

# UNFPA APPEAL

FOR THE EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE  
ACROSS THE WHOLE OF SYRIA

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## SITUATION OVERVIEW

On 6 February, 2023, two major earthquakes with 7.8 and 7.6 magnitudes, respectively, hit areas of Türkiye and Syria, causing mass destruction of residential and public buildings, including hospitals, and significant loss of life. As of 9 February, more than 3,300 people have died and over 7,300 are injured – figures that are expected to increase significantly over the coming days as large numbers of people remain trapped under collapsed buildings. The full extent of the earthquake's impact remains unclear, but the damage has been significant.

Idlib, Aleppo, Latakia, and Hama governorates were severely impacted. Harsh weather conditions, including snowfall and freezing temperatures, have impeded emergency responses and the wellbeing of survivors. Lack of heavy machinery to remove rubble, especially in north-west Syria (NWS), has also complicated search and rescue efforts, and insufficient electricity and fuel have impacted services at hospitals and individuals' ability to access health care and essential gender-based violence services. Damage to infrastructure has interrupted the delivery of basic social services including life-saving reproductive health services, putting the health and lives of pregnant women and their unborn babies as well as newborns at risk.

Women and girls, including pregnant and lactating women, are disproportionately affected by earthquakes and natural disasters, requiring tailored interventions to respond to their reproductive health needs and protection risks. As has been documented during [assessments](#) conducted by UNFPA throughout Syria, pre-existing vulnerabilities and inequalities affecting women and adolescent girls are expected to worsen, further exposing them to various forms of GBV. The disaster follows over a decade of crisis in Syria and compounds significant pre-existing humanitarian needs.

Local authorities are reporting that as many as 11,000 families are now homeless, and several key health facilities, including the Idlib Maternity Hospital, have been damaged. In the

affected areas, some of the large numbers of displaced women and girls are taking shelter in UNFPA-supported Women's and Girls' Safe Spaces (Safe Spaces). Though cross-border operations were temporarily disrupted immediately following the earthquake, the border in Bab al-Hawa is now open.

## NEEDS

**Women and girls have been particularly impacted by the crisis, needing urgent health care, mental health and psychosocial support, and gender-based violence information and services. Displaced women and girls also lack adequate access to essential menstrual hygiene supplies and access to water and sanitation.**

Assessments by the World Health Organization (WHO) in government-controlled areas of Syria found that 172 health facilities in Aleppo, Hama, Latakia, and Tartous have been directly or indirectly impacted by the earthquake, with needs continuing to increase as buildings have been weakened and infrastructure continues to collapse on a daily basis. While assessments are ongoing in northwest Syria, UNFPA teams are particularly concerned as the health facilities in the affected areas have been severely damaged, and there are already reports of maternity facilities being evacuated without adequate alternatives to relocate safely. Health care workers have also been heavily impacted, limiting the ability of staff to respond to the enormous needs of incoming patients.

Temporary shelters are crucial for continuity of medical care in locations where facilities are damaged and non-operational. Essential RH needs for the immediate response are urgently needed, including: medications and supplies - such as incubators, oxygen, and diagnostic equipment, menstrual hygiene materials, and basic postpartum and newborn items. Support is needed to resume services in facilities that have been disrupted. Mobile outreach teams and clinics are essential

# PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS

**UNFPA is prioritizing continuity of services while increasing outreach to the most vulnerable and populations in the affected areas. As part of the emergency response:**

- **UNFPA Syria will establish additional integrated mobile teams (IMTs) and four Women and Girls Safe Spaces, and will support 15 SRH static field clinics.** UNFPA Türkiye Cross-Border will provide continued assistance to the nine health facilities currently supported in Idlib and Aleppo to ensure essential operations are intact, and will further support additional mobile outreach teams to meet increased demands.
- Where facilities are non-operational, **UNFPA plans to support continuation of services with temporary structures** while rehabilitation is underway, ensuring women and girls receive uninterrupted access to SRH services.
- UNFPA is sending available **Interagency Reproductive Health (IARH)** kits with the essential medical equipment, drugs, and consumables to assist with the most immediate lifesaving and integrated SRH and GBV response, and will procure additional kits as needed.
- **UNFPA will also support GBV risk mitigation and response** services including psychological first aid, basic psychosocial support, case management, and awareness raising activities.
- **UNFPA will distribute blankets, winter clothing, and hygiene supplies, including dignity kits** and sanitary pads, to pregnant women, those who recently gave birth, and other vulnerable individuals in the affected areas in order to mitigate the risk of health-related infections and potential sexual exploitation and abuse.



to deliver services in hard-to-reach areas. Fuel is also urgently needed to ensure continuation of critical service provision including urgent patient transportation for obstetric emergencies and surgical intervention. Across the country, initial assessments show that the majority of crisis-affected people in collective shelters are women and children. These usually lack basic facilities, including gender-segregated latrines and women and men are sheltered in the same room. Amid such living conditions, the risks of GBV incidents increases significantly, making immediate action necessary to reduce risks and re-establish specialized, lifesaving services. Immediate needs include winterized dignity kits, winter clothing, blankets, and food - all which mitigate protection risks for women and girls.

Coordination and functioning referral systems need to be scaled-up, noting that protection and GBV referral pathways should be activated as soon as possible in all shelter reception areas that will receive displaced persons. Given the level of vulnerability, humanitarian assistance will ensure that affected populations are protected against the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse.

## UNFPA'S RESPONSE

Following the earthquake, UNFPA and its partners are scaling up activities in the most affected areas to support SRH and GBV response services, including basic psychosocial support (PSS) and psychological first aid (PFA).

GBV response services are being provided through static and mobile teams to respond to the multiple needs of women and girls and to mitigate the health and emotional consequences of GBV. UNFPA has 32 Integrated SRH/GBV mobile teams (IMTs) that are working to meet the immediate needs of women and adolescent girls in Aleppo, Hama, Lattakia, and Tartous, including for GBV response services and referrals, SRH, and PSS. UNFPA is currently distributing essential items and sanitary pads from a prepositioned supply of 60,000 dignity kits for women and girls to mitigate the risk of health-related infections and potential sexual exploitation and abuse. Moreover, additional GBV response services are provided through 23 women's and girls' safe spaces, and through integrated services in health clinics throughout the country. As the lead agency for GBV Sub-Cluster coordination across the Whole of Syria, UNFPA is ensuring close coordination with all response actors to mitigate protection risks for women and girls.

UNFPA continues to provide essential SRH services through its partners on the ground, and is overseeing the distribution of 402 prepositioned reproductive health kits and medical supplies in northwest Syria. An additional 330 kits are currently being loaded and readied for shipment for cross-border movement from Türkiye on 11 February. UNFPA provides essential medical equipment, contraceptives, medicines, and supplies to an estimated 30 NGO and INGO partners, covering 200 service delivery points in northwest Syria. UNFPA's response will target a population coverage of an estimated 4.8 million people in crisis-affected areas through the provision of SRH kits and supplies, and 520,000 GBV prevention, response, and referral services.

Additionally, UNFPA Syria will reach 20 clinics, nine primary healthcare facilities, and 10 CeMONC facilities in the immediate response with essential life-saving reproductive health medicines and supplies, and aims to reach all affected health facilities as soon as funding is made available. Lastly, as the lead of the SRH Technical Working Group, UNFPA is actively overseeing the coordination of activities of all health partners who deliver reproductive health.

- **Cash and voucher assistance will be used and integrated within SRH and GBV responses** to facilitate access and further mitigate GBV and protection risks.
- **UNFPA Syria and Türkiye Cross-Border will continue to lead/co-lead the GBV Area of Responsibility (AoR) and lead/co-lead the SRH Working Groups** to ensure that GBV and RH response are well coordinated and that women and girls needs and measures to mitigate protection risks are mainstreamed into the overall response efforts.
- **At the Whole of Syria level, UNFPA continues to lead on GBV coordination** to ensure that the GBV response across the three hubs is streamlined. UNFPA also continues to work with other sectors and with OCHA to ensure GBV risks are mitigated during the provision of humanitarian assistance.

## BUDGET

Whole of Syria	Budget (USD)
<b>Sexual and reproductive health:</b> a) Ensure continuation of critical and lifesaving SRH services; support to facilities b) Expand outreach efforts, including through mobile SRH clinics/teams, to ensure effective access to critical SRH services for displaced women and girls; c) Provision of essential medical, IARH kits, and non-medical equipment and supplies (e.g. generators, IT equipment, access ramps, beds, etc.); cash and voucher assistance for pregnant and lactating women (Syria); surge support; operational and staffing costs	<b>\$10,419,613</b>
<b>Gender-based violence:</b> a) Support existing and establish temporary Safe Spaces and mobile teams; b) Deliver dignity kits and winter supplies c) CVA including through case management; d) GBV risk reduction and risk mitigation (safety audits, awareness, information sessions and education etc); surge support; operational and staffing costs.	<b>\$14,389,002</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$24,808,615</b>

**Note:** This appeal is in line with the upcoming Flash Appeal and does not represent what is already included in the Humanitarian Response plan.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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