

# 2023 Türkiye & Syria EARTHQUAKES RESPONSE



## Situation Report #7

February 15, 2023

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Two strong earthquakes struck southeast Türkiye and northwest Syria on Feb. 6, killing over 41,000 people.
- Project HOPE's Emergency Response Team is on the ground to support survivors through the delivery of key medical equipment and supplies, disaster hygiene kits, and shelter support.
- Additional Project HOPE Emergency Response personnel are deploying to Türkiye to respond to the needs of the impacted region.

### SITUATION OVERVIEW

On February 6, 2023, a 7.8-magnitude earthquake occurred near Gaziantep in southeast Türkiye. Several hours after the initial quake, a 7.5-magnitude aftershock struck, one of hundreds that complicated search efforts and caused additional buildings to collapse.<sup>i</sup>

The death toll in Türkiye and Syria has passed 41,000 and United Nations officials expect this number to increase significantly as search and rescue efforts dwindle and more victims are recovered.

In Türkiye, where an estimated 9 million people were affected, the needs remain high for a population that is experiencing widespread displacement. Access to the impacted areas has been affected by damaged transit systems and clogged roads as survivors flee and first responders, construction vehicles, and humanitarian aid tries to reach the epicenter of Kahramanmaraş and surrounding communities.

Project HOPE's assessments reveal significant needs in health care center support, including temporary housing for health care workers, medicines, and medical supplies. The Emergency Response Team has also identified several neighborhoods of displaced people who are in need of water, sanitation, and hygiene interventions. Officials estimate that over 1 million people are now displaced, many living in shelters, in vehicles, and on the streets.<sup>ii</sup>

Over 4 million Syrians have sought safety in Türkiye during the 12-year conflict between government forces and opposition military forces. Many of them had relocated to southern Türkiye and are now facing a backlash of discrimination as some Turkish residents insist that humanitarian aid first serve the Turkish population before serving the refugee population.<sup>iii</sup> Thousands of refugees are



*Project HOPE's team is on the ground in southeast Türkiye. Photo by James Buck for Project HOPE, 2023.*

returning back to Syria following the announcement by Türkiye that they will be allowed to return at a later time.

In Syria, humanitarian care and supplies have slowly crossed the border, where they enter a difficult security situation. On Monday, it was announced that two more border crossings will be opened to the public for three months. This has allowed dozens of UN trucks to bring food and non-food items to northern Syria in the week since the disaster, however, significantly more assistance will be needed for the over 10 million Syrians impacted by the quake.<sup>iv</sup> North Syria is held by the government, while northwest Syria is under opposition control. The UN will be assisting in the movement of aid into opposition-held areas.

## PROJECT HOPE RESPONSE

Project HOPE activated Emergency Response Team members already in Türkiye in the immediate aftermath of the initial earthquake and mobilized our partners to respond. In the first 24 hours, Project HOPE responders began assisting survivors out of the rubble and directing them to medical services.

Project HOPE's partner SAMU, a Spanish-based humanitarian response organization, immediately deployed a K-9 search and rescue team in hopes of locating survivors under the rubble. The team conducted 25 interventions during which they located 23 deceased individuals and engaged in recovery.

Project HOPE's team is communicating with local partners operating in Syria to respond to the immediate health needs, including supporting program activities as well as the potential delivery of medicines and medical supplies to the impacted communities.

The Emergency Response Team has mobilized 100 infant incubators for import and distribution to the Turkish Ministry of Health. Additionally, Project HOPE is actively procuring and distributing thousands of thermal blankets, standard blankets, and sleeping bags, as well as 3,000 family and infant hygiene kits to the impacted areas. The team has identified a manufacturer to produce shelter containers that will be used to house health care workers in Adiyaman and can also function as field clinics in other cities.

Project HOPE is working to identify additional local Turkish vendors for the procurement of medicines, medical supplies, hygiene kits, and generators for distribution to the Ministry of Health and impacted health facilities.

The Emergency Response Team is also mobilizing additional surge support, including a Mental Health and Psychosocial Support expert and a Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene expert. Project HOPE continues to have a Type 1 Mobile Medical Team on standby if requested by the government.

Project HOPE first started providing medical support in Türkiye in 1987 and has responded to previous crises including the 1999 earthquake and Syrian refugee response in 2013-2015.



*Project HOPE's Emergency Response Team continues to conduct needs assessments and work with local officials, including in Adiyaman. Photo by James Buck for Project HOPE, 2023.*

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<sup>i</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/turkiye/earthquake-turkiye-and-north-west-syria-flash-update-no-2-7-february-2023>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/video/world/middleeast/10000008768658/earthquake-turkey-syria.html>

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/12/world/middleeast/syria-turkey-earthquake-refugees.html>

<sup>iv</sup> [https://www.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/turkey-syria-earthquake-updates-2-13-23-intl/h\\_96320c686b707dc5b3928088d2fc2224](https://www.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/turkey-syria-earthquake-updates-2-13-23-intl/h_96320c686b707dc5b3928088d2fc2224)