

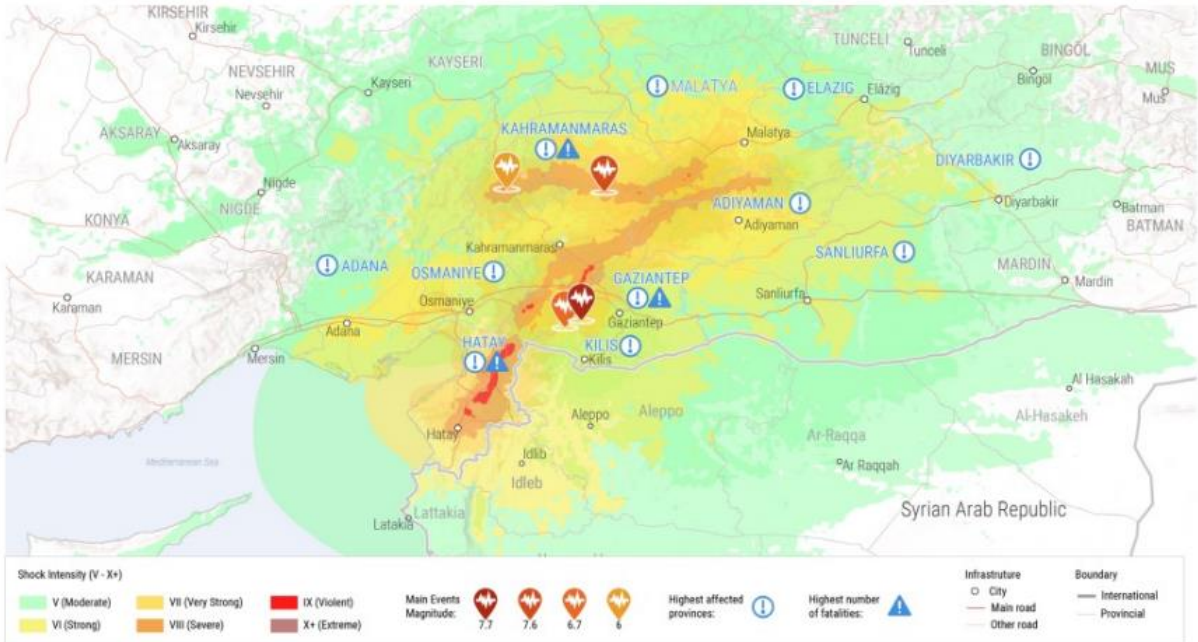
TURKISH RED CRESCENT PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES DURING THE KAHRAMANMARAŞ EARTHQUAKES

FEBRUARY 2023

PUBLIC HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

OVERVIEW

On 6 February 2023, two devastating earthquakes, measuring 7.7 and 7.6 magnitudes on the Richter Scale, struck Pazarçık and Elbistan in Kahramanmaraş, Türkiye. State of emergency has been declared in the ten provinces where devastating impact of the earthquake has been felt: Adıyaman, Gaziantep, Kilis, Hatay, Malatya, Diyarbakır, Adana, Osmaniye, Kahramanmaraş and Şanlıurfa, Elazığ. Hatay, Kahramanmaraş and Gaziantep are reported to be hit hardest. These earthquakes are the largest to occur Türkiye in the last century and the most significant to strike the country's south-east region in hundreds of years. The earthquakes and aftershocks have caused catastrophic devastation, almost 14 million people are affected; 9.1 million people have been directly impacted. By 24 February, more than 44,000 people in Türkiye had lost their lives, and tens of thousands were injured, according to Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD).



Source: UN Flash Appeal Türkiye 2023 Earthquakes

Since the onset of the disaster, Turkish Red Crescent staff and volunteers have been mobilized across 11 impacted provinces in the region to respond to the overwhelming needs. Over 1200 personnel and 4000 volunteers from across the country have been working in the field, coordinated by the Emergency Operation Centre at the Turkish Red Crescent headquarters in Ankara.

As required by the Turkey Disaster Response Plan, Turkish Red Crescent is responding to the food needs of the affected population daily. Along with that, Turkish Red Crescent supports the service provision in different sectors including the relief efforts, psychosocial support, shelter, NFIs, and health.



PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Health and psychosocial support have become one of the most critical elements in the field for the affected population. Turkish Red Crescent MHPSS teams have been working actively from the very beginning to ease the distress of the affected people.

Since the first day of the earthquake, psychosocial support services were initiated in 10 provinces (Adiyaman, Adana, Gaziantep, Diyarbakır, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Kilis, Osmaniye, Şanlıurfa, Malatya). However, due to the urgent needs in the field based on the field evaluations, Diyarbakır, Adana and Kilis MHPSS teams were shifted to other provinces in the following days. As of 17.02.2023, Şanlıurfa MHPSS team has been moved to another earthquake zone where it is needed. As of 25.02.2023, psychosocial support services are ongoing in 6 provinces (Adiyaman, Gaziantep, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Malatya, Osmaniye).

So far, psychosocial support services have been conducted by Turkish Red Crescent staff and volunteers who are mental health professionals (psychologist, clinical psychologist, social worker, psychological counselor) at 12 MHPSS tents and 2 mobile child-friendly spaces. While the acute phase continues, Turkish Red Crescent MHPSS teams plan to scale up MHPSS activities through the mobile units by deploying more volunteer psychologists to the field to support the affected populations.



To reduce the effects of trauma and stress caused by the disaster the following psychosocial support services are being provided to the individuals affected by the earthquake:

- Psychological first aid
- Mental health and psychosocial needs assessment
- Healing activities with children
- Individual interviews and group work with children and adults
- Staff and volunteers support
- Providing information to affected population



While our fixed and mobile MHPSS teams continue to carry out field assessments, they work to provide psychological support in psychosocial support tents established in densely populated and accessible areas.

In the coming six months to a one-year period, Turkish Red Crescent aims to transition its response to address long-term psychosocial impact of the disaster in coordination with the Ministry of Family and Social Services and the Ministry of Health.

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