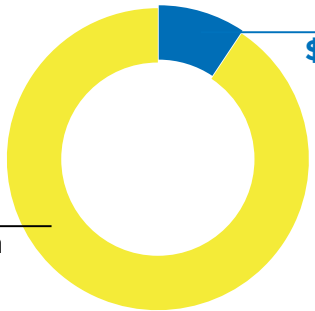
WHOLE OF SYRIA
Emergency Response to the Earthquake - Update #2
2 March 2023

UNHCR and partners conduct psychosocial support and recreational activities for 1,200 students staying in collective shelters in Aleppo.
Photo: ©UNHCR/H. Maarouf

$51.3 million

UNHCR's financial requirements for the earthquake emergency response in Syria, **targeting 385,000 individuals**



Funded:
$4.8 million
9%

Gap:
$46.5 million
91%

8.8 million

people are **affected** by the earthquake in Syria

135,526

people reached with protection services in the whole of Syria

29,396 CRI kits[1]

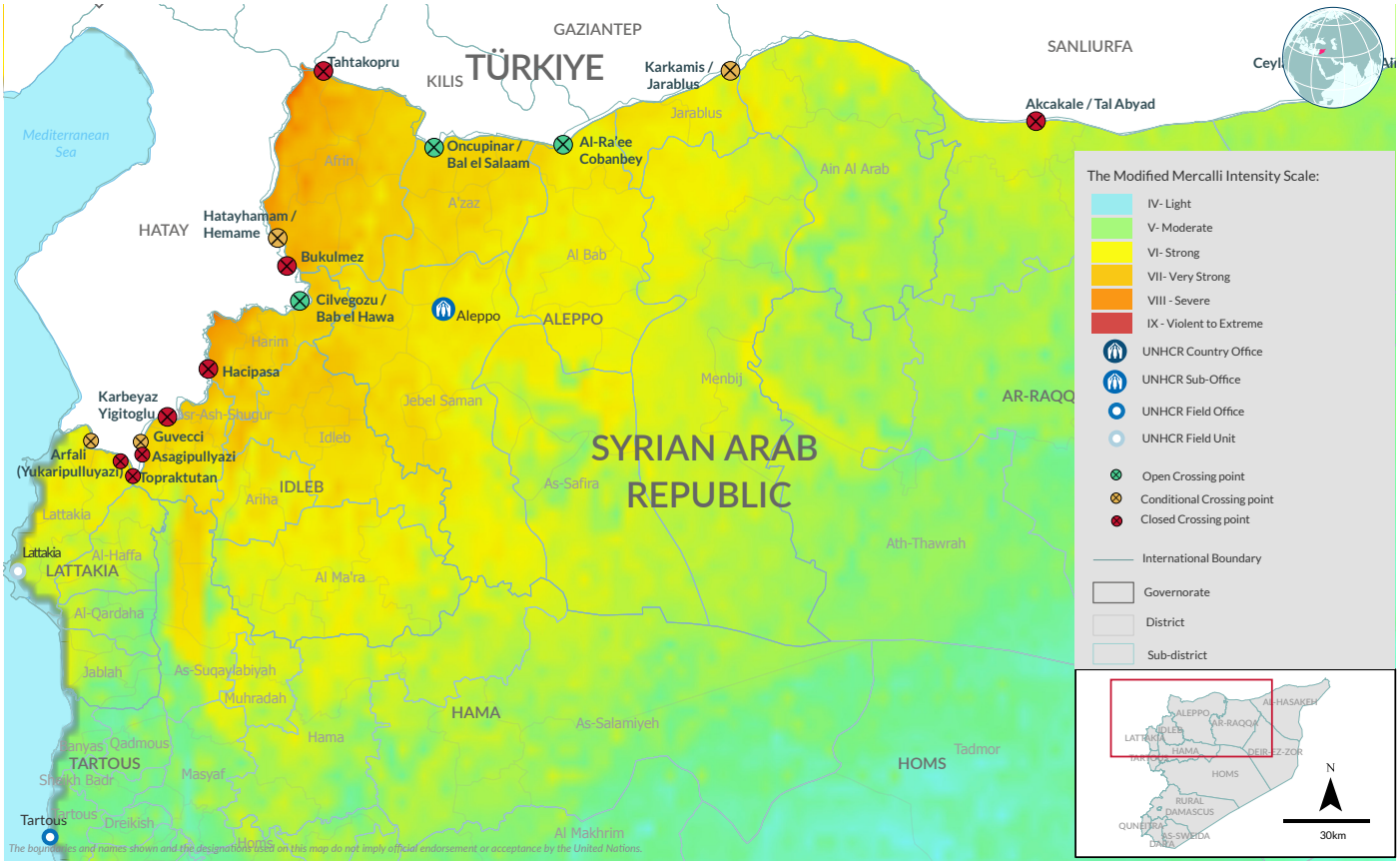
distributed in the whole of Syria, reaching **141,280** people

3,382 tents

distributed in north-west Syria, reaching **16,910** people

[1] *A Core Relief Items (CRI) kit includes the following items: high-thermal blankets, mattresses, kitchen sets, plastic sheeting, jerry cans, solar lamps and sleeping mats.*

Earthquake affected areas



Overview of Developments

In Syria, an estimated 15.3 million people were already in need of humanitarian assistance across the country prior to the earthquakes. Over 1,400 deaths and 2,350 injuries were reported by the Syrian Ministry of Health. The UN estimates that at least 50,000 families (approximately 250,000 individuals) have been displaced in Aleppo, Homs, Hama and Latakia. On 1 March, the Operations Room in Latakia reported that approximately 328,000 individuals in the governorate are in need of humanitarian assistance because of the earthquakes, with many of them being displaced outside their homes while those who stayed at their places are in need of shelter, relief items and psychosocial support.

The earthquake heavily impacted north-west Syria (NWS), a region where **4.1 million people depend on humanitarian assistance**, the majority of whom are women and children. **Over 4,500 deaths and 8,700 injuries** have been reported according to the Health cluster, mainly in the districts of Harim, Afrin and Jebel Saman, with numbers expected to rise. Following the earthquakes with epicenter in Türkiye on 20 February, almost 150 additional injuries have been reported in NWS. The earthquakes have affected at least 96 communities and 35 sub-districts in NWS; **more than 10,000 buildings** have been partially or completely destroyed,[2] leaving and estimated **55,000 households** as displaced, either within or between assessed communities.[3]

UNHCR Emergency Response

Response in Syria

In Syria, UNHCR is leading the coordination of Shelter, Non-Food Item and Protection sectors and working in close coordination with other sectors. Since the onset of the emergency, UNHCR and its partners have been providing protection, core relief items and shelter support to the people affected by the earthquakes, particularly those most vulnerable such as female-headed households, elderly people and people with disabilities.

[2] *OCHA - North-West Syria: Situation Report - 28 February*
[3] *REACH - Earthquake Response Rapid Needs Assessment - 15 February 2023*

During the reporting period, UNHCR and partners' outreach volunteers conducted home visits to hundreds of affected families in the north of **Tartous** to assess their needs. The primary identified needs are relief items, food, and adult diapers. In **Latakia** city, UNHCR partner organized focus group discussions to identify the protection concerns in the collective shelters, with critical needs identified for traumatic and post-traumatic treatment, particularly for children after the continuous aftershocks and the recent earthquake on 20 February. UNHCR and partners' outreach volunteers also assessed the situation of newly displaced families from Latakia, Hama, Rural Damascus, and Aleppo to Dar'a and Sweida Governorates. These families report urgent needs in accessing civil documentation, relief items, and enrolling their children in schools.

Protection

In total, UNHCR has reached **102,900 individuals** in Aleppo, Latakia, Tartous, Homs, Hama and southern Governorates with protection services since the earthquakes on 6 February.

The overcrowded collective shelters and the lack of partitions between families or in WASH facilities is leading to an increased risk of gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). Those risks were anticipated from the beginning of the emergency. UNHCR, as co-chair of the Prevention against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) In-country Network (ICN), developed PSEA key messages to be addressed specifically to women and children and distributed to all ICN members and their partners. UNHCR and partners are also distributing door locks, dignity kits, and risk reduction kits, re-assessing WASH and partition set ups, and closely coordinating with other sectors to effectively respond to those increasing risks. Through regular awareness sessions on GBV and PSEA in collective shelters, UNHCR and partners are aiming to create a space where the residents feel safe and able to report SEA incidents through complaint and feedback mechanisms.

Since the beginning of the emergency response, over 6,500 children and caregivers have received child protection services in the collective shelters in **Aleppo**; the services include psychological first aid sessions, psychosocial support, and child protection counselling. UNHCR and partners also continued providing social and recreational activities in collective shelters in **Latakia, Homs and Hama**. These activities include games and sports, fostering a safe space for the children to de-stress and maintain a positive daily routine.

A total of 365 legal information and sensitisation sessions on amnesty decree 24/2022 have been organized since the earthquakes on 6 February, targeting approximately 3,600 community members. The new amnesty decree 24/2022, which waives fines imposed on late registration of civil events and on refugees and asylum seekers for exceeding residency and for non-legal entry, is about to expire on 20 March. Due to the competing legal services being required from legal experts since the earthquakes, UNHCR and legal partners are advocating for an extension of its deadline.

UNHCR and partners distribute much needed relief items for families affected by the earthquakes, staying in collective shelters in Aleppo.
Photo: ©UNHCR/H. Maarouf

Core relief items

As of 26 February, UNHCR had distributed approximately 23,100 CRI kits reaching a total of 109,800 individuals. An additional 8,600 CRI kits have been released for distribution to affected families in Aleppo, Latakia, Tartous, Hama and south Idleb Governorates. UNHCR has also released 68,300 winter jackets and 31,450 winter clothing kits from its warehouses in Aleppo, Tartous and Homs for distribution to affected families. In addition, almost 537,900 adult diapers, critical for thousands of elderly persons and persons with disabilities, were released for distribution.

Shelter

As the Shelter and Non-Food Item Sector lead, UNHCR is closely engaged in coordination with the Operations Rooms in Aleppo and Latakia led by authorities. Together with other UN Agencies and following the request of the Operations Room in Aleppo, UNHCR is conducting structural assessments of buildings to help identify shelter needs and provide a better view of the structural status of Aleppo's buildings affected by the earthquakes. UNHCR is also coordinating the data entry and supporting the Information Management efforts as well as the Geographic Information System (GIS) based on data from the structural assessments conducted by the Aleppo Syndicate of Engineers.

In collaboration with the Operations Room, UNHCR and Shelter Sector partners approved the final list of locations to be used as emergency collective shelters in Aleppo and are currently finalizing the contractual procedures to start the adaptation works on the ground. Collective shelters set up at mosques and schools will soon be closed, and residents will be moved to the 17 new locations defined in this list. To date, there are a total of 120 collective shelters formally recognized in Aleppo, 14 collective shelters in Hama, and 24 collective shelters in Latakia.

According to the authorities and the Shelter and Non-Food Item Sector, a total of approximately 49,430 buildings were assessed in Aleppo, Latakia, Homs and Hama. The buildings in need of reinforcement or maintenance represent 41% of the total number of buildings assessed.

Cross-border response in north-west Syria

UNHCR is leading the coordination of three clusters – Shelter/NFI, Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) and Protection – in close partnership with the Humanitarian Liaison Group, local and international NGOs, and the Whole of Syria coordination structure, and providing direct assistance through its partners.

Since the Government of Syria accepted that UN staff can cross into NWS from Gaziantep, four interagency missions have been organized to meet with local officials, NGOs and the community. UNHCR has so far joined all missions. On 1 March, the Shelter/NFI Cluster conducted its first technical mission to NWS together with IOM, UNICEF and the WASH Cluster to assess the shelter conditions in reception centers hosting families displaced by the earthquake in Azaz, Aleppo.

UNHCR's convoy to cross-border, north-west Syria on 28 February 2023.
Photo: ©UNHCR

Shelter and Core relief items

535 trucks loaded with aid provided by six UN agencies have crossed the Bab Al-Hawa, Bab Al-Salam and Al-Ra'ee border-crossings since the earthquake. UNHCR has participated in ten convoys to date:

Date	Crossing point	UNHCR trucks	CRI Kits	Tents	Rubb halls*
11 February	Bab Al-Hawa	12	2,000		
14 February	Bab Al-Hawa	18	2,500	1,000	
16 February	Bab Al-Hawa	2		600	
16 February	Bab Al-Salam	2		600	
21 February	Bab Al-Salam	6	1,000		
22 February	Bab Al-Hawa	3		300	4
23 February	Bab Al-Salam	6	1,000		
28 February	Al-Ra'ee	6	750		
1 March	Bab Al-Hawa	8	750	600	
2 March	Bab Al-Salam	3		900	
Total		**66**	**8,000**	**4,000**	**4**

**temporary warehouses*

Assistance distribution as of 2 March:

Tents 3,382 distributed; 16,910 individuals reached

CRI Kits 6,296 distributed; 31,480 individuals reached

Tents installation in A'zaz, Sijraz (Aleppo).
Photo: ©WATAN

Thanks to stock already prepositioned in NWS and the expansion of its delivery assistance following the earthquake, UNHCR has supported earthquake-affected people with CRI kits and tents. Between 27 February and 2 March, UNHCR's partner WATAN continued to support communities across Aleppo and Idleb with CRI kits and tents; 2,140 CRI kits were distributed. Since 6 February, **3,382 tents** have been installed for 16,910 earthquake-affected persons.[4] At the same time, **6,296 CRI kits** have been distributed to 31,480 earthquake-affected persons.[5]

UNHCR through partner WATAN has established **four reception centers** run by local authorities in Ariha (Ariha park), Atarab (Al Snaa school), Atarib (Asl Shamal schools) and Maaret Tamsrin (open area).

Shelter/NFI Cluster members, led by UNHCR, are responding with emergency shelter and NFIs in affected communities, reception centres, existing camps, and collective centres. As of 2 March, Shelter/NFI Cluster members have distributed NFI kits to over 110,000 individuals and tents to over 53,000 individuals. Around 4,700 individuals have been reached with the provision of emergency shelter kits. The main targeted locations were Dana, Maaret Tamsrin and Salqin in Idleb and Jandairis, Atareb, Suran and Azaz sub-districts (in descending order) in Aleppo. Partners have reported an increase in prices for shelter rehabilitation as well as challenges in responding to the huge needs for shelter components, winter items and fuel.

[4] *Tents were distributed in Ariha, Armanaz, Atma, Harim, Hassaniyeh – Hatya, Kelly, Maland, Sarmada and Yaqubiyeh communities in Idleb and Afrin, Atareb, Bulbul, Dowaibeq, Fadrah, Jandairis, Kafrantin, Qatoura, Ra'el, Sijraz camp, Suran, and Tuwama communities in Aleppo.*

[5] *CRI kits were distributed in Bulbul, Fadrah, Jandairis, Kafrantin and Qatoura in Aleppo, and Armanaz, Armanaz Biret, Azar, Batenta, Darkosh, Foz - Zuf, Idleb, Jdidet Eljisr, Jisr-Ash-Shugur, Kherbet Eljoz, Mudiah - Luxin, Qanniyeh, and Salqin communities in Idleb.*

Protection

UNHCR's protection partners, Syrian Relief and Development (SRD) and SHAFAK, continue to conduct outreach activities and work inside their community centers, shelter centers and through mobile teams. From 27 February to 2 March, a total of **3,399 individuals** have been reached through protection services, such as psychological first aid, psychosocial support, awareness-raising activities on gender-based violence (GBV) prevention by using tools developed by GBV Sub-Cluster, case management and referrals to basic and specialized services, child protection activities, legal counseling on civil status documentation.

From 9 February to 2 March, a total of **32,626 individuals** have been supported with protection activities. The emergency response efforts are taking place in Al Bab, Atareb, Azaz, Bazagh, Qabasim and Salama in Aleppo, as well as in Atma, Dana, Ehsem, Haranbush, Kafr, Maaret Qourqeena, Tamsrin, Takharim and Sarmada, in Idleb.

UNHCR's partners report that targeted areas are overcrowded, limiting the availability of safe spaces where to conduct protection activities. Shelters are not fully equipped in terms of sanitation and there is not a sufficient number of tents on the ground to cover the extensive needs. An important level of seismophobia has been reported among the impacted population, further impacting the mental wellbeing of the population in NWS.

Camp Coordination and Camp Management

The Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster has tracked more than 86,500 displacements between 6 and 17 February after the earthquake.[6] Departures principally occurred from Jandaris, followed by Salqin and Harim. The main locations where displaced people arrived included Dana, Salqin and Idleb sub-districts. Displacements are ongoing and the figure is expected to rise dramatically. Establishing reception centres for IDPs and safe spaces for women and girls are priorities. The Cluster continued to receive reports of incidents in IDP sites. Between 23 and 26 February, 27 IDP sites suffered from fire incidents that caused one death and 14 injuries. Tents and IDPs' belongings were destroyed or damaged.

Donors

UNHCR is grateful to the donors who have contributed to the earthquake response, with unearmarked and softly earmarked funds as well as those who have provided earmarked contributions.

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[6] *This figure reflects the number of movements in February 2023 due to the earthquake, noting that individuals may have been exposed to multiple displacement, and that the reasons for moving may vary.*