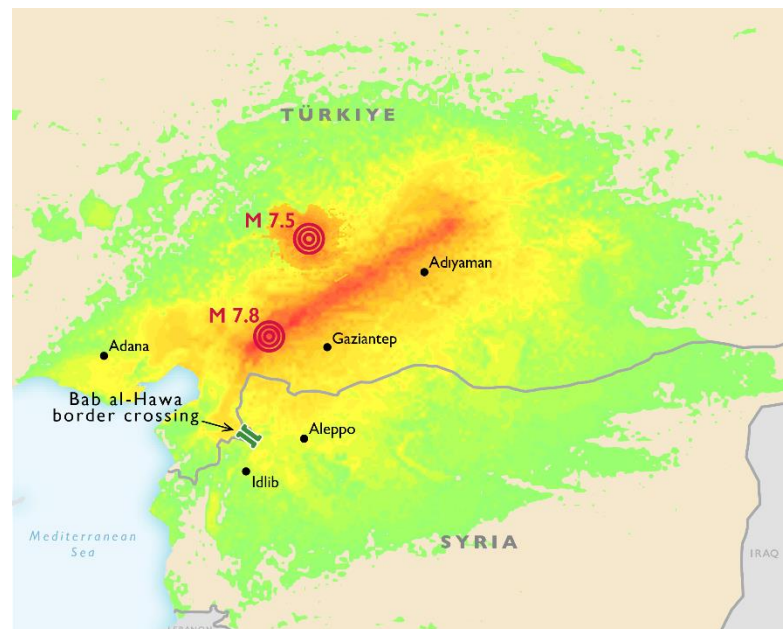
UN – February 2023

610,000

People Exposed to Strong—MMI Level IV—or Above Shaking

USGS – February 2023

- At 4:17 a.m. local time on February 6, a magnitude 7.8 earthquake struck central-southern Türkiye at a depth of 11.1 miles, followed by at least 100 tremors, including a magnitude 7.5 earthquake that struck the area at a depth of 6.2 miles the same day, according to USGS.
- Preliminary reports indicate that the earthquake resulted in at least 20,723 deaths and injury to approximately 88,300 people in Türkiye and Syria as of February 9.
- On February 9, USAID/BHA announced \$85 million in humanitarian assistance for earthquake-affected populations in Türkiye and Syria.



TIMELINE

February 6, 2023

At 4:17 a.m. local time, a magnitude 7.8 earthquake strikes central-southern Türkiye at a depth of 11.1 miles

February 6, 2023

At 1:24 p.m. local time, a magnitude 7.5 earthquake strikes central-southern Türkiye at a depth of 6.2 miles

February 6, 2023

GoT calls for international search-and-rescue assistance as well support to meet the emergency needs of earthquake-affected populations

February 6, 2023

U.S. Ambassador Jeffrey L. Flake issues a DHN due to the effects of the earthquakes in Türkiye

February 6, 2023

USAID/BHA deploys a DART to Türkiye and activates a Washington, D.C.-based RMT to coordinate USG response efforts

February 7, 2023

USAID/BHA deploys USAR teams from the Fairfax and Los Angeles County fire departments to support ongoing search-and-rescue efforts

February 9, 2023

USAID/BHA announces the allocation \$85 million in humanitarian assistance for earthquake-affected populations in Türkiye and Syria

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Earthquakes Result in At Least 20,723 Deaths in Türkiye and Syria

The February 6 earthquakes had resulted in at least 20,723 confirmed deaths and injury to approximately 88,300 people in Türkiye and Syria—including 17,406 deaths and injuries to nearly 83,000 people in Türkiye and 3,317 deaths and injuries to nearly 5,300 people in Syria—as of February 9. The casualty figures are likely underreported as search-and-rescue operations continue. The tremors also resulted in the displacement of at least 150,000 people in Türkiye, where more than 6,400 buildings collapsed due to the earthquakes as of February 8, according to the UN. Local authorities in northwest Syria estimate that the earthquakes displaced 11,000 households in the area, with the destruction of more than 2,000 buildings and damage to more than 5,100 buildings reported as of the same date; however, the number of people displaced may be underreported as assessments are ongoing. The UN World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that repercussions from the earthquake could affect as many as 23 million people, including 1.4 million children.

Local Authorities Lead Response to Meet Urgent Needs of Affected Populations with International Support

To respond to the urgent medical needs of earthquake survivors, the Government of Türkiye (GoT) established nearly 80 field hospitals—including some with the capacity to perform surgical operations—in the 10 worst affected provinces in Türkiye as of February 8, according to U.S. Government (USG) sources. The medical personnel in the country are also transporting earthquake victims in unstable condition by helicopter to regional hospitals, as well as to hospitals in Istanbul city, which maintain sufficient capacity to continue receiving earthquake survivors as of February 8, USG sources report. The GoT's Ministry of Interior Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) had delivered more than 70,800 tents to serve as temporary shelter to households displaced by the tremors and sent 300,000 blankets; 123,400 beds; and 92,700 medical tents to the affected areas as of February 8. In addition, the Turkish Red Crescent had deployed approximately 80 food catering vehicles, 16 mobile kitchens, five field kitchens, two mobile ovens, and one mobile food bank to support food assistance delivery to affected populations as of February 8, AFAD reports. The UN's Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) International Search and Rescue Advisory Group response team and emergency medical teams (EMTs) have also deployed to Türkiye, with one UNDAC team dedicated to efforts in Gaziantep as of February 9, the UN reports.

In Syria, relief actors have identified food assistance, machines and equipment for debris removal, shelter and emergency relief commodities, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) support as some of the immediate needs of earthquake-affected populations, according to the UN and USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) partners.

Humanitarian actors have also reported power outages due to fuel shortages, which is resulting in operational challenges at hospitals in northwest Syria. To respond to urgent health needs, WHO had dispatched two shipments of trauma and essential medicines to Aleppo and Latakia cities as of February 7. Furthermore, local authorities are establishing temporary shelter sites to support individuals displaced by the earthquakes, including communal shelter sites in Aleppo, Al Hasakah, Ar Raqqah, Hama, and Latakia, governorates. On February 9, two UNDAC teams arrived in Syria's capital city of Damascus, from which they will travel to Aleppo city to mobilize emergency operations.

USAID/BHA Announces \$85 Million in Humanitarian Assistance for Earthquake-Affected Populations in Türkiye and Syria

On February 9, USAID/BHA announced \$85 million in humanitarian assistance funding to meet the needs of populations in Türkiye and Syria affected by the February 6 earthquakes. The funding will enable partners to provide emergency food and shelter support for newly displaced individuals, winter supplies for populations facing freezing winter temperatures, critical health care services to support individuals who sustained traumatic injuries, safe drinking water to mitigate the spread of disease, and hygiene and sanitation assistance. The newly announced funding builds on the work of existing USAID/BHA partners in Syria, who were already responding to the ongoing complex emergency in the country, and amplify existing programs to assist earthquake-affected populations in Syria. In addition, USAID's Türkiye-based Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), including urban search-and-rescue (USAR) experts, is coordinating with local authorities, humanitarian organizations, and USG staff in the region to assess earthquake-related damages, identify priority needs, target the most severely impacted populations, lead USG humanitarian response efforts, and ensure that assistance reaches the millions of people affected by the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria.

USAID-supported USAR teams from Fairfax County, Virginia, and Los Angeles County, California, are conducting search-and-rescue activities in Türkiye's Adiyaman city, which was severely affected by the earthquakes, on a 24-hour basis. In total, USAID's DART comprises nearly 200 people, including 21 USAID/BHA disaster experts, 158 search-and-rescue members and 12 canines, and locally based USAID disaster experts who continue to assess needs in coordination with local authorities to inform response efforts.

Earthquakes Severely Damage or Destroy Infrastructure, Exacerbating Humanitarian Needs

Infrastructural damage and destruction resulting from the earthquakes continue to threaten populations in affected areas of Türkiye and Syria. In addition to the more than 8,400 total buildings that have already collapsed in the two countries, the GoT reports that at least 10,000 buildings are at risk of collapse in Türkiye, while the number of structures at risk of collapse in Syria remains undetermined. As a result, many communities in earthquake-affected areas are sleeping in temporary accommodations or outdoors in freezing weather conditions and urgently require shelter assistance, according to the UN and international media. In Syria's Latakia Governorate, the earthquakes caused structural damage to water tanks and the Ghaniri reservoir, with relief actors warning that the reservoir is at risk of bursting and flooding the area. In Aleppo's Kobani town, access to safe drinking water has been obstructed due to earthquake-related damages to the town's water lines. Relief actors continue to assess infrastructural damage and its impact on populations in earthquake-affected areas.

IOM Successfully Delivers First UN Cross-Border Aid Convoy to Northwest Syria Since Earthquakes Struck

On February 9, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) delivered the first cross-border UN aid convoy to northwest Syria from Türkiye through the Bab al-Hawa border crossing since the earthquakes struck. The convoy comprised six trucks carrying blankets, mattresses, tents, shelter materials, solar lamps, and other relief commodities sufficient to support at least 5,000 people, IOM reports. The Bab al-Hawa crossing is the only border crossing authorized by the UN Security Council for the delivery of UN assistance into northwest Syria. The cross-border operation was temporarily disrupted following the earthquake as the road connecting Gaziantep city to the UN Transshipment Hub in Türkiye's Hatay Province was damaged. Following feasibility assessments, the UN had identified two alternative routes to reach the Hatay hub for onward transport to the border crossing as of February 8. The cross-border operation is critical to delivering assistance to northwest Syria; in 2022, approximately 600 trucks per month with aid sufficient to support 2.6 million Syrians on average crossed from Türkiye into Syria through the crossing.

Winter Weather and Damaged Roads Obstruct Aid Access in Türkiye and Syria

Access constraints due to winter weather conditions and earthquake-related building and road damage persisted in Türkiye and Syria as of February 9, partially hampering humanitarian response efforts. Meanwhile, freezing temperatures and rain and snow showers are exacerbating humanitarian needs, with snowfall expected to continue in the coming days, international media report. In Syria, poor weather conditions and a lack of heavy machinery are limiting the reach of search-and-rescue personnel, with only 5 percent of earthquake-affected areas in northwest Syria requiring search-and-rescue operations reached as of February 8, the Syrian Civil Defense (SCD)—also known as the White Helmets—reports. Additionally, fuel shortages are hindering response efforts in Syria, including ambulance transportation and search-and-rescue efforts. In an effort to restore humanitarian access in Syria that has been obstructed by damaged roads, the Early Recovery Cluster—the coordinating body for humanitarian early recovery activities, comprising UN agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders—is coordinating with humanitarian actors in Idlib Governorate to assess road interruptions and impediments to urgent interventions.

KEY FIGURES



170

USAR personnel deployed to Türkiye with the DART

NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL, AND U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

URBAN SEARCH-AND-RESCUE

In the wake of the earthquake, the GoT requested international assistance, prompting approximately 60 countries to offer USAR support, including 20 countries with staff on the ground as of February 7. USAID/BHA deployed two USAID-funded USAR teams from the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department and the Los Angeles County Fire Department, including 170 search-and-rescue personnel and 12 canines, who all joined the DART on February 7. The USAR teams traveled with more than 170,000 pounds of specialized tools and equipment, such as hydraulic concrete breaking equipment, saws, torches, and drills, along with advanced medical equipment for search-and-rescue operations. The teams are operating on a 24-hour basis in Türkiye's Adiyaman city, conducting assessments and rescue operations in the area as of February 9. At the request of AFAD, the USAID-funded USAR teams are also leading the coordination of international USAR teams in Adiyaman.

USAID-supported USAR teams consist of 19 functional positions, staffed by experienced emergency managers, planners, search-and-rescue specialists, hazardous materials technicians, licensed engineers and construction riggers, emergency medicine physicians and paramedics, search-and-rescue dogs with handlers, and logisticians. Structure collapse resulting from earthquake events tends to create numerous void spaces in damaged or destroyed buildings where survivors may be trapped. Thus, USAR teams perform lifesaving technical activities, including specialized search-and-rescue operations involving structural collapse to rescue and recover trapped individuals. Separately, an existing USAID/BHA humanitarian partner is providing search-and-rescue support to affected communities in northwest Syria, rescuing more than 1,000 individuals from rubble between February 6 and 8.

Overall, the GoT and international governments had deployed nearly 110,600 search-and-rescue personnel and 5,600 vehicles, including heavy machinery, as of February 8.



45,000

Number of RTEs available for distribution to earthquake-affected populations in Syria

FOOD SECURITY, LIVELIHOODS, AND MPCA

The UN and humanitarian community in Syria are mobilizing a whole-of-Syria response to address the emergency needs of earthquake-affected populations. WFP maintains 25,000 ready-to-eat food rations (RTEs) in northwest Syria and 20,000 RTEs in SARG-held areas available for distribution to vulnerable earthquake-affected populations as of February 7. As of the same date, the UN agency had dispatched 6,000 RTEs to three cooperating partners and hot meals to displaced populations sheltering at temporary accommodations in SARG-held areas.

Two USAID/BHA international NGO (INGO) partners are broadening existing programs to support the distribution of multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA) to earthquake-affected communities, including IDPs residing in affected camps, in northwest Syria. One of the INGOs also plans to support the distribution of cash assistance for food, food vouchers, and RTEs.



3

Number of USAID/BHA partners already responding to the WASH needs of earthquake-affected populations in Syria

WASH

With support from USAID/BHA, one INGO partner is working to provide hygiene and shelter kits to 300 earthquake-affected households in northwest Syria's Idlib Governorate. A separate USAID/BHA INGO partner is rapidly assessing the emergency needs of more than 130 communities and 98 displacement camps in northwest Syria and intends to provide the populations with urgent water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) support and relief commodities once their priority needs are determined. A third USAID/BHA INGO partner is coordinating with other relief actors on the ground to distribute 100 relief commodity kits—comprising jerrycans, mats, mattresses, solar lamps, and other essential items—to vulnerable populations in northwest Syria on February 7.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed, often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources, such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at [USAID's Center for International Disaster Information](#) website and [interaction.org](#).
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: [cidi.org](#)
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [reliefweb.int](#).

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](#)