

Situation Overview

As the death toll continues to grow, on 7 February the Syrian Ministry of Health (MoH) reported 769 deaths and 1,448 injuries, mainly in Aleppo, Lattakia, Hama, Idleb countryside and Tartous. Alert status has been announced in all public and private health facilities. Media sources mentioned that mosques, churches, and schools were opened to receive the affected people. On 6 February, the Ministry of Education announced suspending teaching in all schools in Syria until the end of the week. Further on 6 February, The Syrian Oil Ministry announced that the Baniyas oil refinery was shut down due to damage sustained after the earthquake. On 6 and 7 February, State media reported that two Iraqi planes and one Iranian plane arrived at Damascus Airport carrying relief assistance for people affected by the earthquake. Government and public calls went viral across official and social media for the UN/ international community's assistance and lifting of the sanctions. In addition, community, and individual initiatives to provide support are on the rise.

The Governorates of the southern region: Damascus,

Rural Damascus, Dar'a, As-Sweida and Quneitra were not significantly impacted. However, the risk of building collapse in the event of another disaster is high in the mountain areas of Damascus and the illegal residential areas.

The Aleppo Governorate Council called on people and the private sector who have equipment to assist in the rescue operations, especially in the mainly affected populous areas.

So far, two young female Palestine refugee students in Aleppo (aged 9 and 11 years) have been reported amongst the victims. Hundreds of others have been injured across the north of Syria, including the son of an UNRWA teacher in Aleppo who is in hospital in critical condition. There are reports that three buildings have collapsed in Lattakia Camp affecting five Palestine refugee families. One child was rescued from the rubble and admitted to intensive care and rescue efforts are ongoing to free other family members who are trapped under the rubble.

UNRWA immediately tasked its Engineering Department to undertake a preliminary assessment of all of its installations in the north and so far none of the buildings have been found to have anything other than relatively minor cracks in the building structures. The majority of UNRWA's recently constructed installations have in-built seismic protection, however it is anticipated that some repairs will be needed in order to ensure that all of the Agency's installations are brought back into full working order.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

MoH is leading the emergency health response at national level and the Directorates of Health (DoH) at the governorates level while the Emergency Operations Center has been fully activated at the ministry. Mobile teams have already been deployed by MoH: 28 ambulances and seven mobile clinics were deployed from Damascus, Rural Damascus, Quneitra, Homs, and Tartous to support Aleppo and Lattakia. MoH has also supported its district health teams with four trucks loaded with medicines and surgical and emergency supplies were dispatched to Aleppo, Latakia and Hama.

WHO is supporting the response through immediate dispatch of life-saving medicines and supplies; two shipments were sent to the DoH in Aleppo and Lattakia from their respective warehouses. These shipments contained mainly trauma supplies and essential medicines. WHO is also mobilizing supplies from its central warehouse, including water disinfection tablets. WHO is working with regional colleagues and its Dubai hub to secure support in the next 24-48h pending approvals.



 **769** Deaths

 **1,448** Injuries

In Lattakia City, four temporary shelters were designated for people who were displaced by the earthquake. They include the old technical services building (under preparation), a building for the Directorate of Education with a capacity of 30 rooms.

Homs and Hama Governors have convened their respective Emergency Relief Committees. A collective shelter (Ibrahim Mahmood school) is being established to accommodate people in need.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AND CAPACITIES

Humanitarian actors reported a huge need for all types of assistance, logistics, skilled rescue teams, and temporary shelters. In terms of prioritized needs, according to Lattakia Governor's Office, machines, and equipment for debris removal, food, and non-food items. Water networks were also impacted as per the WASH sub-national sector.

Coordination

All southern governorates are working on preparedness plans. OCHA is following up with the Governors' Offices to get the needed update on the response and the gaps. At the AHCT level, an ad-hoc meeting was held to discuss the impact of the crisis in the northern and coastal areas in the south and the required preparedness, as one of the expected implications is displacement from the impacted areas in Aleppo, Lattakia, Hama and Idleb to Damascus and Rural Damascus. The potential number of displaced people is still unclear, further discussion will be held with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) and the respective Governors' offices.

WASH

In Aleppo, technicians are working on assessing the WASH infrastructure; pumping to rural areas has stopped due to water contamination since it has shown high turbidity. The sector through UNICEF is ready to support water trucking as soon as requested by SARC in addition to releasing their prepositioned stock of hygiene kits, jerry cans and aqua tabs. The sector is also looking at possibilities of procuring potable water through private the sector if needed. The situation in the camps is stable.

Protection

In Aleppo, the sector is prioritizing psychosocial support and checking mobile units for psychosocial first aid. Community centres will open today to disseminate information. The sector will prepare standardized messages on what to look for to ensure the house is safe for return to and will disseminate through the centres. Also in Aleppo, the Child Protection group is working with DoE to start psychosocial support sessions in accommodation centres and modifying existing manuals to respond to the emergency. The group is working with DoE to provide psychosocial services in accommodation centers.

Education

In Aleppo, schools were not functional on 6 February, and 14 schools were opened to displaced families as temporary accommodation centres. The Directorate of Education reported 37 schools partially damaged while three schools were out of service due to complete structural damage.

Food

In Aleppo, 1,500 hot meals are being prepared by one communal kitchen, and a second one is being prepared to produce more. A total of 4,000 Ready to Eat (RTE) rations will be distributed to families through SARC (1,000 by WFP and 3,000 by ICRC).

In addition to the food component, WFP will be requested to provide fuel on a cost-recovery basis for the initial response. For other humanitarian partners, the cost-recovery price is US\$1.5/litre. The cost of 100,000 litres is \$150,000. WFP

requests \$1.8 million to deliver 20,000 RTEs and 20,000 food rations (WFP monthly food basket) to support newly displaced families.

WFP has 20,000 Ready-to-eat (RTE) rations available (some immediately, the rest within 24hrs). However, WFP does not currently have stocks of dry food rations per se but can divert from its planned distributions if needed. However, in this first phase, RTEs are most appropriate. WFP will request funding for an additional 20,000 RTEs and 20,000 food rations/cash transfers (1-month food basket requirement) for newly displaced families.

Health

In Aleppo, UNICEF in cooperation with WHO and DoE are planning to purchase health items based on need. The sector supported Al Razi Hospital with 400 body bags and 100 wounded kits. The key needs are continuity of search and rescue efforts and patient transport to hospitals for trauma response for injured persons. Civil Defence is facing challenges in some regions due to fuel shortages. Support is urgently needed for additional trauma and surgical supplies. Supply of sufficient safe water is a priority. Fuel shortages are a major hindrance for all actors in the response, including the re-deployment of healthcare workers from other areas, ambulance transport, search, and rescue and NGO-supported RCCE for affected communities.

WHO estimates the required funding at roughly \$3 million which does not include the repair of damaged facilities which will need to be further assessed.



Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Support is also required and requested by DOH for hospitals with reproductive-related equipment, including medicines, ultrasound devices and consumables especially in ER department. There has been an influx of women coming to the hospitals and not enough capacity to support them. It is essential to ensure that the unique needs of women and girls are included in the response including sexual and reproductive health, mental health, and psychosocial support, GBV prevention and response. UNFPA supported Women and Girls Safe Spaces are operating in Hama providing psychosocial services. Assessments of hospitals and clinics are still ongoing. In Lattakia no damage to UNFPA facilities has been sustained, except one station for SARC mobile team (cracks in building).

UNFPA has 29 Integrated SRH/GBV mobile teams that are responding/ready to respond in Aleppo, Hama, Lattakia and Tartous. The teams have a gynecologist, midwife, PSS worker and three community outreach volunteers.

Shelter/NFI

In Aleppo, no structural assessments were conducted so far; however, UNHCR shelter kits are stored at the SARC warehouse and ICRC shelter kits are stored on national level, ready to be dispatched and distributed upon need. Initial information suggests dire need for food, core relief items and WASH support. Health facilities are overstretched, and private hospitals are having to accommodate the growing needs. UNHCR shelter colleagues are on standby to liaise with the

Governor's offices to support rapid assessment of the damaged buildings in collaboration with sector members for the possible removal of debris.

In terms of gaps, UNHCR Sub-Office Aleppo has some shelter kits in emergency stock and will need more to respond. Indicatively and unconfirmed, the Governor plans to open 18 collective shelters for affected families (most likely in schools).

NFI sub-sector is releasing a total of 6,500 kits to be distributed to families, items vary between kitchen sets, blankets, plastic mats, tarpaulin, mattresses, solar lights, moquette and winter clothes (5,000 UNHCR and 1,500 ICRC).

UN-Habitat does not have an emergency response fund; therefore, it is unable to participate in the sudden human response. UN-Habitat can utilize a potential fund in carrying out assessments, shelter rehabilitation, preparing alternative accommodation, rubble, and machinery removal, securing manpower, and consultancy. A rapid damage assessment and a detailed structural assessment to identify buildings at risk (of harming the people living in the building and the people passing the road next to it) are considered important gaps in the current response. The structural strength of those identified buildings/houses needs to be restored by rehabilitating the buildings. Aftershocks may continue for months.



Nutrition

In Aleppo, the Nutrition sector provided support to 3,000 children with high energy biscuits.

SNFI partner priorities are:

- Supporting local authorities in shelter damage needs assessment, as well as structural assessment of collective shelters.
- Supporting the 'Syndicate of Engineers' in the dissemination of messaging related to structural damage of residential buildings (unsafe to return).
- Mobilising shelter partners to assess collective shelters to determine shelter and NFI needs.
- Ensuring accuracy of current SNFI contingency stock records.
- Collaborating with the Early Recovery sector to begin support for debris removal.
- Distributing NFI kits to those in need.

Key gaps in the response are anticipated to be:

- Debris removal capacity and equipment
- Capacity for collective shelter upgrades
- Qualified personnel to undertake damage assessment and rehabilitation of damaged housing

Palestine Refugees

Based on rapid assessments made by UNRWA teams in northern Syria, the following have been identified as most pressing needs of the Palestine refugee affected by the earthquake: medical supplies and non-food items; psychosocial support and other protection measures (particularly minimizing the potential for GBV in communally shared spaces where possible); rental subsidies for those displaced from their homes; repair/rehabilitation for damaged UNRWA premises and for individual homes. The specific needs of women and girls will be taken into account (including dignity kits and other gender-specific NFIs). Emergency services, including SARC, are responding to the needs of Palestine Refugees in Lattakia Camp. UNRWA's Relief and Social Services office staff are working with relevant authorities to ascertain how many refugee families are affected. UNRWA has already made some of its schools available to provide emergency shelter for about 1,000 people and it is anticipated that this number may rise. Northern Syria is home to approximately 62,404 Palestine refugees. UNRWA estimates that about 90 per cent of these families are in need as a result of the earthquake.