

TÜRKİYE/SYRIA EARTHQUAKE - 1 YEAR ON
FEBRUARY 2024

A TREMBLING YEAR

On February 6, 2023, 7.8 and 7.5 magnitude earthquakes hit southern and central Türkiye and northern and western Syria. Across the two countries, nearly 56,000 people were killed and more than 10 million were left in urgent need of help.

Over the past year since the earthquakes, Oxfam has supported over 2 million people in collective centers and communities across Türkiye and Syria, with water, sanitation and hygiene services, food and livelihoods support, and gender and protection services. We are grateful to our supporters and institutional donors for helping us to make a difference in the lives of the people we serve.

As Oxfam had teams on the ground in both Syria and Türkiye, we were able to send rapid assessment teams into the worst affected areas within hours, to assess the damage, impact, and people's needs.

The data gathered was immensely helpful in informing our planning. Our immediate focus overall was to provide emergency aid to the earthquake survivors. However, we tailored our approach to the different context in each country.

Oxfam teams in Syria had been managing large humanitarian programs to address the needs of people suffering from more than a decade of conflict, at the time when the earthquake struck. Part of our response therefore consisted in scaling up and adjusting those programs, to cover the needs of those affected by the quake.

In Türkiye, government agencies and local civil society have extensive humanitarian capacity from years of providing relief to refugee communities. Building on our 37 years of experience in supporting women-led development and networks in Türkiye, we decided to supplement and enhance the larger response, and invest in women-led local recovery and development in Türkiye. Through the 1999 Marmara earthquakes response, we've learned that no response can be successful without tackling existing social and economic inequalities in the long run. We decided to concentrate on the harshly hit towns and villages near the fault line, while also dedicating attention to underserved communities.



Search and rescue teams are working in collapsed buildings.
(photo: Yalcin Ciftci/
Oxfam KEDV)

DEADLY IMPACT

In **Türkiye**, the earthquakes killed at least 50,000 people and injured more than 100,000 people. Nearly 300,000 buildings were damaged or destroyed, 3 million people had to leave their homes, and 9.1 million were directly affected. Many people had a very difficult time after the disaster and could not return to their homes for fear that their buildings would collapse. Those who couldn't leave had little access to clean running water or toilets. Basic education and health services were decimated. Women, children, the elderly, and people with other vulnerabilities were left without services, especially in terms of protection and health.

In **Syria**, the quake caused one of the biggest natural disasters to impact Syrian families in recent times. The shock of the earthquake piled on top of 12 years of conflict marked by crumbling infrastructure, financial collapse, coronavirus, soaring food prices, and a recent cholera outbreak, forced more and more people were deeper into poverty.



OXFAM

2,045,099
people reached
with support



SYRIA

1,852,929 people



LATAKIA
238,300

OSMANIYE
800

MARAS
43,937

ADIYAMAN
4,180

GAZIANTEP
10,951

HATAY
97,076

ALEPPO
1,099,266

IDLIB
55,251

HAMA
460,112

TÜRKİYE

192,170 people



CHILDREN
42%

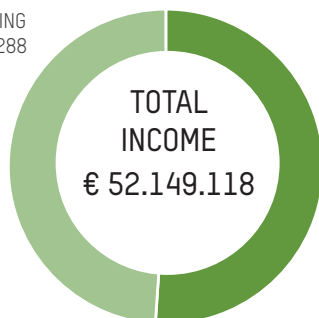
WOMEN
32%

MEN
26%

INCOME

We've raised over 50m EUR globally in support of a 3-year response, with almost equal parts sourced from public appeals and from institutional donors.

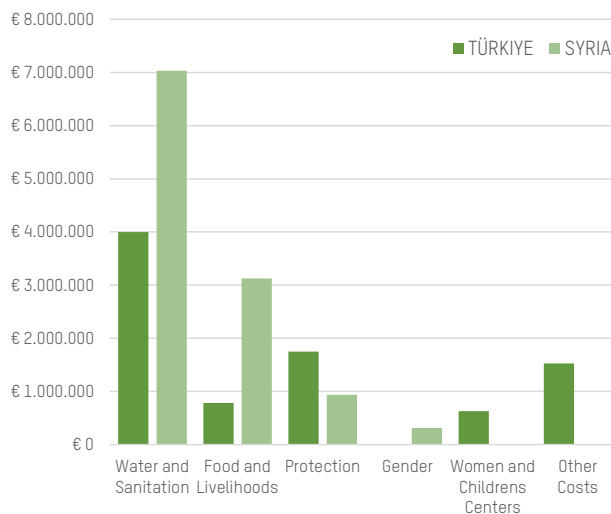
**PUBLIC
FUNDRAISING**
€ 25.518.288



**INSTITUTIONAL
DONORS**
€ 26.630.830

EXPENDITURE

During the first year of our response, Oxfam spent € 20,091,618, with 55% invested in water and sanitation services.



NOTES: Türkiye expense extrapolated for full year, based on actuals by Dec 31, 2023; Syria expenses are actuals until Dec 31. Other costs include business support costs, salaries, travel and MEAL.

WATER, SANITATION & HYGIENE

1,824,194 people reached

People we spoke to in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake faced major challenges: they lacked safe and reliable water sources.

In Syria, the earthquake's destruction came on top of damage done to wells and pipelines during the long-lasting conflict. Survivors had to rely on expensive private water trucking. This increased the financial pressure on households already struggling to pay for basic food, shelter, and health services. Sanitation services were affected as well, creating public health risks. Hygiene supplies were compromised due to soaring prices and malfunctioning markets.

Oxfam Staff members discussing matters to efficiently coordinate the emergency support in a camp in Hatay, Türkiye.
(photo: Delizia Flaccavento/Oxfam)

In the face of the challenges, Oxfam collaborated with communities to meet their water needs by **fixing and improving damaged water networks**, to increase the capacity of the water system and mitigate water scarcity and pollution.

- we supported the Karaçay Drinking Water Treatment Plant in Türkiye to operate at full capacity again; and we rehabilitated a 3,200 m³ water tank in Kahramanmaraş, providing 28,000 people with clean water
- we enabled access to clean water with pumps from Özsoğuksu wells and rehabilitated the pipeline network in Sinanlı District, providing more than 80,000 people with access to clean water
- in Syria, we rehabilitated water facilities in schools and collective shelters, reaching 19,259 people; we cleaned water tanks, in order to provide safe drinking water for 24,872 people; we trucked drinking water for 1,192,282 people; and installed communal tanks, serving another 38,916 people
- we also trained employees from local water authorities and humanitarian actors responsible for running, maintaining, and managing the water supply system, on the use of green technologies like solar power

In addition to restoring access to water, Oxfam rebuilt and enhanced **sanitation services** in both Türkiye and Syria, to help prevent the outbreak of diseases.

- in Türkiye, we installed 1,285 toilets and 731 showers
- our team in Syria provided latrine cleaning kits for 94,124 people; and we assigned 30 latrine attendants in shelters to supervise the cleaning process on a daily basis
- we helped 113,356 people in Syria to manage solid waste, including distributing garbage bins, to help reduce health risks

Oxfam also implemented comprehensive **hygiene interventions**.

- in Syria, we conducted hygiene awareness sessions for 98,366 people, addressing acute water diarrhoea, cholera and menstrual hygiene topics – some of these delivered by 63 trained community-based volunteers
- we distributed essential hygiene items to 326,730 people in Syria, including jerry cans, diapers, soap, shampoo, and menstrual pads; we also distributed personal hygiene items in schools to 11,837 students
- in Türkiye, we distributed 9,311 hygiene kits, 2,504 hygiene cash vouchers, 684 baby kits and 1,169 elderly kits
- we also enabled hygiene and menstrual hygiene – distributing kits at first, and cash coupons later on; this enables women to choose themselves which products they use



Delivering water to shelters
in Aleppo, Syria
(photo: Islam Mardini/ Oxfam)

FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS

125,084 people reached

"Olives are the most widely used agricultural output in the region. Farmers benefit from its fruit, oil and seeds. We have rekindled people's hopes."

Özge Sagaltıcı works as a Food & Economic Security Officer with Oxfam in Türkiye. She helped distributed olive saplings, so farmers could return to their old lives, produce and cultivate the soil.

(photo: Erva AKCA/Oxfam)

Many earthquake survivors relied on food from friends, family, and community volunteers in the days following the earthquake. However, depending on the location, this food was at times barely sufficient and coordination was difficult. Food prices spiked when local markets started to function and many families – up to 40% from one of our assessments – said they were having to borrow money to get by. The earthquakes ruined job opportunities, trade and livelihoods, too.

Together with our partners, we undertook quick action to help families to get the **food** they need to survive and rebuild their livelihoods.

- in Türkiye we've provided vouchers to 400 households who lost their livelihoods to cover their food and non-food needs; we registered 440 of the most vulnerable households for cash support
- our team in Syria provided cash assistance to 21,341 of the most vulnerable people in Aleppo, enabling them to purchase urgently needed food items

Oxfam has implemented programs to restore **livelihoods** for people who lost their jobs due to the earthquake.

- Oxfam repaired and upgraded two bakeries in the earthquake-hit areas in Syria, to ensure they could make enough bread for 95,000 people; another 5 bakeries are being rehabilitated.
- we also supplied dry yeast to Syrian bakeries - a key ingredient for bread making - helping them to bake bread for over 5 million people
- in Hatay, Türkiye, we are aiming to restore the local market of Samandag in cooperation with the municipality and improve the livelihoods of 40 local tradesmen and their families, who lost their work due to the earthquake
- in the same region, and with support of a private sector partner, we are starting the reconstruction of the heavily damaged Vakıflı Gastronomy Village, famous for its culinary and cultural heritage, creating jobs and trade income in the longer-term for local women, reviving local tourism, and helping to protect the social and historical fabric of the region.

We continue to work to repair the damage caused in the **agricultural sector**, to restore access to livelihoods, especially for women farmers.

- in Türkiye, we provided 299 households with animal feeding, and distributed 982 seedlings to farmers
- we started installing tents which will be used to keep livestock, and replace barns damaged by the earthquake



ALEPPO: UNDERSTANDING NEEDS

In order to tailor and optimize our response to disasters, Oxfam undertakes comprehensive needs assessments. We spoke to the most affected people in different communities across Aleppo, Syria, one of the hardest-hit governorates. They said that food prices soared after the earthquake. This forced families to reduce their food intake and resort to unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as eating only one food item like bulgur for days, or skipping meals. Women, girls, and children were mostly affected by the food rations in the households. People we spoke with also said that some children and teenagers fainted at school because of hunger.

After the earthquake, many women in rural Aleppo needed work and funds for small projects. They were the ones mainly responsible for their families because their previous breadwinners had either passed away, were missing, or were injured by the conflict. The earthquake worsened their already poor financial situation and they had trouble getting bread for their families.

Women said they could not work or start businesses because they did not have the skills or money. They wanted opportunities to better their lives and livelihoods. They thought vocational training and small business grants were very important to gain more financial independence.

To understand the food and livelihood needs of people in Aleppo and Hama, Oxfam assessed the agriculture and market conditions in both governorates to understand the different needs of people following the earthquake. We looked for target groups with specific food and livelihood needs, and markets that could handle more demand. The results helped us to cross-check previous assessments, so we could better understand the different needs. In the next phase of the response, we will work to address those needs.

PROTECTION

58,431 people reached

"My family and friends are safe. Now we need to show solidarity with all of those impacted by the earthquake. I am here because I need to be."

Berfin Akdeniz (18) from Gaziantep was preparing to start her university education after graduating high school, but she found herself volunteering with Oxfam instead. Here, packing diapers for newborn babies in the local hospital.
(photo: Tineke D'haese/Oxfam)

Oxfam worked to ensure the safety, dignity and well-being of the affected communities in Türkiye and Syria. We conducted specific protection risk analysis to identify and mitigate the exposure of vulnerable groups to violence, abuse, and exploitation.



Our teams carried out targeted interventions, well adapted to the local context, to **protect the most vulnerable** groups in both Syria and Türkiye. These would include women, girls, people with disabilities, internally displaced persons, and other groups at risk.

- in order to protect against the heat in summer, our team in Türkiye provided 4,390 summer kits, including awnings, shades and fans.
- we also distributed 320 fire extinguishers, along with the necessary training; according to field reports, these prevented fires from spreading on two occasions.
- Oxfam facilitated the delivery of 17,927 dignity kits to women and girls in Syria, including underwear, hijab (head scarves), towels, abaya (cloak), toothpastes, toothbrushes and socks, protecting women's privacy and dignity, and preventing health and hygiene issues
- with winter cold coming in, we distributed 2,988 winter kits in Türkiye, including blankets, quilts, heater fans, thermal insulation, umbrellas, lanterns, searchlights, coats, shoes, underwear, scarves for children, berets, gloves, socks, raincoats – reaching 14,457 people.
- in Syria, we handed out 494 blankets, 10,021 winter kits and solar lights to people in rural Aleppo and Idlib to keep them safe, warm and comfortable, and to ease the financial stress of buying winter clothes.
- we provided individual protection assistance to 90 people with specific protection risks (due to physical or mental disabilities) and to survivors of gender-based violence

We actively ensured **coordination** with other protection actors to avoid duplicating efforts and streamline our approaches. Sharing information prevents overlaps in protection services, and helps to create a harmonized intervention.

- we conducted protection awareness sessions for local Syrian NGOs to enhance their understanding of Oxfam's protection approach and exchange knowledge with them, promoting a common vision and strategy for our protection work
- in Aleppo, Idlib, and Hama we conducted a service mapping exercise to improve referral and information systems, and ensure that survivors of gender-based violence have access to the available services and resources
- In Türkiye, we worked with local partners ASAM, IBC, and FISA to coordinate almost 3,500 public health, mental health, and psychosocial activities with affected populations, targeting women and children in particular



FOCUS ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Our team in Türkiye assessed the particular needs of women and girls. Early in our analysis we confirmed a rise in gender-based violence and unpaid care responsibilities. Women and girls were being particularly hard hit by trauma, distress, insecurity and loss of work and income. We therefore decided to work directly with local government authorities, UN agencies and the private sector to establish and manage nine Women and Children's Centers and three Women's Solidarity Centers to ensure women's inclusion in longer-term recovery and reconstruction processes.

In addition to providing pre-school education and care services for children, trainings for women, workshops, income-generating activities and in-kind support, these centers also invest in information collection and dissemination, access to services, and referral.

The centers target families whose houses were severely damaged by the earthquake, causing them to relocate. We prioritize single parent households, households with pregnant or lactating women, people with disabilities, and refugees.

Although not all centers are fully operational yet (besides the six functional, another three Women and Children's Centers are still in the making) our teams have started actively promoting their work, providing psychosocial support, and preparing trainings. Four hundred and seventy five women and 137 children have registered so far for the services of the Women and Children's Centers, and 293 women attended Leadership and Empowerment trainings. We'll also support women's participation in economic life through cash and in-kind support and training to (re)establish businesses. The Centers provide early childcare and education services when needed. We also maintain a pool of experts to support community members with legal aid. Our Women's and Children's Centers have reached 1,953 people so far.

ADVOCACY

Oxfam joined collective advocacy efforts in **Syria**, on the needs in Syria and the impact of the earthquake.

- we co-drafted two letters to the Syria Donor Working Group and Donors at Capitals on the need to continuously support funding for Syria, with the increase of needs post-earthquake.
- with the Syrian INGO Regional Forum (SIRF), Oxfam co-drafted public statements marking the one-month moment post-earthquake, and a statement directed to donors ahead of the Donor Conference in Brussels.
- through Oxfam networks, several private donors briefings have been organized, highlighting Oxfam's key recommendations and asks, mainly on: funding, humanitarian access; early recovery; localization; coordination and unilateral coercive measures.
- Oxfam's policy work during the past year, also focused on looking at early recovery as an urgent pressing need, as well the need to enhance and increase partnerships with local NGOs as lessons learned post-earthquake.

In **Türkiye**, our advocacy work focused in particular on the need to support women.

- we supported the "Listen to the Voices of Women" signature campaign, which demanded to meet the needs of women and children in the post-disaster period and to include women in the humanitarian aid and reconstruction process. The petition was signed by 5,349 people. The second phase of the campaign, demanding state support for women's cooperatives in the region, was signed by 1,503 people.
- during the 45th Istanbul Marathon on November 5, Oxfam organized runners to participate in support of women affected by the earthquake, mobilizing 2,005 people to donate, totaling 920,680 TL (around € 30,000) in donations.



Coordinating and discussing affairs at the camp in Maras, Türkiye, so all families get the support they need. (photo: Delizia Flaccavento/Oxfam)

LOCAL HUMANITARIAN LEADERS

In Türkiye, Oxfam has been collaborating with women's cooperatives. Some of these established community kitchens to support survivors from the earthquakes.

(photo: Yalcin Ciftci/Oxfam KEDV)

At Oxfam, we believe that a humanitarian response can be effective only if it is informed by the insights of those closest to the affected communities.

In both Türkiye and Syria, we work closely with local partner organizations in designing our interventions.

SYRIA

- [Syrian Society for Social Development \(SSSD\)](#)

TÜRKİYE

- [Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants \(ASAM\)](#)
- [International Blue Crescent](#)
- [Fikir ve Sanat Atölyesi Derneği](#)



Members of the Matiya Women's Cooperative and Oxfam's Neighbourhood Leadership program pack the prepared meals.
(photo: Yalcin Ciftci/Oxfam KEDV)

In Türkiye, our response combined Oxfam's humanitarian expertise with our historical work supporting women-led local development and its existing partnerships with women's cooperatives. We collaborated with 20 different women's cooperatives in Kahramanmaraş, Hatay, Gaziantep, Osmaniye, Sanliurfa and Malatya representing more than 270 women members who are active leaders in their communities. The cooperatives provide them with the space and platform to advocate collectively with local and national government to advance their communities' social and economic rights.

In spite of having lost family and friends, and often livelihoods, businesses, jobs and assets, many of these cooperative members were providing life-saving support to their communities, including food and shelter. Oxfam consciously chose to help them to target underserved communities including Syrian refugees and other minority groups.

In the first phase after the earthquake, Oxfam provided technical advice, funding, materials and services to support the food, textile and other production activities of the Ekodoku, Vakıfköy, Gaziantep, Zeugma, 3K Kale, Hekimhan, Payas, Düziçi, Osmaniye and Kahramanmaraş Women's Cooperatives. This helped them to restart production and access markets to sell their products. The sales of these products are providing greater visibility to women's producers nationally. For instance, the products

of the Kahramanmaraş Women's Cooperative are now on sale in a large cosmetics chain.

The cooperatives distributed 700 meals and 4,000 Food Kits. The Arsuz Women's Cooperative distributed the first stage of 2,100 sheets and pillowcases produced by 36 women. We distributed recyclable toys produced by Mersinden Women's Cooperative to children at the national Children's Day celebrations on April 23 in the earthquake zone.

Oxfam also launched a fund in support of social and economic empowerment of women's cooperatives in the region, providing psychosocial support services to the groups most affected by the earthquake, including women and children, and refugees under protection. The fund was open for all the 11 regions affected by the earthquake. So far, 41 women's cooperatives have applied for the support fund and five cooperatives' applications have been approved. The evaluation of the applications of 13 cooperatives and the development process with volunteer mentors continues. The total budget of the five applications approved so far is over € 125,000.

LOOKING AHEAD

A year after the earthquake, people are still suffering. At Oxfam, we have shifted from providing live-saving aid to a longer-term recovery plan that seeks to improve and restore lives in the communities affected by the disaster. While the first stage of the response is now largely over, the work to rebuild lives and livelihoods has merely begun.

- our team in Syria continues to support people with the assistance they need to survive these difficult times and restore their dignity after a year of hardship and trauma, on top of the ongoing conflict that has destroyed much of the infrastructure in their country.
- in Türkiye, we are establishing dialogue and negotiation channels with government agencies and humanitarian actors, to help women and their communities influence decision-making, and advance localization of the aid agenda over the long term.
- we are supporting survivors and refugees to have a voice in the reconstruction of their cities as safe and resilient communities –investing in particular in women’s capacities to access and control resources.
- in Türkiye, we’ve now mapped water needs of approximately 20 villages in Adiyaman, and we are developing plans to service these villages in 2024.
- we will continue to provide cash and material support to women cooperatives and entrepreneurs and women engaged in agriculture and livestock farming in Türkiye’s rural areas.
- we continue to work on the distribution of winter clothes, with 3,433 winter clothes kits scheduled to be distributed in 2024 in Gaziantep and Hatay, targeting 15,000 individuals.
- the Women’s Coalition in Türkiye, of which Oxfam KEDV is a member will distribute 3,000 hygiene kits on Oxfam’s behalf in Adiyaman in 2024



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An earthquake survivor from Aleppo receives hygiene materials delivered by Oxfam to help them keep good hygiene habits.
(photo: Islam Mardini/Oxfam)