

2023 Morocco Earthquakes Response

Situation Report #3

September 11, 2023

Situation Overview

On Friday, September 8, 2023, at 11:11 p.m. local time, a magnitude 6.8 earthquake struck near Adassil, Morocco, about 50 miles south of Marrakech. The earthquake is the strongest to hit Morocco in over a century.

The latest reports show more than 2,600 people are dead and over 2,500 injured. The Moroccan government has said that 1,452 of those killed were near the epicenter in the mountainous province of Al-Haouz. Casualty numbers are expected to rise as rescue workers continue operations, which enter their third day. Historic walls and buildings collapsed in the ancient neighborhoods of Marrakech where structures were made from stone and masonry not fit to withstand quakes. Thousands of people have spent their third night on the street, many because they have lost their homes and others out of fear of the next aftershock.

A majority of the damage occurred in rural areas surrounding Marrakech, including the provinces of al-Haouz, Ouarzazate, Azilal, Chichaoua, and Taroudant. These provinces are part of the larger Marrakech-Safi region, which is home to 4.5 million people. The United Nations has estimated that approximately 300,000 people have been affected by the earthquake. Concerns persist regarding search and rescue professionals' ability to access remote villages in the Atlas Mountains.

Although there are no current reports of hospitals in the area incurring major damage, it is likely that some primary health care facilities — particularly in the harder-hit rural areas — will have been damaged. Starting in the initial hours after the tremor, injured people from the surrounding areas started traveling to Marrakech for medical treatment, which is a sign of damage to health facilities, and local media reports

Quick Facts

- An earthquake with a magnitude of at least 6.8 struck near Marrakech, Morocco.
- More than 2,600 deaths have been confirmed in Morocco with numbers expected to rise.
- Local rescue workers are conducting search and rescue operations of collapsed buildings.
- Project HOPE's partner SAMU's local subsidiary has deployed a search-and-rescue team with medical personnel, two dogs, and two Advanced Life Support ambulances to Adassil, Morocco, close to the epicenter of the quake.

that there has been [a massive influx of victims to the emergency room Mohammed VI University Hospital](#).

[Local health care facilities put out calls for blood donations in the affected area, to which hundreds of Moroccans have responded to ensure there's adequate supply for the injured](#). Rescue workers from several countries including Spain, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar remain hard at work.

How Project HOPE is Responding

Project HOPE has worked in the Middle East/North Africa region since 1975, and has relationships with several partner organizations in Morocco.

Project HOPE's partner, SAMU, a Spain-based emergency response organization, is now operating on the ground in Adassil, a village southwest of Marrakech, with a team of 19 people and six vehicles. The convoy includes two Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulances from SAMU Tangier, where the organization is headquartered in Morocco, as well as a surgical rescue unit, three all-terrain vehicles, five doctors, two nurses, eight Health Emergency Technicians, and four rescue specialists accompanied by two dogs. The ambulances have been providing care to impacted communities in and around Adassil for several days.



Project HOPE's partner, SAMU, has two Advanced Life Support ambulances and a team of 19 people in Adassil, Morocco, supporting search and rescue efforts and health needs in the aftermath of the quake. Photo courtesy of SAMU, 2023.

Project HOPE and SAMU have jointly responded to numerous global crises, including the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria to support search and rescue operations. Project HOPE has remained in Türkiye since, supporting longer-term recovery efforts including mental health needs, shelter containers for displaced health workers, clean drinking water, and mobile medical units throughout the region.

Given that it is still the early days of this disaster, Project HOPE recognizes that there is much to be learned in the coming days and weeks about the scale and scope of humanitarian needs. The situation is changing rapidly and we are pre-positioning resources to respond to immediate health needs including medical care, primary care, and mental health and psychosocial support.

As the situation is constantly evolving, information and response needs will be updated.