



مجلس كنائس الشرق الأوسط

The Middle East Council of Churches

DIAKONIA DEPARTMENT- SERVICE IN DIGNITY

Rescue Syria Update - 12

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The Middle East Council of Churches

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One of many affected buildings in Jableh / Lattakia

In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world. John 16:33

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Striving for a Better Life

Forty-five days have passed since the earthquake hit Syria on February 6th, 2023. Thousands of affected people who lost their roofs and livelihood resources are still trying to absorb the trauma they face in the absence of tangible solutions to their tragedy on short term. Thousands are still living in temporary shelters and became displaced several times over 12 years of protracted crises, others had to leave their affected homes after becoming unsafe to stay in, and many have already left their cities to settle in. Others governorates as they lost the fruit of their lives. The impact of such unprecedented crises are beyond imagination when we touch the sadness on faces we meet every day. The impact is heavier on parents who cannot afford a safe life for their children to their children and on children who are not enjoying safe life as well. People became fatigued by trying to find ways to cope with their economic burden and basic living requirements. They feel that their lives have no meaning any more. “The most challenging matter in our lives when we lose hope and dreams of a safe promising future” many said. On the other hand, the Syrian people are paying the price of imposed sanctions on them every day when they cannot get access to minimum standards of basic services and dignified life, and the question that resonates in our ears and minds: how the international community which advocate for human right and social justice as well as for sustainable strategic objectives among which the fight against hunger, no poverty, good health, economic growth etc.. can accept to punish the whole population of Syria? This is a question that still has no answer? , we believe that there are still many decision makers with good will who can make a change and act in favor for every suffering human being irrespective of political interest. SL

Highlights

About 8.8 M are the total number of the affected people,¹ while an estimated 500,000 people have been displaced across Syria by the earthquake.² The affected people are living in formal collective shelters, with relatives or friends, or in informal settlements where little or no services are being provided. The European Commission and the Swedish Council Presidency of the European Union will host an International Donor Conference on 20 March in Brussels to mobilize pledges for further relief, recovery and rehabilitation after the earthquake.

According to the latest local and Government records, 5,954 people have been killed by the earthquake across Syria³ while more than 11,200 injuries were reported. Overall, more than 2,260 buildings were destroyed, and more than 32,000 buildings were reportedly damaged in Syria.⁴

As of 15 March, the 2023 Syria earthquake Flash Appeal, which require US\$ 398 million to assist 4.9 million people, was funded at 64 per cent with \$256 million received.⁵ Many injured have not been able to receive the level of care they needed. The number of casualties has overwhelmed hospitals' capacities that had limited medical, surgical and intensive care unit (ICU) beds. Most hospitals suffer from an acute shortage of supplies, especially consumables and medicines, shrinking the operational capacity to care for patients. Water supply and sewage networks have been damaged and disrupted, increasing the possibility of cross-contamination and causing losses in potable water.

The earthquake will further worsen every aspect of economic recovery in Syria. Prices for basic goods are rising and households are struggling to meet their basic needs, placing women and children who have been displaced multiple times, at a higher risk from exploitation and abuse. The earthquake will likely result in a further increase in the price of goods.

[1] Syria Earthquake Needs and Response Overview - March 15, 2023

[2] Syrian Arab Republic: Earthquakes - Syria Situational Updates - As of 15 March 2023

[3] Syrian Arab Republic: Earthquakes - Syria Situational Updates - As of 15 March 2023

[4] Syria Earthquake Needs and Response Overview - March 15, 2023

[5] Syria Earthquake Needs and Response Overview - March 15, 2023

01 In Aleppo

- The total number of affected people reached 72,632 families (290,528 persons) of which 10,320 families left their homes because they needed to be demolished or razed. about 42,408 families left their homes because they need rehabilitation, while 19,904 families may or may not return because their homes need minor repairs.⁶
- The number of displaced families reached 9,829 families, who were distributed to 83 official collective shelters, while local communities hosted 191 families, and 1,139 families were provided with refuge.

02 In Homs and Hama

Four collective shelters are rehabilitated and will provide temporary safe and secure living conditions to 464 people in Hama.

03 Lattakia and Tartous

- As of 16 March, 26 collective centres are currently operational in Lattakia Governorate where 9,675 individuals are taking refuge.
- To date, it is estimated that 2,460 displaced families are residing in Tartous and Lattakia, in host communities.
- Local authorities continue to state plans to consolidate the 26 collective centres into seven (four in Lattakia City and 3 rural). A nine-storey building was identified as a potential collective shelter.

04 Idleb

- Four collective shelters were rehabilitated to provide safe and secure living conditions with adequate privacy and protection from elements to 200 people.
- Earthquake response has depleted the contingency stock of NFI sector partners. No contingency stocks is available for to meet any sudden shocks/emergencies in the future.⁷

[6] Relief sub-committee in Aleppo, 18 March report

[7] OCHA, Earthquakes Situation Report No. 4 As of 16 March 2023, 19 Mar

Damaged buildings

- In Aleppo, as a result of a constructional integrity assessment for 26,707 buildings, it was found that 19,958 is a safe building to return to, about 5,759 buildings need rehabilitation while 413 buildings were razed and 990 buildings must be completely leveled.⁸
- In Hama : 75 engineering committees assessed 60,000 buildings, of which 5,118 are severely damaged, 32,576 need reinforcement, and 24,400 buildings are safe.⁹
- In Lattakia : The number of completely damaged buildings in Lattakia governorate reached 336 buildings that must be evacuated and demolished. The number of damaged buildings that need to be rehabilitated reached 1697 buildings, while the damaged buildings that need light maintenance amounted to 5819 buildings. It is important to note that the engineering committees continue their work, as they have completed to date 11,728 buildings in Lattakia alone.¹⁰

MECC intervention in response to the Earthquake:

01 Aleppo :

Technical certified engineering team continue its mission to assess the status of many buildings. To date the team assessed 515 buildings. Of those assessed buildings there are 8 buildings that are not safe, 432 building are safe and need minor repair and 75 buildings that need reinforcement .1484 apartments were checked upon assessing the buildings in addition to 62 shops located in the ground floors of many buildings. Of 1484 apartments, there are 98 unites that needs reinforcement to be safe for residents and 24 shops need rehabilaition to preserve the livelihood of HHs investors.

The engineering team is continuing its mission to asses 1200 buildings which should finish the soonest. In parallel, MECC requested from an engineering specialized office in Aleppo to begin preparing the engineering studies with BoQ for the neediest 20 buildings that needs reinforcements in order to prepare the tendering books before selecting the required contractors.

[8] Relief sub-committee in Aleppo, 18 March report

[9] OCHA, Earthquakes Situation Report No. 4 As of 16 March 2023, 19 Mar

[10] Syria steps, 26 Feb, Chairman of the Higher Committee for Relief



Technical engineers assessing the structure of many buildings that may need rapid reinforcement



Status of one of basement of one building where the beams that link the foundation needs reinforcement



Another photo showing the status of ceiling in one of the visited buildings. The photo also shows that the building is not safe.

- 3300 food and hygiene kits were distributed to 1650 HHs in partnership with PLAN International and Save the Children to date in Aleppo. The total target is to distribute 7689 kits to reach the initial target.

- Preparation is taking place for cash assistance activity in order to select appropriate safe modality.

- MECC is also assessing the damage of building that has already rehabilitated recently under restoration fund program in order to intervene and do the appropriate repair accordingly.

Additionally , and in partnership with MECC partners, flexible funding will be used to do the repair of halls that will be used as shelters upon hosting many families for many days.



Distribution of food and hygiene kits to families



One of many schools that need rehabilitation to be ready to receive students under their roofs.

And in response to ensure safe education space for children, MECC is assessing the affected schools in Aleppo in order to prepare the required proposal to rehabilitate the schools whose structure are safe for students.

MECC attends the regular meetings with the Relief ecumenical committee in order to coordinate the response with other active actors the ground.



Regular coordination meetings that are taking place in Aleppo

02 Lattakia:



One of the affected Buildings in Jableh /Lattakia

MECC's responsible person for costal region and central Syria is coordinating with Ecumenical relief committee in Lattakia in order to intervene in Lattakia city and Jableh once the data collection is finalized and the allocated fund for that region is received by MECC. Same procedures are taken place for many areas in Hama region in order to support displaced people from Aleppo and Lattkia suburbs.



Coordination meeting in Lattakia with Ecumenical Relief Committee

Video Reports :

click on picture to access the videos



1- Syria Is in Distress Due to the Earthquake that Hit It
Video - Safir Salim Describes the Situation in the Salesian Church in Aleppo



2- Moments of Terror Following the Earthquake that Struck Syria
Video - Georges Batikha Survives the Disaster and Highlights the Urgent Needs



3- Searching for Hope Following the Earthquake that Hit Syria
Video - Rogina Makhoul Describes the Fear of the Afflicted Families and Children



4- An Interview with His Eminence Ephraim Maalouli, Greek Orthodox Metropolitan of Aleppo, Alexandretta and Dependencies, after the Earthquake that Struck Syria



5- A New Baby Born in Earthquake Rubble
Mohamad Bitar Explains the Difficult Situations He Passed Through with His Family



6- In Seconds... Everything Changed
Manal Bitar Reports the First Moments of Terror



6 - Interview with His Eminence Archbishop Mor Boutros Kassis
Following the Earthquake that Shook the North of the Antiochian Levant

Photo Albums :

click on picture to access the albums



Album 1- The Scenes of Destructions in Syria
In Some Photos Taken by MECC



Album 2- Difficult Humanitarian Conditions in Syria
New Photos Shows the Massive Disaster



Album 3- Photos from the Heart of the Tragedy in Syria



Album 4- Photos Showing the Bitter Humanitarian
Situations in Syria