



UNHCR TÜRKİYE


EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO EARTHQUAKE

27 February 2023

BACKGROUND AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

- Since the earthquakes of 7.7 and 7.5 magnitude in Kahramanmaraş Province on 6 February, over 9,900 aftershocks have been registered in the region, including two 6.4 and 5.8 magnitude quakes on 20 February, a few in Central Türkiye and the latest in Malatya Province on 27 February of magnitude 5.6. The initial earthquakes impacted 11 provinces in Türkiye's southeast region and neighbouring Syria.
- As of 6 February, a three-month state of emergency is in place in provinces directly affected by the earthquake. In addition, on 24 February, Disaster and Management Authority of Türkiye (AFAD) [declared](#) some districts of cities outside the 11 affected provinces as "disaster zones".
- [According to](#) AFAD, as of 26 February, 44,374 people have lost their lives, while 563,000 people have been evacuated to other provinces.
- On 27 February, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs communicated in-kind aid received so far through Turkish diplomatic missions abroad: whereby Türkiye has received around 130,700 tents, 1,200 temporary housing containers, 1,700 mobile hygiene units, as well as 1.6 million blankets, 227,000 sleeping bags, 84,000 beds, 29,000 generators, 6,300 tons of clothing, 3,500 tons of hygienic medical supplies and 6,000 tons of food. The ministry stated that 28 countries have set up 30 field hospitals in the earthquake-affected provinces.
- AFAD [announced](#) on 23 February that 100,000 containers would be set up in around 143 locations. So far, over 6,500 containers have been installed. AFAD also said that 280 tent sites have been established in earthquake-affected provinces with close to 330,000 tents set up. In addition, 918,000 people have received financial support of TRY 10,000 (USD 530). This support is directed towards Turkish citizens.
- According to the [Minister of National Defence](#) on 23 February, over 30,000 Syrians have, for the most part, temporarily exited to Syria after the earthquake, mainly to check on family and to attend burials and funerals.
- The Turkish government is leading the response through coordination by AFAD and provincial governors. The Turkish Red Crescent (TRC), local partners as well as humanitarian organisations are working alongside AFAD. The Presidency of Migration Management (PMM) is also contributing to the response, including coordination of support to temporary settlements accommodating refugees and members of the host community, while the Ministry of Family and Social Services (MoFSS) is implementing protection and psychosocial services for women, children and other at-risk groups.
- As the inter-agency coordination structure is being set up, partners, NGOs and UN agencies are meeting on a regular basis to coordinate a response under the guidance of the local authorities and provincial directorates.
- UNHCR is responding with life-saving core relief items upon the request of the Turkish government. These include mainly emergency shelter materials, tents, blankets, hygiene and kitchen items, and solar lamps.

UNHCR OPERATIONAL FIGURES TO DATE


67,800
high-thermal blankets delivered


35,800
hygiene kits delivered


33,500
sleeping bags


28,700
foldable beds


27,400
tents delivered


19,500
kitchen sets delivered


15,300
mattresses delivered


10,000
plastic tarpaulin

UNHCR CAPACITY AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

UNHCR presence in the affected areas:

- As of early February, UNHCR had three offices in Gaziantep, Hatay and Şanlıurfa with 85 staff.
- UNHCR teams are currently operating from Gaziantep with daily missions to Hatay and affected provinces.
- UNHCR is setting up a working space in Hatay to facilitate and maximise response efforts in Hatay, one of the provinces most impacted by the earthquake and where UNHCR had an office prior to the earthquake. In coordination with UNDAC, UNHCR has temporarily set up two tents at the humanitarian hub in Hatay until a light base camp is established by the Turkish authorities.

Delivery of Life-Saving Assistance

- In liaison with AFAD and PMM, UNHCR is prioritizing the delivery of core relief items, winter clothing, tents and shelter materials, and working with partners and communities to identify and assess the overall needs of refugees and the host community.
- UNHCR is procuring and dispatching core relief items and hygiene materials from its in-country and global stocks in Europe, the Middle East and Asia regions to provide urgently needed shelter assistance. Items are dispatched through airlifts and road transport.
- With PMM, UNHCR is coordinating the provision of core relief items, including blankets, mattresses, kitchen sets, hygiene kits, heaters, food packs and warm clothing for **PMM-managed centres**, including 12 temporary accommodation centres (TACs) to accommodate affected refugees and local residents.
- So far, UNHCR has provided 19,500 high thermal blankets, 12,000 foam mattresses and 19,500 kitchen sets, 12,500 supplementary food packs, 9,000 hygiene parcels, as well as heaters, winter clothes and boots, and other standard core relief items to **PMM** for distribution in the TACs.
- UNHCR has also provided **AFAD** with over 33,500 sleeping bags, 26,800 family tents and close to 600 all-weather tents, 28,700 foldable beds, 48,000 high-thermal blankets, close to 26,800 hygiene parcels, 10,000 tarpaulin and 3,100 foam mattresses. UNHCR is also supporting the **Ministry of Family and Social Services** with 3 Rub Halls and over 100 tents and 800 powerbanks.

Field Response

- In provinces neighbouring the affected areas, UNHCR is working with the local authorities to identify needs, challenges and population movements as they receive individuals from the earthquake affected provinces.
- UNHCR's field teams across the country are following up with the provincial directorates of migration management issuing travel permits, partner NGOs and refugee leaders and associations to track refugee movements into receiving provinces. The tracking provides an overview of the refugee population movement out of the eleven provinces affected by the earthquake with UNHCR inputs as the reference point. Accommodation in receiving provinces is being provided by refugee relatives, local associations as well as municipalities, sports centres and dormitories among others.
- According to UNHCR's tracking, close to 148,500 refugees were reported to have arrived in 44 provinces from their earthquake-affected home regions so far. Mersin remains the highest receiving province with 50,000 estimated arrivals, followed by Istanbul and Bursa. The province with the highest issued travel permits so far is Istanbul with around 18,500 travel permits issued by PDMM.

Communication with Communities (CwC)

- Since the initial earthquakes on 6 February, the UNHCR counselling line has received over 3,000 earthquake-related calls seeking information about missing or deceased family members and accessing temporary accommodation or financial support.
- Through its CwC channels, UNHCR is disseminating information and messages related to the earthquake from official sources to communities in multiple languages, including Arabic and Farsi. During the past week, the Help website [earthquake section](#), launched on 8 February with advice and resources, reached 17,109 page views. The posts cover post-earthquake recommendations, emergency hotlines, information from MoFSS related to its unaccompanied children platform, information on the Turkish Red Crescent WhatsApp service and WHO Earthquake recommendations.

Education

- 870 refugee university students supported by UNHCR were living in the 11 provinces which were severely impacted by the earthquakes. UNHCR has been able to reach over 670 students so far (77 per cent). Forty-five per cent of the students are still living in their accommodation while 55 per cent are either staying with relatives, are constantly changing their accommodation, or staying at communal facilities or outdoors. The most pressing needs according to the students are cash, shelter, clothing, blankets and hygiene kits as well as medication. UNHCR is working with the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) to discuss possible ways to support students on DAFI scholarships and who receive Higher Education Cash Grants. One possibility might be a cash grant programme targeting students affected by the earthquake.

Resettlement

- UNHCR is discussing with resettlement countries the possibility to increase resettlement quotas to receive urgent cases of refugees made more vulnerable by the earthquake. Accommodation for refugees affected by the earthquakes is a serious challenge. Many refugees have lost their homes and UNHCR is currently interviewing refugees who require emergency housing. UNHCR is also exploring temporary housing options, which includes discussions with private sector companies such as Airbnb to secure credits to be used by refugees who are ready for resettlement.

SNAPSHOT OF COMMUNITY INITIATIVES AND LOCAL RESPONSE

- Municipalities in arrival provinces are forefront local actors being approached by people in need. UNHCR teams are in close communication with these municipalities and city councils regarding municipal support for the earthquake survivors, with various municipalities providing direct assistance to refugees. Nevertheless, municipalities have reported a shortage in resources and need support.
- UNHCR's partners Ankara and Izmir Metropolitan Municipalities (MM) are setting a positive example of the support they are offering both within their provinces and in the earthquake-affected areas. Ankara MM has provided housing to some 4,500 people, established a clothing store at the ANFA Fair and Congress Centre which has served some 10,000 people, launched a meal solidarity campaign, established a shower area with a

capacity of 100 people in Kahramanmaraş, and carried out maintenance and repair of more than 500 vehicles and construction machines in a workshop established in the earthquake zone. The municipality has also transformed unusable public buses into mobile showers, boiler rooms, dormitories, barber shops and laundry rooms to be sent to the earthquake zone. Izmir MM is providing technical and logistic support for the maintenance of the clean water infrastructure in Hatay, and establishing container spaces in Kahramanmaraş and Osmaniye. The municipality is also providing rent support to 33,100 affected households who relocated to Izmir province, hot meals for 22,000 people per day in affected areas, and has deployed staff and dispatched vehicles to all affected areas.

INTER-AGENCY

- UNHCR is working with OCHA and the Humanitarian Country Team as part of the earthquake coordination structure under the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC), co-leading the Protection Sector, the Child Protection and Violence against Women, Girls and Other Vulnerable Groups sub-sectors at national level, as well as the cash-based interventions (CBI) Technical Working Group. Each sector will be co-led by a national NGO partner in a commitment towards localisation. The partners are still to be confirmed. Discussions with the RC/HC, UNDP and OCHA underline the continued importance of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) and the synergies between the earthquake response and 3RP structures, including for refugees moving from earthquake-affected provinces to other regions.
- Information management, and monitoring and evaluation specialists are developing an earthquake response log frame to coordinate partner response to earthquake survivors. The tool will be aligned with the refugee response monitoring framework.
- The National Protection Sector convened on 24 February with approximately 150 participants. Key priority areas were the necessity of mainstreaming protection and gender-sensitive approaches, as well as disability inclusion across service delivery. Some protection-related challenges discussed include limited access to assistance and services, particularly for vulnerable groups and reduced service delivery capacity against scale of needs.

APPEALS AND FUNDING

In alignment with the Türkiye Earthquakes [UN Flash Appeal](#), UNHCR is appealing for USD 150 million to cover the emergency response in Türkiye. The overall aim of UNHCR's action is to improve living conditions of earthquake-affected people, and to assist those with specific needs, including among refugees, in finding and accessing necessary services including documentation and social protection. [Earthquake Emergency Supplementary Appeal covering Türkiye and Syria](#)

UNHCR is grateful for all support and queries from government donors and the private sector. UNHCR is helping to secure in-kind donations by the private sector. The items include hygiene products, clothing, chairs, and sleeping bags. UNHCR is also in negotiation with a number of foundations and institutions for core relief item support.

DONATE