

UNHCR Syria Flash Update #12

Emergency Response to the Earthquake
20 February 2023 / Updated as of 8:00 hrs

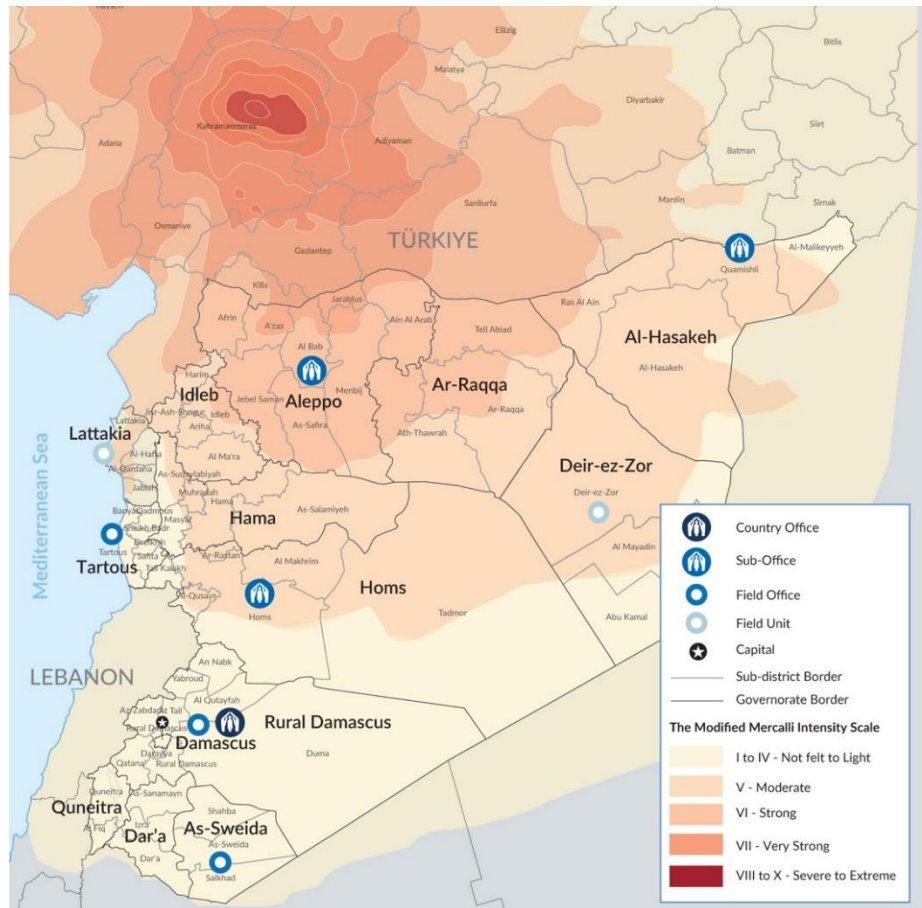


UNHCR and partners preparing the relief items for distribution in Aleppo. ©UNHCR/H. Maarouf

8.8 million
people are affected by
the earthquake in Syrian Arab
Republic

31,700
core relief item kits have
been released by UNHCR
for distribution to
affected families

Distribution of core relief
items continues in
**Aleppo, Latakia,
Hama and Tartous**





Overview of Developments

- A magnitude [6.3 earthquake](#) struck southern Türkiye at about 8 p.m. local time Monday 20 February, near its shared border with northern Syria. The quake, centered in Türkiye's Hatay province, was also heavily felt in Aleppo, Latakia, Tartous and Damascus. People took immediately to the streets where they spent the night once again. Families who were contemplating returning back to their homes are now returning back to collective shelters. Levels of distress are high, and UNHCR and partners are on the ground assisting affected families, including by providing psychosocial support, and also assessing new damages.
- Many schools that had been temporarily used as collective shelters are being restored to their original function, as other venues are gradually being identified and converted into collective shelters for families who cannot return to their homes.

UNHCR Emergency Response



Core relief items

- Core relief items (CRIs) are being released by UNHCR to partners for distribution. As of 19 February, UNHCR has released 31,700 CRI kits¹ for distribution to affected families in Aleppo, Latakia, Tartous, Hama and south Idlib Governorates.
- UNHCR has also released 26,800 winter jackets and 11,900 winter clothing kits from its warehouses in Aleppo, Tartous and Homs for distribution to affected families. In addition, some 163,850 adult diapers, critical for thousands of elderly persons and persons with disabilities, were released for distributions.



Protection

- Following the resumption of in-person gender-based violence case management in the community centres and the remote case management for those in collective shelters, increasing trends of harassment continue to be reported by affected families. This is mainly explained by the communal rooms and current WASH facilities in place in the collective shelters. In response, UNHCR and

protection partners are disseminating awareness-raising messages, including protection against gender-based violence, and coordinating with community structures to support raising awareness efforts on feedback and complaint mechanisms, and referral of gender-based violence survivors to case management services.

- Approximately 3,180 legal counselling sessions were provided to affected people on issues related to lost/damaged civil documentation, family booklets, and ownership of property deeds. Legal assistance is essential for those who lost identity cards and other documentation that allow them to access services.

Situation Updates

Aleppo Governorate:

- Following the establishment of government-led operation rooms, UNHCR and Shelter sector partners reviewed a list of the newly proposed collective shelters in Aleppo. Out of 17 locations, 14 are structurally safe or are only partially damaged. UNHCR and partners are preparing the technical documents to start the adaptation of collective shelters within the next one or two weeks, pending the Governor's approval.

¹ A CRI kit includes the following items: high-thermal blankets, mattresses, kitchen sets, plastic sheeting, jerry cans, solar lamps and sleeping mats.

- UNHCR and Aleppo Governorate are conducting rapid structural assessments with engineering teams in Aleppo; thus far, more than 11,000 buildings have been assessed, out of which 8,000 buildings were identified as structurally safe. UNHCR has been supporting the engineering teams with transportation fees, data collection and mapping analyses.
- Out of a total of 235 collective shelters currently operational in Aleppo, around 60 were closed, requiring the relocation of affected families to other shelters in the Governorate. Most of the 60 collective shelters that had to be closed were schools. This brings the number of operational collective shelters in Aleppo to a total of 188 (60 were closed, 13 opened).



Large-sized tents accommodating affected families in Kobane.

- The 10 large-sized tents UNHCR dispatched from Qamishli (Al-Hasakeh Governorate) on [14 February](#) have reached their final destination, Kobane/Ayn Al-Arab, Aleppo Governorate. UNHCR and partners have installed two tents in hospital yards and the remaining eight in public parks and streets. Each tent aims at accommodating eight families, reaching a total of 80 families (400 individuals) who had to leave their homes due to the earthquake of 6 February.

Tartous/Latakia Governorates:

- A total of 1,160 families who fled their damaged houses in Aleppo, Hama, and Latakia are being hosted by local communities in Latakia and Tartous.
- A UNHCR partner visited approximately 35 newly displaced families (175 individuals) living with local communities in different areas in Tartous Governorate to assess their

needs and provided them with the psychological first aid and the required referrals. In coordination with UNHCR's legal partner, approximately 40 families (200 individuals) received legal counseling on civil documentation.

- The [adaptation works](#) of the biggest collective shelter in Latakia (Sports City) are ongoing, so as to improve living conditions and provide privacy. The works are expected to be completed by end of this week. The shelter will accommodate approximately 55 families (275 individuals).

For additional information on the situation, please refer to: [Syrian Arab Republic - Humanitarian Country Team \(HCT\) Coordinated Response Flash Update #13 - Earthquake \(As of 18 February 2023\)](#); [Syria HCT: Protection Sector Earthquake Update: February 19, 2023](#) and [Flash Appeal: Syrian Arab Republic Earthquake \(February - May 2023\)](#).

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