



## PRESS RELEASE

Tuesday February 14 2023

### **WHO Foundation launches lifesaving Emergency Health Appeal for millions devastated by the earthquakes in Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic**

- US\$43 M required to support immediate WHO's emergency response and mobilize emergency health supplies for the estimated 26 million people affected by the earthquake disaster in Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic. The health needs will undoubtedly increase in the coming days. The initial appeal is being revised to meet the increasing needs of the affected populations
- Money raised will provide vital trauma and post trauma care for injuries, mental health and psychosocial support to the most vulnerable and affected populations.
- Funding will allow provision of essential medicines, emergency kits and supplies to fill urgent gaps. As well as prevention and control of disease outbreaks, including through strengthening disease surveillance.

**Tuesday February 14 2023:** The WHO Foundation [has launched a campaign](#) to urgently raise funds for WHO's Earthquake Emergency Appeal for Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic. The [WHO appeal](#) (part of a broader UN appeal) is in response to the multiple earthquake disasters in Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic that began early on Monday 6 February, killing over 23,000 people and leaving more than 83,000 in urgent need of life-saving medical support and these numbers continue to climb.

Aftershocks, freezing conditions, and the destruction of roads and power supplies are increasing the risks to survivors in the aftermath of the disaster. The immediate health needs include surgical expertise to treat traumatic injuries but also essential health services, including psychosocial support services, to ensure that people survive. Many hospitals and health facilities have been damaged or destroyed. Those that remain standing urgently require the necessary equipment, and supplies including medical and surgical supplies to treat the wounded and medicines, and personnel to provide life-saving care to those who need it most.

WHO and its partners on the ground are working closely with the local health authorities to respond to immediate needs and prepare for possible subsequent health threats, including those caused by exposure to cold weather, mental health issues, and the increased risk of disease outbreaks. In the Syrian Arab Republic, cholera outbreaks, already an issue before the earthquake, are getting worse, with clean water and functioning sanitation systems required to prevent further devastation.

Immediate funding is also required to support WHO's 11 emergency medical teams made of mobile health systems and highly qualified health professionals from around the world that will be operating in the affected areas. The WHO Foundation is calling on people and companies everywhere to show their solidarity with those impacted, by responding generously to the appeal.

Members of the WHO Foundation's **Health Emergencies Alliance** – a community of businesses and philanthropists, united in the aim of supporting WHO's global emergency response – are also supporting this appeal. Set up to help respond to disasters quickly and effectively, Alliance members are providing financial assistance at this hour of need.

In light of the sheer magnitude of the emergency, WHO has activated a triple-level response, bringing WHO Headquarters together with the WHO European and Eastern Mediterranean Regional Offices, and the WHO Türkiye and Syrian Arab Republic country offices, to better coordinate critical health care support for impacted communities.

**Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization, said:**

“Survivors are facing freezing conditions, continuing aftershocks and very limited access to shelter, food, water, heat and medical care. We're in a race against time to save lives. We urge all people to come together in solidarity, as one humanity, to save lives and alleviate the suffering of people who have already suffered so much.”

**Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe, said:**

“As details of the immediate human cost continue to emerge, the consequences on populations affected by these earthquakes will be long-lasting. But we can and we will make a difference to the lives of many. We are sending supplies as needed. We're also increasing operations into neighbouring Syria from our field office in Gaziantep, which supports the whole-of-Syria response from Türkiye.”

**Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari, WHO Regional Director for WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO)**

“Syrians have been crushed by crises over and over again: war for the last 12 years, major economic decline, continuous disease outbreaks, COVID-19, cholera, and now this immense challenge. People are devastated and we cannot expect them to keep surviving without urgent help. The scale of this disaster is above the capacity of one country to handle. It needs a global response. We have to help these people help themselves. There is inspiring resilience and determination – we just have to bring them the resources. The world must stand by Syria.”

**Anil Soni, Chief Executive Officer of the WHO Foundation, said:**

“The race is on to save lives and bring urgent aid to the millions of people affected by this natural disaster. As the search continues for survivors many people are still at risk and need healthcare for injuries, for trauma, and for prolonged exposure to cold from sleeping outside in freezing conditions. We must all stand with Türkiye and Syria by donating to the WHO's lifesaving response to the earthquakes. Let's collectively ensure we support those who need it most, as every second counts.”

Donate to the Emergency Appeal for **Türkiye** and the **Syrian Arab Republic** now to help WHO deliver urgent healthcare to people in both countries.

<https://earthquakeresponse-turkiyesyria.who.foundation/>

**ENDS**

**For more information contact:**

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### **Notes to editors**

- For more information on the **WHO Emergency Appeal**, see: [here](#)
- [WHO released an appeal for 43 Million dollars to help support critical health needs](#) WHO has sent in the last few days health supplies to reach 400 000 people impacted by the earthquakes in Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic.
- WHO will be releasing an updated appeal in the coming days to reflect the growing health needs in Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic
- For **WHO photos**, see [here](#)

### **What is the WHO Foundation?**

Established in 2020 as an independent entity, the WHO Foundation complements and strengthens the work of WHO and its global network of partners by mobilizing new funding from diverse sources—including philanthropists, corporate entities, and the public—to power WHO’s mission. By addressing the world’s most urgent health issues in a new, transformative, catalytic way, the WHO Foundation aims to provide everyone, everywhere, a healthier, more equitable future. For more information on the **WHO Foundation Health Emergencies Alliance**, see [here](#).