



مجلس كنائس الشرق الأوسط
The Middle East Council of Churches

DIAKONIA DEPARTMENT- SERVICE IN DIGNITY

Rescue Syria Update - 19

July 11th 2023



We never stop in meeting the basic needs to the survivors of Aleppo and Northern Syria earthquake.

Distribution of basic needs in Coastal and central Syria

Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. John 15:9

We get strength from those who are served in love and dignity

MECC continuous to lend help to many survivors from the earthquake that Hit Syria in February 6th this year. Many left Aleppo and moved to more secure areas. It was specially the case for those who lost their homes that need to be retrofitted for the survivors to be able to enjoy a return safe home. In spite of the inner suffering that cannot be reflected in word, we always learn from those patient people when we hear them thanking God for still being alive and hearing them repeating every day in their daily prayers “Thy will be done”. Such great lessons learned reinforce our dedications and determinations to continue our mission in serving with faith and confidence that our Almighty God open hidden doors before us so we reflect His Love and Will to all.

Highlights

The earthquakes struck as humanitarian conditions in the Syria were worsening, with needs at their highest level since the start of the conflict amid dwindling resources, a cholera outbreak, harsh winter conditions, ongoing violence and insecurity, displacement and related vulnerabilities, and deteriorating economic conditions. For the first time, people living in every sub district in the country are experiencing some degree of humanitarian stress. Some 4.1 million people are in areas with “extreme” or “catastrophic” needs. The Syrian Arab Republic still has the largest number of internally displaced persons in the world, and conditions in the country are driving one of the world’s largest refugee crises.

The consequences of the earthquakes have exacerbated the already precarious humanitarian situation for people in Syria. Fifty-five medical facilities in addition to a lot of infrastructure and service buildings in Syria were damaged and several others have been completely destroyed, hindering their capacity to respond.¹

Families across the country gathered to celebrate the holy day of Eid al- Adha with less food on their plates, little fuel in their stoves, and limited water in their homes. Households must pool their wages to cover basic expenses, and even that is often not enough to keep pace with rising prices. Many Syrians receive only two hours of electricity per day, which is not enough to run the water pumps. Buying water transported through private trucks costs 40 euros per month (400,000 Syrian pounds) for a family of five in a country where the average income ranges between 10 and 25 euros per month (between 100,000 and 250,000 Syrian pounds).² Young people have to receive vocational training but must also be mentored to turn these capacities into new incomes and livelihoods.

Distinctions between a “rehabilitated school” and a “reconstructed school” can be relaxed to provide students with safe places to learn. Meanwhile, the different needs of children must also be secured.

It’s too important to deliver emergency cash assistance to earthquake-affected families through the vertical and horizontal expansion of Humanitarian Cash Transfer (HCT) programs and the provision of in-kind assistance to alleviate the economic burden on the affected families. Stronger international consensus is needed on the importance of early recovery programs in Syria and life-saving assistance.

Any move towards a more sustainable response will require a different approach, one with longer timelines and fewer donor redlines.

[1] Msf.org

[2] Oxfam in Syria, Facebook

MECC intervention in response to the Earthquake:

- Retrofitting of affected buildings in Aleppo:

MECC has assessed 1360 buildings to date. Out of 1360 buildings, there are 15 buildings with high damage that require evacuation of inhabitants, 1151 buildings that have minor damage inside apartment without any damage of building structures, 192 buildings with moderate damage that require technical retrofitting studies to be safe. MECC has already begun to retrofit 13 buildings and another 8 buildings are under procurement process to be retrofitted in the coming two weeks. Technical studies of other selected buildings are in process in order to outreach the target which is 40 affected buildings. Given the fact that each building has a unique technical condition and level of damage, providing adequate retrofitting solutions takes time and consultancy with many experts prior to getting the approval of the municipality and engineering syndicate in Aleppo. Additionally, the rare technical contractor who can meet the required technical works represents a challenge today. Nevertheless, MECC managed to follow its action plan accordingly. The below photos show part of the technical work to strengthen the affected structures of some selected buildings.

MECC technical team observing the technical work during their monitoring visits to Aleppo



- Distribution of lifesaving items and Cash assistance:

To date MECC executed the following activities in Aleppo, Latakia, Jableh, Hama, Homs suburbs and Hama surrounding villages which are hosting IDPS from Aleppo.

Governorate	City	Food baskets	Hygiene kits	Blankets	Child protection games and tools	Medicines and medical accessories	Cash assistance
Aleppo	Aleppo	13009	8009		500	35 HHs	2100
Homs	Hwash	100	100	500		40 HHs	
Tartous	Banias	105	105				
Latakia	Latakia	1439	1439				
	Jableh	415	415				
Hama	Ayo	65	65				
	Tumine	48	48				
	Alpeh	25	25				
	Kafr Bihem	234	234				
	Muharda	75	75				
	Suqaylabiyah	1053	1053				
Total		16568	11568	500	500	75	2100

Distribution activities in Jableh and Hama surrounding villages

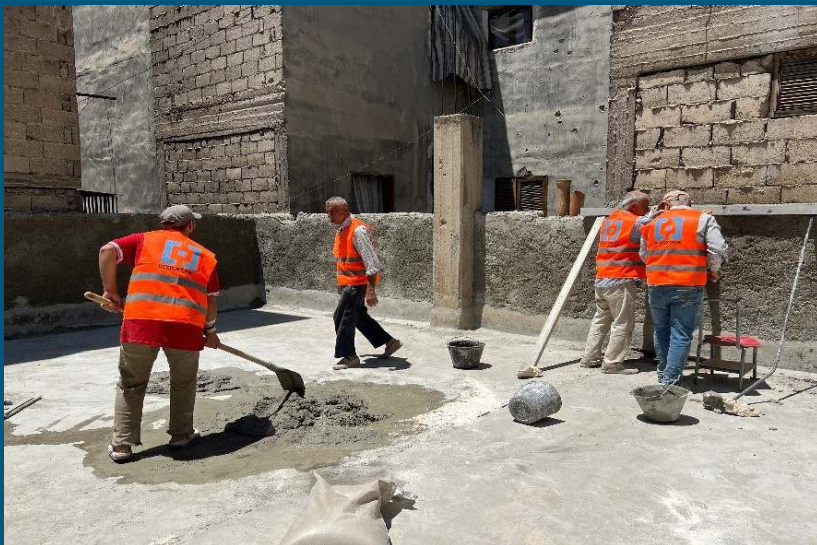


School rehabilitation:

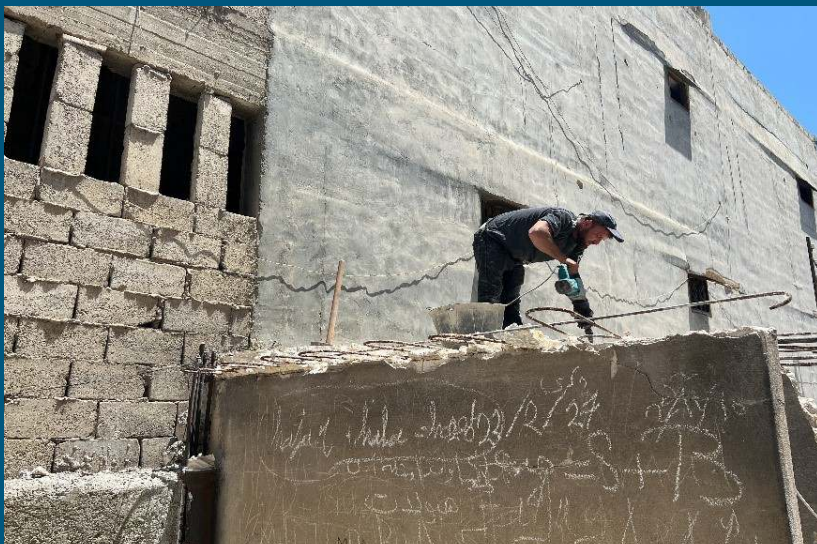
MECC completed the rehabilitation studies and procurement of two affected public schools in Aleppo in addition to other three schools which are under technical studies.



Fowzi Jisri school in Aleppo



Rehabilitaion of Rabia Al adawieh school in Aleppo



Rehabilitaion of Rabia Al adawieh school in Aleppo

Testimonies

“The cost of living increased even more after the earthquake, and securing food to feed my family became my biggest burden. MECC provided me with cash assistance that helped me buy medicine for my sick mother and food for the children for nearly a whole month. I do not have a fixed income, that’s why I buy food on a daily basis in small quantities based on the amount of money I earn. One of the benefactors provided me with a house to live in for free after my house was badly damaged by the earthquake”.

B (41 years old) benefited from the Cash assistance provided by MECC to the most vulnerable families affected by the earthquake. B does not have a fixed income but only gets paid for the day he works, and relies on the aid of charities and benefactors who donate a little money to him to meet the basic needs of his family.



“Although our house is cracked from the earthquake, we have never left it because we cannot afford high rents. I am the sole breadwinner for my elderly parents, and I work as a shopkeeper. My financial income is very low, and my father is sick and needs medication, which is also too expensive. Thanks to the assistance of the MECC who is helping us in rehabilitating our house, hope has returned to our lives after we thought we had lost our house. We were afraid that the cracks would widen over time, causing the house to collapse and bury us alive.”

H (50 years old) from Aleppo is one of the beneficiaries of MECC Program “Rehabilitation of buildings affected by the Earthquake”

“I am the sole breadwinner for my family, working as a shopkeeper in a small grocery store, and I don’t have enough money to rehabilitate my house that was affected by the earthquake. My monthly income barely covers the food and basic needs of my family of three, especially since the cost of living has become very high after the war, and prices are constantly rising since the earthquake, and are not proportional to our income. MECC is currently helping us in rehabilitating our house...we are very thankful for this assistance as we live today at my sister’s house because it is very difficult for us to afford to pay rent”.

A (56 years old) from Aleppo is one of the beneficiaries of MECC Program “Rehabilitation of buildings affected by the Earthquake”

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 Maaloui, 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



**7 - Syria is Still Crying Out in Pain After the Earthquake that Struck the North of the Antiochian Levant
A Survivor Reports the Bitter Situations She Passed Through Following the Disaster**



**8- Video - Following the Earthquake that Shook the North of the Antiochian Levant
Survivors in Syria Remember the Most Difficult Moments**



9- Video - A New Batch of Aid Heals the Wounds of the Affected People Due the Earthquake in Syria



**10- Video - Syria is Still Wounded
One of the Earthquake' Survivors in Aleppo Remembers the Bitterness of the Disaster's First Moments**



11- Video - Jableh Region Facing the Repercussions of the Earthquake that Hit 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