



A stuffed toy on top of what remains of collapsed homes in Bsaniah, north-west Syria. 21 February 2023. Photo credit: OCHA/Madevi Sun-Suon

Key Figures in North-west Syria

4,500+

Deaths due to earthquakes

8,500+

Injuries due to earthquakes

10,000+

Partially or fully damaged buildings

48,900+

Suspected cholera cases

Situation Overview

“We were working for 24 hours at the emergency department when suddenly everyone started running outside.”

A nurse at the Harim General Hospital in Idleb described the moment when a second set of earthquakes struck Türkiye on the evening of 20 February, only two weeks after the first disaster that killed over 4,500 people in north-west Syria. At least 150 new injuries were recorded in the area in its aftermath.

“Some people were so scared that they jumped out of their balconies,” said the nurse, adding that bruises and bone fractures were common among newly injured patients. However, the majority of cases at the hospital reportedly were psychological support and nervous breakdowns, particularly among women and children.

The humanitarian situation in north-west Syria has been dire even prior to the earthquakes. This has been an area where 4.1 million people, or 90 per cent of its population, depend on humanitarian aid to meet their most

basic needs. Data from 2022 suggest that some 3 million people were deemed food insecure. At least 800,000 children have been out of school, putting a whole generation of Syrian children at risk of being left behind.



A nurse working at the Harim General Hospital recounted the aftermath of the 20 February earthquakes. 21 February 2023. Photo credit: OCHA/Madevi Sun-Suon

13-year-old Bahaa lost 26 people in his family in one evening. He lives in Jandairis, one of the most affected towns in north-west Syria where over 1,000 people have died following the 6 February earthquakes.

"We are survivors," he said before breaking down into tears.

After losing his home, Bahaa moved to stay with one of his relatives in the Ishkan camp in the countryside of Jandairis. One of his legs is still broken today and his father remains in critical condition in a hospital. But Bahaa continues to hold onto hope, expressing that his father will soon "be fine."

"I want to be a construction engineer one day. I want to complete my studies and design an earthquake-resistant building," he shared, determined to help future communities avert such disastrous events.

The UN has so far completed four cross-border visits from Türkiye to north-west Syria since the earthquakes first struck. The most recent was a [UN interagency mission on 21 February](#), led by David Carden, UN Deputy Regional Humanitarian Coordinator (DRHC) ad interim on surge, involving representatives from IOM, OCHA, UNDSS, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF and WHO, three days following a [visit to Jandairis](#).

The delegation visited hospitals, a displacement camp and a reception center in Harim, Salqin and Ma'arrat Misrin in the Idlib governorate. The hospitals were supported by various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) including the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS), the Social Development International (SDI), Shafak Organization and Relief International.

Medicines and medical supplies provided by the World Health Organization (WHO) were distributed to three hospitals. The NGO Hand in Hand for Aid and Development (HIHFAD) also supported the distribution and storage of items.

On the same day, the UN team paid a visit to the office of GOAL in Harim, [the NGO with the highest number of recorded casualties of aid workers](#). As many as 79 aid workers have passed away due to the earthquakes, the majority of whom worked for NGOs. At least four were UN staff members.

Many NGOs have long-standing partners of the UN cross-border aid operation, whose projects were funded by OCHA's [Syria Cross-border Humanitarian Fund \(SCHF\)](#).

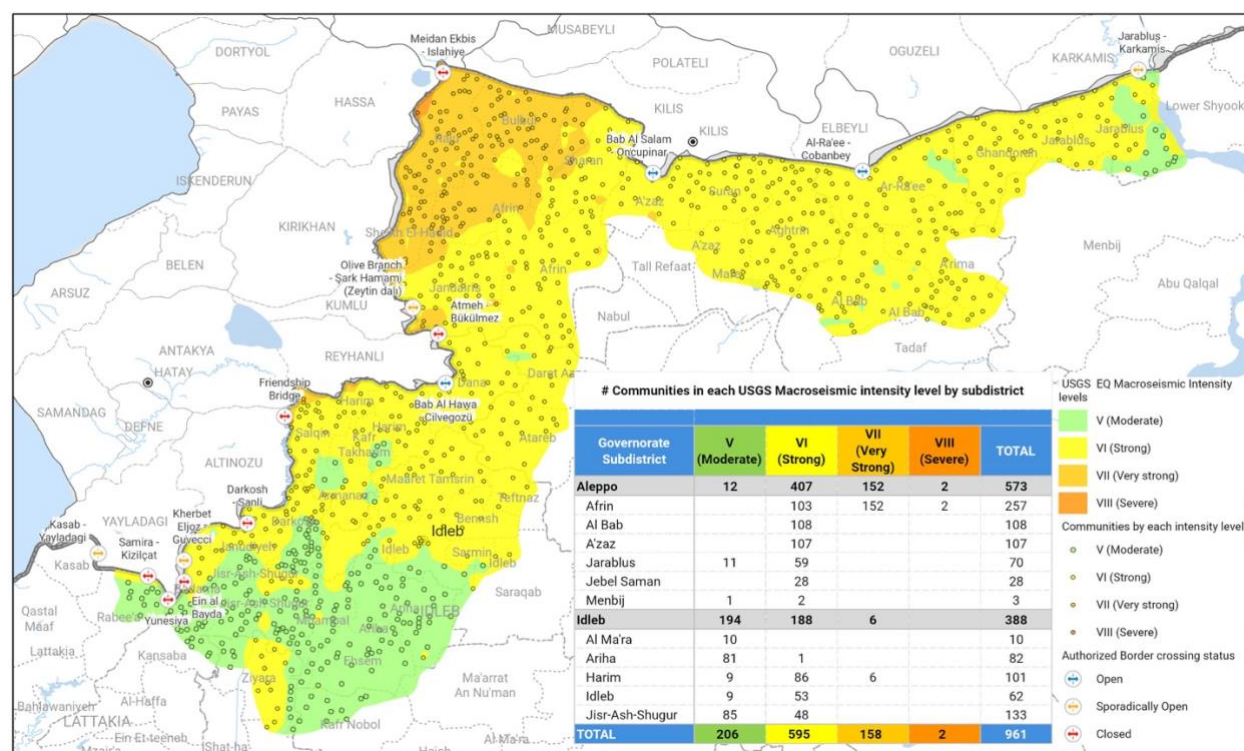
On 20 February, the SCHF launched the [first phase of its Reserve Allocation](#), valued at \$30 million, to address immediate life-saving needs. Once this allocation is completed, a second phase, valued at least \$20 million, will be launched to address life-sustaining needs in the medium term. The SCHF has also reprogrammed ongoing activities, worth \$7 million, towards the earthquake response.



Representatives from seven UN agencies visited a displacement camp in Idlib to meet with communities. 21 February 2023. Photo credit: OCHA/Madevi Sun-Suon

The UN and humanitarian partners are continuing to scale up its [cross-border operation](#). As of 22 February, the UN has sent 282 trucks loaded with aid provided by six UN agencies from Türkiye to north-west Syria using three border-crossings: Bab Al-Hawa, Bab Al-Salam and Al Ra'ee.

Impact, Needs and Response



Earthquake-affected communities in north-west Syria and border-crossings (as of 15 February 2023)

Impact

- **More than 4,500 deaths and more than 8,500 injuries** have been reported in north-west Syria, as of 21 February, according to the Health cluster.
- Almost 150 additional injuries have been reported in north-west Syria, following the 6.4 and 5.8 earthquakes that struck Türkiye on 20 February. Several buildings within the cities of Jandairis and Salqin, and the towns of Kherbet Eljoz, Hamziyeh, and Maland, collapsed in its aftermath.
- As of 21 February, **more than 1,700 buildings** have been completely destroyed and **more than 8,500 buildings** have been partially destroyed. Some 60 per cent of partially destroyed buildings were reported in Harim in the Idleb governorate and Afrin in the Aleppo governorate.
- The districts with the **highest number of deaths and injuries** as of 21 February remain Harim, followed by Afrin and Jisr-Ash-Shugur.

Humanitarian needs

- **Priority needs: Winterization, shelter and multi-purpose cash support** were cited as the top priority needs, according to a REACH [rapid assessment](#) involving 604 communities.
 - ✓ Assessments are ongoing and around 70 assessments are being tracked as per 21 February.
- **Internal displacement updates:**

- ✓ Some 40,000 households were reportedly displaced within their own communities, according to the REACH rapid assessment. 13,000 of the households were in the Salqin sub-district.
 - ✓ Movements of the population are continuing to be registered in the direction of the northern Syrian border and east Syria.
 - ✓ More than 86,000 displacement movements were recorded as of 17 February, according to the **Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) cluster**.
- **Shelter and winterization needs:** At least 50,000 households are in need of tents or emergency shelter, according to REACH. At least 88,000 households need mattresses, high thermal blankets and clothing.
 - ✓ Most of the affected population have been displaced within their own communities, but many have also arrived in reception centers or pre-existing camps, increasing the burden on facilities and services provided in those locations.
 - ✓ **The Shelter/Non-Food Item (SNFI) cluster** reported that the most urgent needs are tents and other temporary shelter units, NFI kits, basic and winter clothing, and heating fuel. Adaptation of collective shelters and minor repairs to damaged buildings are also urgent requirements.
 - ✓ **The SNFI cluster** calls to increase dignified shelter delivery and planning on longer-term shelter solutions as soon as possible.
- **Post-earthquakes health needs amidst a cholera outbreak:** At least 20 per cent of 604 assessed communities by REACH reported that they do not have access to healthcare, notably in the Badama and Harim sub-districts.
 - ✓ At least 47 health facilities have been damaged post-earthquakes, according to the Health cluster, as of 21 February.
 - ✓ Over 560 cholera cases and 21 cholera-related death were registered as of 21 February. Over 49,000 suspected cholera cases have been reported as of the same date.
- **Education services are unlikely to resume until March.** 46 schools are reportedly being used to host internally displaced people (IDPs). Temporary learning spaces are used as shelters by the earthquakes-affected communities.
- **Markets demonstrate a certain level of resilience:** Markets remain generally accessible to all or most of the population in assessed communities with earthquake impact. Only 11 per cent of the assessed communities indicated increased unavailability of items.
- **WASH needs putting people at risk of water-borne diseases:** Top WASH needs of persons displaced by the earthquakes include water, water tanks, latrines, hygiene items and sewage infrastructure.
 - ✓ **The WASH cluster** shared that the displaced population affected by the dam collapse in Al-Talul and subsequent flooding is partially returning. However, the dam cannot be repaired at this point and people are at risk of catching water-borne diseases.
 - ✓ 93 per cent of 43 assessed collective centers reported that they need hygiene support.
- **Gender-based violence (GBV):** 10 out of 93 previously available GBV service points were put out of function due to devastation by the earthquakes. As a result, the capacity to deliver assistance through dignity kits and cash-based interventions is hampered.
- **The border crossing closure pre-dating the earthquake is escalating health needs:** Before the quakes, around 30 cases from Syria per day crossed the borders to get medical attention in Türkiye. Since the border closure, this capacity to receive quality health support has been affected.
 - ✓ Procurement of medical supplies is increasingly challenging.
 - ✓ Psychological first aid (PFA), case management and safe service points are overwhelmed with rising needs in the earthquakes' aftermath.

- **Urgent funding needed to replenish food stocks:** Shortages of food items in Idleb and surrounding areas have been reported by the **Food Security & Livelihoods (FSL) cluster** partners.
 - ✓ A large proportion of assistance reported by **FSL** partners is one-time/one-off (75 per cent of cooked meals and 23 per cent of bread distribution) and is not sustained over time. Urgent funding is required to replenish food stocks and scale up the response while in parallel resuming and maintaining regular food assistance to support targeted food-insecure people.

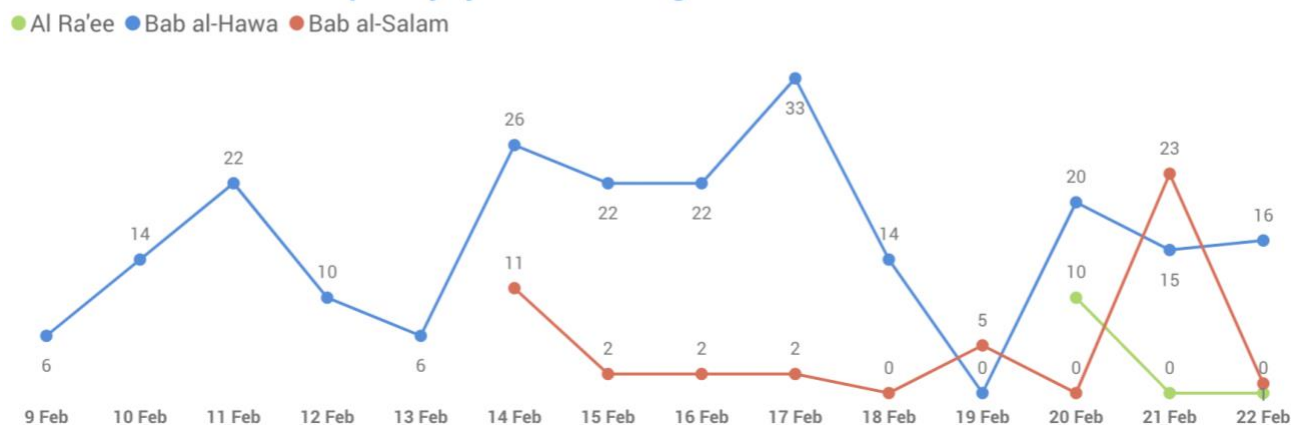


Humanitarian response

- **UN cross-border aid operation:** As of 22 February, a total of 282 trucks loaded with aid provided by six UN agencies (IOM, UNHCR, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, WHO) have so far crossed to north-west Syria since the earthquakes.



Number of Trucks Crossed per Day by Border Crossing Point



- ✓ The UN resumed its cross-border operation on 9 February following three days of temporary disruption due to damaged roads connecting Gaziantep to the UN Transshipment Hub in Hatay.
 - ✓ As of 14 February, three border-crossing points are opened for UN aid delivery: Bab Al-Hawa, Bab Al-Salam and Al-Ra'ee.
 - ✓ On 14 February, the first aid convoy crossed to north-west Syria through Bab Al-Salam since 2020. The convoy was comprised of 11 trucks carrying non-food items provided by IOM.
 - ✓ On 20 February, the first convoy crossed to north-west Syria through the Al-Ra'ee gateway for the first time. The convoy was comprised of 10 IOM trucks carrying medical and NFI aid to cover the needs of 3,500 people.
- **Debris removal:** Damage assessments are ongoing.

- ✓ As of 17 February, seven **Early Recovery and Livelihoods (ERL)** partners reported debris removal interventions in three Aleppo communities and thirteen Idlib communities. To date, the total amount of reported debris removed is approximately 28,600 m³.
- **Shelter and Non-Food Item (SNFI): The SNFI cluster members** are responding with emergency shelters and NFIs in affected communities, reception centers, existing camps, and collective centers.
 - ✓ 17 SNFI cluster members have reported completed or ongoing responses.
 - ✓ As of February 18, more than 14,000 individuals have been reached with tents. Close to 50,000 individuals have been reached with the provision of emergency NFIs and over 3,750 individuals have been reached with the provision of emergency shelter kits.
 - ✓ UNHCR and IOM currently report the highest stock levels as well as items in the pipeline for emergency shelters and NFIs. However, available tents stocks might be insufficient if compared to the scale-up. Since the earthquake response began, UNICEF and partners have reached 302,321 affected people residing in 89 reception centers and most affected communities with lifesaving WASH supplies and services in NWS Syria of identified needs.
 - ✓ A structural damage assessment training is being conducted among SNFI cluster members.
- **Food support and cash voucher assistance: FSL cluster** partners are providing a first-line response to the food needs of people affected by the earthquakes, including ready-to-eat (RTE) food (which covers the food needs of a family for one week), cooked meals and multi-purpose cash.
 - ✓ 530,000 people in north-west Syria have received their regular General Food Assistance rations and cash transfers by WFP. RTEs remain the main assistance modality, reaching 126,800 people in north-west Syria as of 20 February. 15,000 RTEs are being packaged in Mersin in southern Türkiye before onward transport to Syria.
 - ✓ The FSL cluster is coordinating with partners to ensure coverage of food need of newly established reception centers.
 - ✓ Through its emergency response tracker, FSL partners reported from the start of the response that 43 partners reached in total cumulative 393,538 people with one-off distribution of ready-to-eat rations of dry food (sufficient for a family of five for one week).
 - ✓ As of 22 February, nine FSL partners provided supplementary food – mainly bread support (free or subsidized bread) - reaching over 300,000 people during last week.
- **WASH: The WASH cluster** is continuing to provide desludging and water trucking support and is developing an emergency response plan. Contingency and preparedness assessment was completed.
 - ✓ A WASH Advocacy Working Group has been established. Health and WASH strategy meetings are ongoing to coordinate the cholera response post-earthquakes.
 - ✓ As of 22 February, UNICEF and partners have so far reached 302,321 affected people residing in 89 reception centers and most affected communities with lifesaving WASH supplies and services. More than 114,000 affected people received hygiene kits.
 - ✓ Five water stations are supported with water quality management by UNICEF and partners, serving over 187,000 people with safe domestic water supply. Services such as water trucking, solid waste management, and desludging of septic tanks reached over 125,000 people.
 - ✓ A total of 96,619 beneficiaries have been reached by at least one activity through eight WASH cluster partners. Activities include the provision of water, sewage, latrines and showers, and hygiene kits
- **Health:** As of 22 February, UNICEF and partners reached 18,265 individuals with medical consultations in 13 centers across communities in Aleppo and Idlib. Psychological First Aid was provided for 7,042 people and psychosocial support was provided for 348 people as of the same date.
- **Education: The Education cluster** has developed an Emergency Response Plan, targeting 500,000 people over three months. Activities include school rehabilitation, debris removal, provision of

Psychosocial First Aid for teachers, caregivers and students, and the establishment of child-friendly temporary learning spaces, among other support. \$24 million is required to implement this Plan.

- ✓ UNICEF and partners have distributed 10,371 stationary kits (which will serve 10,371 children) to schools in anticipation of the resumption of education activities.
- **Nutrition: The Nutrition Cluster** has reported that partners have screened 18,717 children aged 6-69 months. 532 children were reached with Severe Acute Malnutrition treatment.
 - ✓ 6,473 children have been screened for malnutrition and 334 children treated (representing five per cent of children) by UNICEF and partners.
- **PSEAH Hotline:** UNICEF and partners have established a functional Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Sexual Harassment (PSEAH) hotline as of 16 February.
- **Funding:** The UN and humanitarian partners are calling for US\$397.6 million in a [Flash Appeal](#) for Syria launched on 14 February.
 - ✓ On 20 February, **OCHA's Syria Cross-border Humanitarian Fund (SCHF)** launched the first phase of its Reserve Allocation, valued at \$30 million, to address immediate life-saving needs. Once this allocation is completed, a second phase, valued at least \$20 million, will be launched to address life-sustaining needs in the medium term.
 - ✓ The SCHF has also reprogrammed ongoing activities, valued at \$7 million, for the earthquake response.
 - ✓ The SCHF has so far received pledged contributions worth some US \$72.9 million. However, only 11 per cent of this pledge has been paid.

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

Contact

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