



On February 6, a massive 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Turkey and Syria, leaving tens of thousands dead and injured.

One week after two massive earthquakes struck southern Turkey, rescuers are continuing to pull survivors—including entire families—from toppled buildings in Turkey and Syria. The death toll is staggering: more than 36,000 people have died—including 31,643 people in Turkey and 4,574 in Syria—and that figure is expected to rise as recovery efforts continue.<sup>1</sup> More than 78,000 people have been reported injured so far, and more than 14,000 buildings have collapsed across the region, with thousands more damaged or partially destroyed.<sup>2</sup>

The sheer scale of the disaster is enormous, with satellite imagery showing widespread destruction across the two countries. In Turkey, the three most affected districts—based on number of deaths—are Hatay, Gaziantep and Kahramanmaraş. Relief actors in Turkey have recorded significant numbers of internally displaced people, with at least 150,000 displaced in Turkey as February 8.<sup>3</sup> In Syria, humanitarian needs are vast, with initial reports indicating that more than 6 million people were affected by the quakes—including millions that were already displaced due to conflict.

Damage to infrastructure has disrupted critical services, including healthcare, in both countries. This is particularly concerning in Syria, where access was already drastically limited due to 12 years of conflict. Additionally, the high volume of casualties as a result of the earthquake is overwhelming functioning facilities, with many hospitals reporting acute shortages of medical consumables and supplies.

Along with the physical trauma experienced, the quakes and aftershocks also pose other significant health risks, including the threat of hypothermia due to prolonged exposure to harsh winter conditions, and psychological trauma. Populations in earthquake-affected areas are also at heightened risk of contracting waterborne illnesses due to disruptions and damage to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) systems, poor shelter conditions and overcrowding at facilities

## FAST FACTS

- 7.8- and 7.5-magnitude earthquakes struck southern Turkey on February 6.
- More than 36,000 are reported dead, with many more thousands injured; 31,643 deaths have been reported in Turkey, and 4,574 in Syria.

## OUR FOOTPRINT

- International Medical Corps has been present in **Syria** since 2008.
- We are currently working in 10 governorates across the country, supporting 33 health facilities that provided more than 620,000 health consultations and supported 6,850 mental health cases in 2022.
- International Medical Corps worked in **Turkey** from 2012 until 2018, with extensive programs in southern areas (including Gaziantep, Hatay, Sanliurfa, Kilis and Mersin) providing health, MHPSS, GBV, child protection and WASH programs.

## OUR RESPONSE

- Three of our trucks have delivered 15 metric tons of medications, medical supplies and cholera kits to support facilities in Aleppo, Hama and Latakia in **Syria**.
- We are operating two mobile medical units in Aleppo governorate and sending an additional three MMUs to provide primary health, trauma, and sexual and reproductive health services to thousands of patients per week.
- We are partnering with local organizations in **Turkey** to provide essential food and non-food items, including winter clothes and shoes, blankets, towels and diapers to displaced people in Hatay province.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/02/13/turkey-syria-earthquake-updates-deaths/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://turkiyeeg.thedeep.io/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/turkiye/turkiye-and-syria-earthquakes-fact-sheet-3-fiscal-year-fy-2023-february-12-2023>

harboring people displaced by the quakes. When one considers that Syria is in the midst of a cholera outbreak since September 2022, this risk is even more acute.

## International Medical Corps Response

International Medical Corps is continuing to provide essential services and support—including health, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), protection (including child protection and gender-based violence support), non-food item distribution, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services—to earthquake-affected communities in Syria and Turkey. Our field teams are coordinating closely with local authorities and non-governmental organizations to address immediate needs and support medium- and longer-term recovery efforts. International Medical Corps is continuing to work with the World Health Organization to evaluate the need to deploy its [Emergency Medical Team](#) (EMT) Type 1 to provide a variety of essential services, such as triage; basic first aid and life support; basic stabilization and referral; initial wound care; basic fracture management; outpatient pain management; minor outpatient surgical procedures; outpatient care for communicable and chronic diseases; basic pediatric care; mental health assessment and referral; and pharmacy services. While those discussions are ongoing, our teams are continuing to provide immediate support to functioning healthcare facilities throughout the region while rapidly scaling up our programs to support the increased needs in affected communities.

In **Syria**, International Medical Corps is continuing to procure and deliver essential medications, consumables, supplies and cholera kits to support functioning healthcare facilities. Last week, our teams delivered 15 metric tons of medications, medical supplies—including antibiotics, asthma medications and trauma-related supplies, such as bandages—and cholera kits to Ministry of Health (MoH) warehouses in Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia. The items are being distributed—in coordination with the MoH—to primary healthcare centers and public health facilities, where patient caseloads have rapidly increased as a result of the quakes. Over the next week, International Medical Corps will deliver additional medications and consumables to support trauma and surgical departments in affected governorates and will support some 20 hospitals that have been facing surging caseloads in the aftermath of the quake. Our teams are also working with local authorities to finalize a list of priority emergency and surgical equipment needs, and will begin working with vendors to source items that can be quickly dispatched to support overwhelmed facilities.



*Last week, International Medical Corps' team delivered 15 metric tons of medications, medical supplies and cholera kits to the MoH's warehouses in Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia. Additional supplies are expected to arrive next week.*



*While conducting a rapid assessment in Lattakia, International Medical Corps' teams distributed essential non-food items, including blankets and winter clothing, to displaced residents in temporary shelters.*

In addition to providing support for existing facilities, we are also deploying three mobile medical units (MMUs) and two mobile medical teams to provide healthcare services to displaced people in Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia. The MMUs will provide integrated primary and MHPSS services and will be equipped with a mobile pharmacy that will provide free medications to beneficiaries. Of the three planned, two MMUs are currently providing services in and around the Aleppo governorate to those staying at temporary shelters. The majority of cases seen at our MMUs have been related to injuries caused by the earthquake and its aftermath. International Medical Corps is also deploying medical teams—comprising physicians, nurses, MHPSS case managers and administrators—that will travel to affected areas and will be equipped to provide basic trauma/emergency care and safe referrals. We are coordinating closely with local authorities and reviewing assessment data to determine the initial locations for both teams. As recovery efforts continue, International Medical Corps is also developing plans to launch additional MMUs and mobile medical teams to increase access to critical emergency healthcare services throughout Syria.

Based on discussions with local partners, there is a risk that healthcare facilities may run out of psychotropic medications in the coming months. International Medical Corps' teams are working closely with local authorities and non-governmental agencies to develop contingency plans to avoid interruptions in the supply chain. Additionally, our teams are continuing to provide psychological first-aid (PFA) training to frontline healthcare workers, to provide additional tools and insights on reducing stress, how to provide emotional support to patients and how to identify those who may be in need of further professional services.

International Medical Corps is also operating a 24-hour MHPSS hotline and six centers that are providing services from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., including weekends, in the Aleppo governorates. Given the increased need for MHPSS support in the wake of the quakes, our teams are also exploring launching an additional hotline and developing an expanded mobile PFA plan that would include the deployment of multi-sectoral teams made up of MHPSS, child protection, gender-based violence and nutrition specialists that will be able to provide comprehensive and integrated support to vulnerable populations.

International Medical Corps is also working with local authorities to explore opportunities to establish mobile women's and girls' safe spaces, and child-friendly spaces, that will be co-located near shelters and camps hosting large numbers of displaced families. Though plans are in the early stages, our teams plan to distribute winter clothes and dignity kits, which include sanitary napkins, soap, washing powder and other items that help women and girls maintain proper hygiene.

In **Turkey**, International Medical Corps is working with local partners to address immediate needs related to food and non-food items. We are partnering with the Association of Assistance Solidarity and Support for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (MSYD-ASRA), a local humanitarian aid organization that focuses on providing basic needs and improving the living conditions for people and communities that are affected by humanitarian crises, conflicts, human rights violations and natural disasters. Together with MSYD-ASRA, International Medical Corps is procuring food kits and baby food, diapers, towels and more than 10,000 items of winter clothes and shoes to support displaced people in Hatay—the southernmost province of Turkey and one of the hardest-hit areas in the country. We expect to procure items and distribute them in Hatay next week.

Moving forward, International Medical Corps will continue to work closely with local authorities to strengthen recovery and relief efforts and to provide immediate support to the affected communities in Syria and Turkey.