

2023 Türkiye & Syria EARTHQUAKES RESPONSE



Situation Report #8

February 17, 2023

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Two strong earthquakes struck southeast Türkiye and northwest Syria on Feb. 6, killing more than 45,000 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.
- Project HOPE's emergency assessments are showing a significant WASH need for internally displaced tent camps.

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 the hundreds that complicated search efforts and caused additional buildings to collapse.ⁱ

The death toll in Türkiye and Syria has surpassed 45,000 people and United Nations officials expect this number to increase significantly as more victims are recovered.

In Türkiye, where an estimated 9 million people were affected, the needs remain high as the population experiences widespread displacement. Officials estimate that over 1 million people are now displaced, many living in shelters, in vehicles, and on the streets.ⁱⁱ

Project HOPE's Emergency Response Team has identified several neighborhoods with significant displaced populations living in makeshift tent camps. The displaced families only have tents for shelter, despite the cold winter temperatures. There is little access to proper hygiene facilities, including showers, toilets, or latrines. The Emergency Response Team's assessments have shown that some camps of up to 3,000 people have only one latrine. In addition, the assessed camps have no running water, increasing the chances of unclean water being used and spreading illness.

Project HOPE has also identified significant needs among health centers, including mobile medical units for rural populations, temporary housing for health care workers, medicines, and medical supplies.

Those affected include the over 4 million Syrians who sought safety in Türkiye during the 12-year conflict between government forces and opposition military forces. Thousands of refugees are returning back to Syria following the announcement by Türkiye that they will be allowed to re-enter at a later time.



SAMU, a Project HOPE partner, deployed a K-9 search and rescue team to Antakya, Hatay, Türkiye after the earthquake. Photo by James Buck for Project HOPE, 2023.

In Syria, humanitarian care and supplies have slowly crossed the border, where they enter a challenging security situation. On Monday, it was announced that two more border crossings would be opened to the public for three months. To date, more than 100 UN trucks have crossed into Syria at three border crossings to bring much-needed assistance. However, substantially more will be needed for the over 10 million Syrians impacted by the quake.ⁱⁱⁱ North Syria is held by the Syrian 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 our Emergency Response Team in the immediate aftermath of the initial earthquake and mobilized partners to support these efforts. In the first 24 hours, Project HOPE's team began assisting survivors out of the rubble and directing them to medical services.

Through our partner SAMU, a Spanish-based humanitarian response organization, Project HOPE deployed a K-9 search and rescue team in hopes of locating survivors in collapsed structures. The team conducted 25 interventions during which they located and recovered 23 deceased individuals.

The Emergency Response Team is mobilizing 100 infant incubators for import and distribution to the Turkish Ministry of Health. Early next week, Project HOPE will begin distribution of thousands of thermal blankets, standard blankets, and sleeping bags, as well as 2,000 disaster hygiene kits and 1,000 infant hygiene kits. The team also has identified a manufacturer to produce containers that can be outfitted to house health care workers or to function as field clinics.

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

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

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. Through its partner, SAMU, 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 surveys displaced communities in Adiyaman. Photo by James Buck for Project HOPE, 2023.

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

ⁱⁱ <https://www.nytimes.com/video/world/middleeast/100000008768658/earthquake-turkey-syria.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/turkey-syria-earthquake-updates-2-13-23-intl/h_96320c686b707dc5b3928088d2fc2224