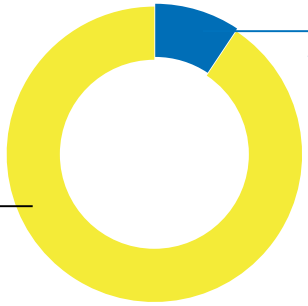
WHOLE OF SYRIA
Emergency Response to the Earthquake - Update #3
6 March 2023

Blankets and solar lanterns from UNHCR warehouse in Dubai arrive in Damascus International Airport.
Photo: ©UNHCR/V. Toumeh

$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

278,424

people reached with protection services in the whole of Syria

35,998 CRI kits[1]

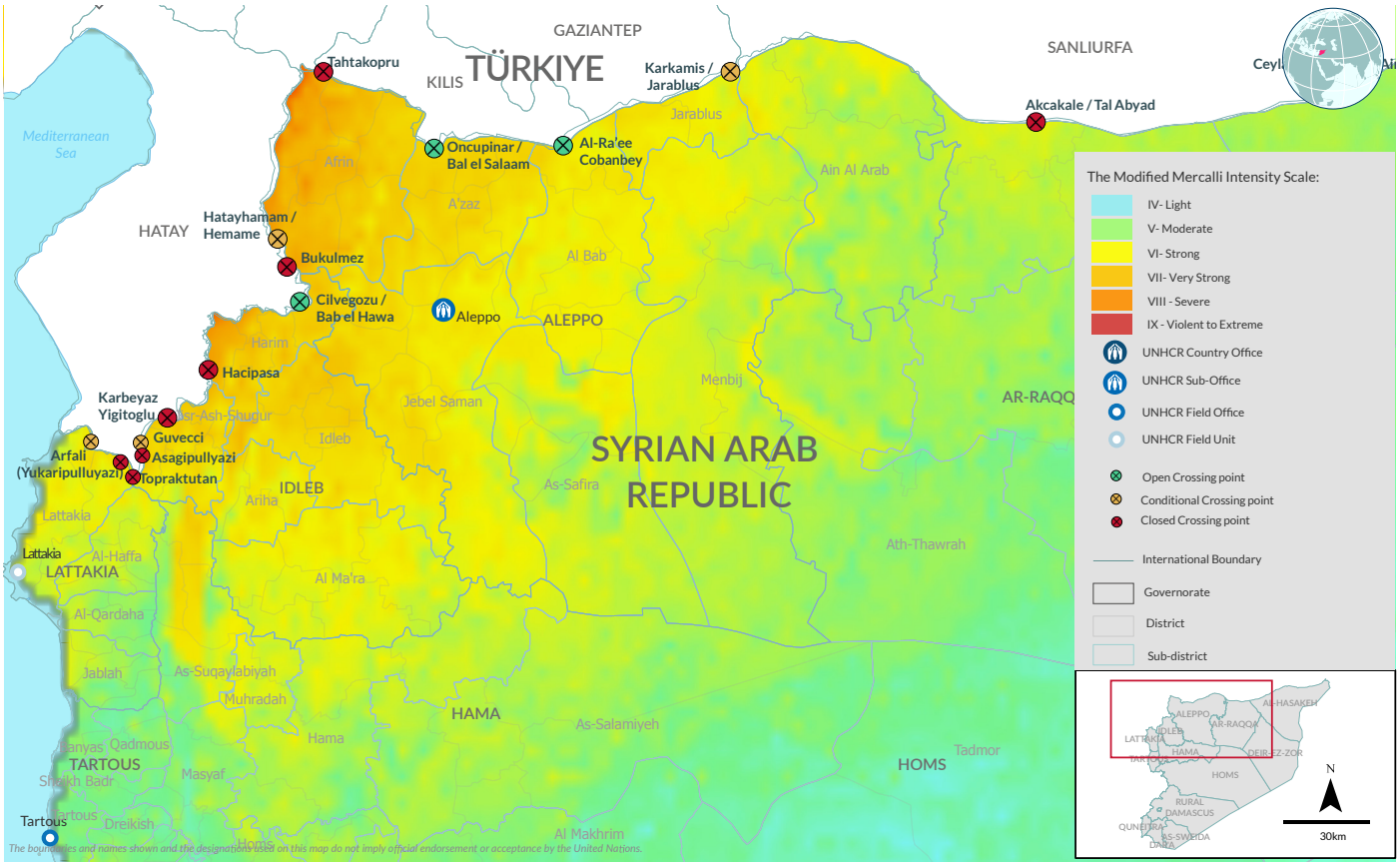
distributed in the whole of Syria, reaching **173,990** people

3,893 tents

distributed in north-west Syria, reaching **19,465** 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 **8.8 million individuals** have been affected by the earthquakes. **Over 1,400 deaths and 2,350 injuries** have been reported by the Syrian Ministry of Health. The Shelter and Non-Food Item (SNFI) Sector, led by UNHCR, estimates that the homes of approximately **2.7 million people inside Syria** have sustained various levels of damage because of the earthquakes.

The earthquakes 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. 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 Protection and SNFI sectors and working in close coordination with other sectors to effectively assist families affected by the earthquakes. Since the onset of the emergency, UNHCR and its partners have been providing protection services, core relief items and shelter support to thousands of families staying at collective shelters and hosted by local communities, particularly the 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*

Protection

Since the beginning of the earthquake emergency response, UNHCR-led Protection Sector and its partners have carried out around **245,000 protection** interventions, mainly in Aleppo, Lattakia, Tartous and Hama.

UNHCR and protection partners have assisted around **10,740 children and caregivers** in the collective shelters since the earthquakes on 6 February, through recreational activities, psychological first aid (PFA), child protection counselling and awareness sessions, and referral to case management. It is important to note that trauma related to the earthquakes is hampering children's return to school. Thus, in coordination with the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Working Group (WG), UNHCR has conducted psychosocial support counselling to support children's return to school.

The 26 UNHCR mobile units working in collective shelters of Aleppo have set up a workplan that includes a minimum of two visits per week providing psychological first aid (PFA) sessions, prevention to sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) key messages, awareness-raising sessions on protection concerns and referrals to the nearest community centres. Within the protection activities, around **3,460 displaced individuals** and members of the local communities were reached through PSEA key messages during the last week. Furthermore, community-led initiatives are springing up, such as providing haircuts by members of the affected community at no cost.

Also, the UN working group on accountability to affected populations (AAP), co-chaired by UNHCR and WFP, has prepared guidance to all sectors and partners on how to ensure that communities are consulted and can provide feedback on humanitarian assistance delivered and decisions that affect them.

During an inter-sectoral assessment mission to Tel Rifaat, a region of the governorate of Aleppo not under the control of the Government of Syria, local authorities informed UNHCR that approximately **20,000 individuals** had been displaced there in the aftermath of the earthquake. The main protection concerns identified include MHPSS; access to protection services; recreational activities for children; access to specialized services for people with disabilities and elderly people; and relief items. In coordination with the Protection Sub-national Sector, UNHCR is working with partners to ensure protection service delivery in Tel Rifaat enclave is enhanced through mobile units and UNHCR-supported community centers. UNHCR is also distributing plastic sheets, solar lamps and other relief items, following the identified gaps and priority needs. UNHCR also conducted a mission to Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, which is also not under the control of the Government, where 2,500 people are hosted in 12 collective shelters (mosques, schools and gardens).

Meanwhile, UNHCR and other partners carried out a mission to rural Latakia, where an estimated 24,000 people who have fled their homes are hosted by relatives and friends, while some have installed tents near their damaged houses. Many are people with disabilities; UNHCR will be dispatching mobile protection services to provide support.

Displaced girl studying in a collective center in Hama. With the psychosocial support from UNHCR and partners, she is preparing herself to get back to school. Photo: ©UNHCR/S. Sawas

Core relief items

As of 6 March, UNHCR had distributed approximately **29,000 core relief item (CRI) kits** reaching a total of **139,000 individuals**. An additional **2,700 CRI kits** have been released for distribution to affected families in Aleppo, Latakia, Tartous, Hama and south Idleb Governorates. UNHCR has also distributed additional some **110,000 relief items** to affected families, including winter jackets, winter clothing kits, rubber boots and adult diapers. Relief items are being released regularly from UNHCR warehouses in Aleppo, Tartous and Homs for distribution to affected families.

UNHCR Syria received approximately **10,000 blankets** and **4,900 solar lanterns** from the UNHCR warehouse in Dubai. The items, which will be distributed to affected families, were carried by a flight donated by International Humanitarian City in Dubai.

Shelter

UNHCR, together with other UN agencies, continues to participate in rapid assessment exercises in coordination with Aleppo Operations Room. To date, the number of buildings assessed in Aleppo is **19,290**, out of which 21% are damaged and in need of reinforcement, and 3,5% are damaged and should be demolished. In Latakia, **28,000** buildings have been assessed by the public safety committee thus far; with results showing that almost 9,5% need repairs and almost 1% should be demolished.

A total of 47 collective shelters were officially opened in Latakia during the first week of the earthquake, hosting an estimated **6,000 households** (30,000 individuals). To date, 24 are currently recognized as official collective shelters. Meanwhile, a decision has been taken to consolidate them and have a total of seven collective shelters - four in Lattakia city and three in the rural areas. The new seven shelters will be provided with police points along with essential basic services.

UNHCR is providing technical expertise and is helping to adapt these shelters, including with a view to mitigating protection risks, especially measures to ensure the safety of women and girls, adequate privacy, and accessibility for older and disabled people.

Through its health partners, UNHCR is extending health services to a number of collective shelters in Aleppo, and has worked with WHO to include **36 community health workers** in psychological first aid training.

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.

Reception centres in Azaz, Aleppo.
Photo: ©UNHCR

Shelter and Core relief items

583 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:

Delivered

Crossing Points	66 UNHCR trucks	8,000 CRI Kits	4,000 tents	4 Rubb halls*
Bab Al-Hawa	43	5,250	2,500	4
Bab Al-Salam	17	2,000	1,500	-
Al-Ra'ee	6	750	-	-

**temporary warehouse*

Upcoming

Date	Crossing point	UNHCR trucks	CRI Kits	Tents	RHU**
Upcoming 7 March	Bab Al-Hawa	11	1,000	1,000	-
Upcoming 8 March	Bab Al-Salam	3	300	300	-
Upcoming 9 March	Bab Al-Hawa	6			300

***Refugee Housing Unit*

Assistance distribution as of 6 March:

Tents		
	3,893	distributed
	19,465	individuals reached

CRI Kits		
	6,998	distributed
	34,990	individuals reached

Reception Centres in Azaz, Aleppo.
Photo: ©UNHCR

Thanks to stock already prepositioned in NWS and the expansion of its delivery assistance following the earthquake, **UNHCR** has managed to quickly distribute CRI kits and tents to people in need. Between 3 and 6 March, UNHCR's partner WATAN continued to support communities across Aleppo and Idleb with 702 CRI kits and 511 tents. Since 6 February, a total of **3,893 tents** have been installed,[4] and **6,998 CRI kits** have been distributed.[5] The distribution of assistance is fully coordinated with the Shelter/NFI Cluster.

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 6 March, Shelter/NFI Cluster members have distributed NFI kits to over 116,700 individuals and tents to over 55,500 individuals. Around 9,700 individuals have been reached with the provision of emergency shelter kits. The main targeted locations were Dana, Salqin, Maaret Tamsrin, Januhdiye, Armanaz and Harim sub-districts (in descending order) in Idleb and Jandairis, Afrin, Atareb, Daret Azza, A'zaz and Suran 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.

An earthquake response strategy has been drafted as a living document. The strategy focuses on different response phases: In the first phase, in line with the Flash Appeal, Shelter/NFI Cluster members are concentrating on emergency lifesaving activities to reach the affected populations as rapid as possible with shelter and NFIs, including tents, blankets, clothes, kitchen sets, heating fuel and stoves. The second phase will shift from emergency to longer-term response; repairs and addressing the acute needs of the vulnerable groups will be prioritized, as will moving people from the emergency shelter into more sustainable and dignified shelter units and apartments part of the comprehensive dignified living conditions interventions and approach.

The SNFI Cluster, with the support of the Global Shelter Cluster, is working on a gap analysis to highlight priority areas for urgent response. In line with CCCM Cluster's reception centre tracker, the SNFI Cluster overlays information of damaged buildings and displacement. Other maps and data analysis will focus on needs for different response types for shelter and NFI activities respectively versus the reported completed response of cluster members.

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 3 to 6 March, partner SRD reached 798 individuals with community-based protection services. Since 9 February, at least **33,424 individuals** have been supported with protection activities, which include psychological first aid, psychosocial support, awareness-raising activities on gender-based violence (GBV) prevention, case management and referrals to basic and specialized services, child protection activities, and legal counseling on civil status documentation. 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 continue to 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.

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

[5] *CRI kits were distributed in Aghtrin, Al Bab, Bulbul, Fadrah, Jandairis, Kafrantin, Qatoura and Sejjo 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.*

[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.*

Protection Cluster members conducted a rapid needs assessment to identify the most affected population groups, emergent protection risks and map accessible/available protection services in affected areas. Over 1,570 key informant interviews were conducted in 256 communities across NWS. Initial findings show that most vulnerable groups identified were persons with disabilities, children with disabilities, women-headed households, and pregnant and/or lactating women. Other groups that were found to be vulnerable include destitute older persons, persons with chronic illnesses, including mental health conditions, homeless and minorities. Around 12% of the population are unable to move freely in and out of their location; in specific communities the share of the population affected is higher. Over 70% of the population were recently displaced and facing problems with housing, land and property. 9% of the population faced forced recruitment, with 63% being children. Mines or explosive remnants of war were found in 13% of the locations assessed. Over 70% of the assessed population require humanitarian services such as health, food and nutrition, and there is a lack of services for youth, persons with disabilities or the elderly. More than 30% of key informants mentioned the presence in their communities of children without parents and 33% mentioned that the current setting is not safe for women, boys and girls, or other groups.

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. Many of the displaced families report fear of returning home, even when damages to their homes were cleared. The Cluster continued to receive reports of incidents in IDP sites. Between 27 February and 1 March, eight IDP sites suffered from fire incidents that caused one death and 13 injuries. Tents and IDPs' belongings were destroyed or damaged.

CCCM Cluster members facilitated the drafting of a multi-sectorial reception center operation checklist to enable a coordinated humanitarian earthquake response across NWS. The tool aims to guide partners delivering assistance at reception facilities to prioritize their response and deliver assistance in a coordinated and harmonized manner. Released multi-sectorial severity analysis of service provision at reception centers in NWS show that 32 out of the 77 new reception centers established after the earthquake have inadequate services, that Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) has agreed to prioritize in their immediate responses.

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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