



The 7.8- and 7.5-magnitude earthquakes brought widespread devastation to both Turkey and Syria, with the total numbers of lives lost, injuries and destroyed buildings continuing to rise a month after the quakes.

It has been more than one month since two devastating earthquakes struck Turkey and Syria, killing more than 50,000 people—including at least 45,968 people in Turkey and 7,259 people in Syria—and injuring many thousands. The 7.8- and 7.5-magnitude earthquakes also destroyed critical infrastructure, leaving the communities in the area in urgent need of humanitarian assistance.

Thousands of families have been left homeless after more than 160,000 buildings collapsed or were badly damaged in the quake. There is a shortage of safe spaces for people to take shelter, with people residing in tents and public buildings. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 1.5 million people are without a permanent place to live inside the earthquake zone.¹

Tents are not proving to be an adequate solution for sheltering people, with scabies outbreaks being reported due to unsanitary conditions. In Syria, the earthquake further damaged already impaired water infrastructure. Water systems in the country are now running even less efficiently, with a higher risk of the water supply being polluted with contaminated water. Syria already had been challenged with cholera outbreaks before the earthquakes, making new levels of water contamination even more of a concern.²

The need for healthcare support in the affected areas is critical, with millions of people displaced. Antibiotics, access to chronic disease medications, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), wound care, maternal and pediatric health, cholera treatment and clean water are some of the top reported needs.³

FAST FACTS

- The death toll from earthquakes in Turkey and Syria has surpassed 50,000 people—including 45,968 confirmed deaths in Turkey and 7,259 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 in 2022 provided more than 620,000 health consultations and supported 6,850 mental health cases.
- International Medical Corps worked in **Turkey** from 2012 until 2018, with extensive programs in southern areas (including Gaziantep, Hatay, Kilis, Mersin and Sanliurfa) providing health, MHPSS, GBV, child protection, nutrition and WASH programs.

OUR RESPONSE

- In **Syria**, we are operating six mobile medical units and two mobile medical teams that have provided 7,870 primary, emergency and surgical healthcare consultations.
- We have conducted PFA sessions in temporary accommodation shelters that have reached 3,254 people.
- We have delivered more than 15 metric tons of medications, medical supplies and cholera kits to support facilities in Aleppo, Hama and Latakia, with more supplies on the way.
- In **Turkey**, we are working with local partners to procure and distribute non-food items and food to support IDPs in camps and shelters. So far, our teams have reached 13,626 people with support.

¹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-64824516>

² <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/humanitarian-crisis-persists-for-survivors-in-turkey-syria-after-devastating-earthquake>

³ <https://www.directrelief.org/2023/03/follow-the-data-crisisready-shares-emergency-response-models-for-turkey-syria-earthquakes>

International Medical Corps Response

In the month since the earthquakes, International Medical Corps has been working with local authorities and partners to provide essential healthcare services to affected communities by deploying mobile medical units and teams, and procuring and distributing essential medications, consumables and supplies. Our teams have also been providing mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS); protection (including child protection and gender-based violence support); primary healthcare, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services.

In **Syria**, International Medical Corps has worked with local partners to launch six mobile medical units (MMUs), which include a medical team that travels in a fully equipped van with a patient area for consultations. We also have deployed a mobile surgical team and two mobile medical teams (MMTs), which provide consultations at the sites they travel to, to address gaps in emergency and primary health services for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in shelters and camps. As of March 8, our teams had provided 7,870 consultations—including more than 3,000 through the MMTs—to people in the affected regions. The majority of consultations have been related to primary healthcare concerns such as non-communicable diseases and upper respiratory-tract infections, as well as hygiene issues related to scabies and lice.



International Medical Corps is working with a local partner in Syria to deploy a mobile surgical team to support earthquake-affected communities in the aftermath of the tremors. As of March 8, the team had provided consultations for 662 patients.

Over the past week, our teams visited several shelters in the towns of Jebleh and Qurdaha—located just south of Lattakia—including a sports center where 2,000 residents are sheltering in the aftermath of the quake. Our teams provided medical services to IDPs in the shelter, delivered walking aids (such as walkers and crutches), hygiene kits and dignity kits. Additionally, the six MMUs are providing services in IDP camps and shelters in and around the Aleppo governorate, where thousands of families have been displaced. In collaboration with a local partner, International Medical Corps' mobile surgical team is providing services throughout the Aleppo governorate and surrounding areas. As of March 8, the team had provided consultations to 662 patients, the majority of whom required orthopedic services.

International Medical Corps' two MMTs are providing services in Lattakia, where we have been working closely with the Ministry of Health (MoH) to provide critically needed supplies, medications and consumables to support functioning hospitals and public healthcare facilities in the district. The MMTs are focused on providing services to people living in temporary shelters and makeshift camps throughout the district. With needs related to health, WASH and MHPSS have increased—particularly for those living in shelters and camps—International Medical Corps is deploying an additional MMT to see patients over six months to meet health care needs in Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia. International Medical Corps' Health Advisor and Health Coordinator will visit the affected areas throughout Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia in the coming weeks to ensure that current interventions address the immediate needs and to assess whether additional MMUs or MMTs are required, helping us to design future interventions to effectively meet critical gaps in care.

To support functioning healthcare facilities, International Medical Corps is meeting with local authorities, physicians and administrators at public hospitals and primary healthcare facilities to identify needs to support surgeries for earthquake victims, and to address immediate gaps in supplies, medications and equipment caused by increased patient caseloads. The need for reconstructive surgery for victims is expected to increase throughout the year as patients are stabilized. International Medical Corps is working to help one operating room in a trauma hospital in Lattakia increase its surge capacity for reconstructive surgeries by procuring and delivering critical equipment, including surgical instruments and trauma-care supplies.

Additionally, International Medical Corps is continuing to support the MoH by procuring and delivering essential pharmaceuticals, medical supplies and equipment for healthcare facilities in Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia. To date, our team has delivered more than 15 metric tons of pharmaceuticals, medical supplies and cholera kits to support operating facilities in the target areas. International Medical Corps also is coordinating with the MoH to ensure that the items are distributed to the facilities most in need. Our teams are procuring additional cholera kits, trauma supplies and consumables (including gauze and bandages), walking aids and pharmaceuticals that will be delivered to the MoH in the coming weeks. These items will be distributed to facilities in Aleppo, Hama and Lattakia.

Given the multisectoral gaps and needs in the region, International Medical Corps' MMUs and MMTs include specialists in MHPSS, protection and nutrition to provide integrated, comprehensive support to patients. International Medical Corps is relying on MHPSS specialists and a cadre of trained community health workers (CHWs) who have been providing psychological first-aid (PFA) training and direct psychosocial support to patients seeking healthcare. In the past month, International Medical Corps' team has reached 3,254 people through training and PFA-related sessions, and has provided more than 500 in-person psychosocial mental health consultations to affected residents. Given the increased levels of stress and anxiety within the affected communities, International Medical Corps is operating six mobile PFA teams comprising specialists in psychosocial support, child protection (CP) and gender-based violence (GBV) who are providing services to IDPs in and around the Aleppo governorate. Together, the six teams have served more than 1,700 people. We are also continuing to operate our 24-hour MHPSS hotline, along with six centers that are providing services from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., including weekends, in affected areas in the north of Syria.



In Turkey, our teams are working closely with our partner, the Association of Assistance Solidarity and Support for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (MSYD-ASRA), to deliver critically needed supplies.

International Medical Corps' GBV and CP teams also are providing group activities for and consultations to vulnerable women, girls and children currently living in temporary shelters and camps. Services include running awareness-raising sessions, providing safe spaces where children can express their fears and emotions, and distributing games and toys for children. As of March 8, the teams had reached more than 450 women, girls and children.

International Medical Corps' Nutrition team is providing support to earthquake-affected communities in and around the Aleppo governorate as part of our MMUs. As of March 8, the team had provided support to more than 650 pregnant and lactating women and children.

Finally, our WASH team is working closely with local authorities and other non-governmental organizations to procure additional supplies—including drinking water, hygiene kits and dignity kits—to support IDPs living in shelters and camps. As a result of the quake, damage to water and sewage lines has been reported across the affected areas, increasing the risk of disease outbreaks. Our WASH teams are working closely with local authorities to install latrines, provide clean water and distribute hygiene kits, to mitigate risk.

In **Turkey**, International Medical Corps is working with our partners—Association of Assistance Solidarity and Support for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (MSYD-ASRA), and the International Blue Crescent Relief and Development Foundation (IBC)—to procure and distribute essential non-food items, including winter clothing, towels, blankets, hygiene kits and drinking water, to support IDPs in Hatay, Gaziantep, Kilis and Kramanmaras. In partnership with MSYD-ASRA, International Medical Corps has distributed non-food items to 8,626 people (4,645 females and 3,981 males) in shelters, including blankets, food baskets, diapers, towels, hygiene kits and winter clothing. MSYD has procured an additional 3,000 food baskets, along with diapers, blankets, towels and hygiene items, that will be distributed to IDPs in Antakya and Hatay later this week.

In partnership with IBC, International Medical Corps has distributed drinking water to 5,000 IDPs and refugees living in Islahiye tent camps, in the southern Turkey province of Gaziantep, one of the hardest-hit areas. Moving forward, the team will procure nutrition packages, adult winter clothing and canned food to be distributed in Gaziantep (Islahiye), Kahramanmaraş (Elbistan) and Kilis. The team is also planning to deploy an MMU in coordination with the MoH to provide emergency and primary care to displaced people. Moving forward, International Medical Corps will continue to work with local partners to address critical needs related to health, WASH and MHPSS in the region.