



مجلس كنائس الشرق الأوسط
The Middle East Council of Churches

The Middle East Council of Churches

DIAKONIA DEPARTMENT- *SERVICE IN DIGNITY*

Rescue Syria Update - 13

March 30th 2023



مجلس كنائس الشرق الأوسط
The Middle East Council of Churches

www.mecc.org ©

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him,
who have been called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28

After Darkness There Is Light

The tunnel of sorrows is long, and we walk through it compelled by a difficult reality. The more we surrender to this reality, the longer and more endless the tunnel becomes. At this point, we need someone to light a candle of hope for us, whose light is enough to wash away the sorrow in our hearts and guide us to the end of the tunnel, armed with hope and willpower. MECC, in collaboration with its partners, took it upon itself to light this candle and support the families affected by the earthquake. They began by providing food baskets and health services to those residing in the shelters, to meet their basic needs. They also worked to meet the greater needs of the people, considering the necessity of securing the return of those displaced by the earthquake to their homes in Aleppo and Latakia. The earthquake disaster came at a time when the people of these two cities, like all Syrians, were unable to cope with a difficult reality and are struggling under great economic pressures. They are unable to bear the costs of repairing their homes, which had been damaged either severely or minorly due to the earthquake. The situation of the families in Jableh, including children and adults, is heartbreaking. They have no place to go after losing their homes except for tents or shelters. UNICEF had stated after the devastating earthquake, that Syrian children still face one of the most complex humanitarian situations in the world. Two-thirds of the population urgently need assistance amidst the worsening economic crisis. There are severe problems regarding food security, reliance on unsafe alternative water sources, protection issues, and high levels of school dropouts.

Highlights

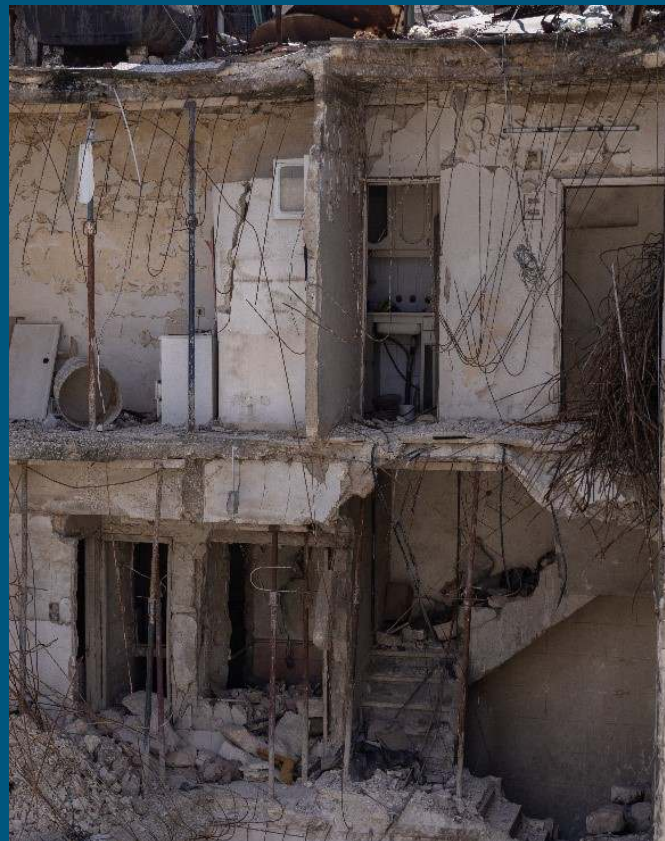
Since the earthquake, 97,400 households have been displaced in Syria.¹ More than 8.8 million people in Syria, including 3.7 million children and pregnant and lactating women, have been affected.²

Twenty-two collective shelters in Lattakia Governorate remain, housing a total of 5,453 people (1,322 families).

The number of collective shelters inside Aleppo City has decreased by 13 (70 shelters remain as of 23 March).

The total number of households hosted in these shelters has dropped to 8,346 (37,234 people).³

As of 22 March, The Overview states that the earthquakes destroyed more than 2,260 buildings, damaged more than 32,000 buildings and killed more than 5,900 people over Syria. In addition, more than 11,200 people across Syria have been injured but many have not been able to receive the level of healthcare that they need. The earthquakes have also exacerbated protection, gender-based violence (GBV) and child protection risks.⁴ The earthquakes damaged a total of 2,947 schools, including 2,513 schools in Aleppo, Lattakia, Tartous, Hama, Homs and Idlib. At least 116 health facilities reported damages (including at least seven hospitals) in Aleppo, Hama, Lattakia and Tartous.⁵



A sample of badly affected buildings in Aleppo

[1] UNICEF, 21 Mar

[2] Unicef, Earthquake Response in Syria Humanitarian Situation Report No. 6

[3] OCHA, SYRIA Earthquakes - Situation Report No. 5, 27 March

[4] OCHA, Earthquakes - Syria Situational Updates, 23 Mar

[5] OCHA, Earthquakes - Syria Situational Updates, 23 Mar

Estimated values of earthquake losses and damages



According to a new report released on 18 March by the World Bank and Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA), the damages and losses estimated at the followings:

- The physical damages resulting from the earthquakes in Syria are estimated at about 3.7 billion dollars, while the losses amounted to about 1.5 billion dollars, bringing the total estimated impact to \$5.2 billion. The Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA) estimates that recovery and reconstruction needs across these six Governorates would cost \$7.9 billion.
- Syria's real GDP is expected to contract by 5.5% in 2023.
- The agriculture sector incurred the heaviest toll, with the gap in access to food estimated at US\$1.3 billion (83% of total losses).
- Earthquake-Housing damages are estimated at US\$ 880.6 million.
- About 3.9 percent of health facilities in the affected areas were either damaged (3.5 percent of facilities) or destroyed (0.4 percent of facilities), with estimated damages of US\$ 202.9 million.
- Damages and losses in education are estimated at US\$30.7 million and US\$85.4 million, respectively for damages assessed across the six governorates.
- The overall damage to the transport sector is estimated at US\$718 million across the six Governorates and US\$56 million.
- The Power Sector has sustained moderate damages estimated at US\$32.1 million.⁶
- The recovery and reconstruction needs amount to US\$933 million for the six governorates and US\$73 million for the cities, and include the repair of primary roads, secondary roads, and bridges, and the Aleppo airport.
- Early recovery interventions will cost approximately US\$373 million in the six governorates and US\$29 million.
- Damages in Water sector are estimated at US\$129.7 million across the nine cities and US\$145.4 million across the six Governorates.⁷

[6] Global Facility For Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), World Bank, 18 Mar

[7] Global Facility For Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), World Bank, 18 Mar

MECC intervention in response to the Earthquake:

MECC continues to assess the structural status of buildings in order to intervene in required technical interventions the soonest. To date, 715 buildings were examined by an engineering team. Of the 715 buildings, there are 10 buildings ranked as high risk buildings and need evacuation of inhabitants, 90 buildings ranked as moderate risk and can be reinforced and 610 buildings ranked as safe buildings. 2294 unites were visited during building assessments. Of the 2249 unites, there are 1726 unites which require minor rehabilitation, 173 unites are in need to be rehabilitated and 292 unites are safe. Along with unite apartment assessments, the engineering team assessed 68 shops located in the ground floors of assessed buildings. Of the 68 shops, 12 are in need to be rehabilitated, 12 are in good shape and 30 shops need minor rehabilitaion. Out of 90 buildings that need reinforcement, ten buildings were selected as a priority first step to be studied for technical reinforcements. Tender process is going in parallel with the technical works in order to intervene as soon as possible.

To date, MECC has finalized the data collection of 4000 affected households to be targeted under different MECC activities. To date, MECC distributed 3300 food and hygiene kits to 3300 HHs and in Partnership with PLAN international, distribution is continuing to target households in different areas in Aleppo. Data collection in central Syria and in the coastal area has already been finalized to begin the distribution of lifesaving items soon.

Testimony

Diab (76 years old) a retired employee, says: "On the day of the earthquake, we were asleep, and we woke up to a very strong shaking. The building was swaying left and right.

I woke my daughter and we ran to the street, and we took refuge in the church. My daughter is a person with special needs, and my son works in Homs and provides us with our needs and medicine for his sister.

A team of engineers from MECC visited my apartment on the sixth floor and inspected the cracks in it and told me that I can live in it because the cracks are not dangerous, they assured me that MECC will help me repair these cracks, and this is the best help I could receive, because I cannot pay the fees of consulting an engineer to check my house, and I can't afford the high house rent costs, which increased a lot after the earthquake.

MECC also provided me with a healthy ration and a food basket."



Distribution of food and hygiene kits in Aleppo



Diab and his daughter, one of the beneficiaries receiving aid from MECC

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