



HANDS UP
FOUNDATION

Programme Report

July 2023

Charity no. 1156491

INTRODUCTION

On 11 February, our Board Chair, George Butler, stood on a street in Antakya, Turkey, facing the collapsed 32-flat Buket apartment building with surviving residents and relations, waiting for loved ones to be found in the rubble. The destruction (physical and emotional) caused by February's earthquakes cannot be captured in a sentence and goes far beyond this desperately sad scene. If hope can be found in such a situation, it is in the courage of our partners and the generosity of our supporters, like you.

Our work is designed to respond quickly and efficiently to the greatest needs of Syrian communities, which made us uniquely placed to respond when the earthquakes struck, killing over **55,000***, and injuring more than **110,000**** people. We worked quickly with our partners to save lives, providing aid including baby milk for orphans (our contribution unlocking further funding from UNICEF), dialysis kits, orthopaedic equipment for surgery and critical health care. So far, we have reached over **14,400 earthquake victims** with this response, while continuing our usual health and education programmes.

Today, the emergency is not over, and our work on earthquake response alongside our long-term work continues. The earthquake is just the latest in a series of crises; conflict, economic crisis, cholera, and a lack of trained medical and educational professionals. While Syria has once again faded from the headlines, we are committed to the recovery, however long it takes. Thank you for helping us do this.

This report covers the period from 01 January to 31 June 2023 and reflects on the situation on the ground during this period.

*<https://shorturl.at/cegoZ>

**<https://help.rescue-uk.org/syria-turkey-crisis-up>



IMPACT IN NUMBERS

So far in 2023, we have helped over 26,000 Syrians, including emergency support for over 14,400 earthquake survivors.

We've funded:

- Vital medical and nutritional support to over 3,500 earthquake victims
- Cash assistance for 280 families affected by the earthquake
- Salaries for 22 medical staff & 22 educational staff
- Education for 280 Syrian refugee children
- Healthcare for over 11,300 patients, with over 28,900 free consultations
- Prosthetics for 7 patients, provision, fitting and physio support
- Training for 6 prosthetics clinicians



Earthquake Response

North Syria, South East Turkey



EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE IN NUMBERS

Thanks to your support, so far we have helped over 14,400 people.

We've provided:

- **3,048** Baby Milk Substitute cartons for orphans or mothers unable to breastfeed, supporting **639** children and their caregivers.
- **171** orthopaedic consumables (e.g. Surgeons Drills) used to help **2,745** people.
- **4,627** dialysis kits used to treat **195** patients.
- **9,744** patients with primary health care*.
- Cash assistance for **280** families.

*Please note, final reporting for this programme is due 31st July and will be confirmed in our next report.



EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE

The earthquakes hit communities already shattered by over a decade of conflict, economic crisis, cholera outbreaks, and COVID-19. As one of our partner colleagues, Omar, put it: *"It will take years to return to where we were on 5th February 2023"*.

The data in the following pages covers four initial earthquake response programmes (including our Primary Health Clinic in Tel Abyad), delivered in collaboration with our local partners, Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS), Physicians Across Continents (PAC) and SAWA for Development & Aid. Reporting to date shows we have reached over **14,400 people**, focussing on providing critical medical care and equipment, nutritional support and cash assistance.

This work is now entering a new phase and further programmes have launched in recent weeks, to address the long-term response. At the time of writing, all funds raised through our Earthquake Appeal (over £400,000 in total) have been committed. Further earthquake response programming will be reported on in our next 6-monthly report. A budget breakdown of earthquake funds can be found on page 9.



CRITICAL MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

The earthquakes left **110,000** people injured*. Our partner, SAMS, quickly informed us of the urgent need for dialysis kits in NW Syria to treat crush injuries, where severe loss of fluids and blood cause acute renal failure. This serious complication is treated with dialysis. Hands Up funded **4,627 dialysis kits** for SAMS to treat **195 patients**.

CASH ASSISTANCE

We have always believed in giving Syrians a hand up, not a hand out, and in the dignity gained by empowering communities. Cash assistance is proven as an effective strategy in disaster response**. This intervention provided provided **280 families** (with an average of **4 members**) in Idlib governorate with \$150, allowing them the flexibility to address their most pressing needs. Idlib was severely affected by the earthquakes, with thousands left homeless***. The funds from this programme were used for repairing damage to homes, covering rent, food, and medical care.

*<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/around-40000-syrians-return-turkey-after-quake-2023-02-28/>

**<https://www.unhcr.org/what-we-do/respond-emergencies/cash-based-interventions>

***<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/2/6/in-war-ravaged-idlib-devastating-quake-feels-like-doomsday>



BABY MILK SUBSTITUTES & ORTHOPAEDIC CONSUMABLES

In the emergency phase of the earthquake response, working with our partner Physicians Across Continents (PAC), we delivered **3,048 cartons of Baby Milk Substitutes (BMS)** for orphans and mothers unable to breastfeed, reaching **639 children** and their caregivers. This gave these babies a fighting chance at life, while helping to prevent the spread of cholera. When BMS are randomly distributed, improper preparation can lead to the spread of this life-threatening disease. To mitigate this, the programme included controlled distribution, outreach and co-ordination with health clusters and authorities.

Alongside the provision of BMS, this project with PAC also provided **171 orthopaedic consumables**, such as surgeons drills, to help care for **2,745** people injured by the earthquakes, saving lives in the process.

One of our greatest achievements related to the BMS project is uncaptured by the statistics. Our funding (£20,000) for Baby Milk Substitutes unlocked further funds from UNICEF which is expanding the programme to reach an estimated 5,000 children under the age of two years. This is such a positive example of why listening to local organizations goes further and why immediate funding for programmes in emergencies is so critical.



FURTHER FUNDS COMMITTED & RELATED PROGRAMMES

The success of our Earthquake Appeal means we can work with our partners on the long-term response to the earthquake. We cannot stress enough how important it is that these communities are not forgotten.

In addition to the programmes above, we have committed further funding for:

- **Psycho-Social Support Programme** with SAMS for children affected by the earthquake in Hatay, Turkey, who are living with trauma. The impact of this project will be delivered in the January 2024 Programme Report.
- **Playgrounds for Children** with PAC in NW Syria. Syrian children under 12 have only ever known their country in conflict, and are now struggling with trauma inflicted by the earthquake. We believe every child deserves somewhere to play, safely and happily. We're making this possible for an initial two communities in NW Syria.
- **Gender-Based-Violence & Protection Programme** with Maram in NW Syria. Displacement and breakdown in social and community structures resulting from the earthquake increase the risk of gender-based violence for women and children. This programme will increase coping abilities through the provision of protection services and awareness-raising sessions.

Our earthquake response also includes two of our long-term programmes; our **Primary Health Clinic** in Tel Abyad with SAMS and our **Prosthetics Clinic** in A'zaz with PAC. Reporting for these can be found in the next section.



EARTHQUAKE APPEAL BUDGET BREAKDOWN

The table below sets out how funds from the earthquake appeal have been spent or committed.

Thanks to our generous supporters, the appeal raised a total of £414,737. We set aside 5% as cost recovery to go towards costs of the fundraising campaign, due diligence and oversight.

	Total funds raised
	£414,737
Programme	Amount
Critical Medical Equipment - Dialysis Kits - SAMS, NW Syria	£60,000
Baby Milk Substitutes & Orthopaedic Consumables - PAC, NW Syria	£20,000
Cash Assistance - SAWA, NW Syria	£40,000
Primary Health Care - SAMS, NE Syria*	£100,000
Psycho-social Support - SAMS, Hatay, Turkey*	£15,000
Prosthetics - PAC, NW Syria*	£40,000
Playgrounds for Children - PAC, NW Syria*	£60,000
Gender-based violence & Protection Programme - Maram, NW Syria*	£59,000
5% cost recovery	£20,737
Total committed	£414,737

* = Ongoing Programmes



Primary Healthcare

Tel Abyad, North Syria

HEALTHCARE

**Please note, this is also part of our long-term earthquake response.*

Everyone in northern Syria was affected by the earthquakes, including the **50,000-strong** community around Tel Abyad, which relies on our Primary Health Clinic for access to everyday health services, whether medication for chronic diseases like asthma, vaccinations for Cholera and COVID19 or midwifery services. The need for this clinic, which fortunately was not damaged, has become more acute following the earthquakes with further displacement bringing more people to the area*. A severe lack of similar health facilities means this clinic really is a lifeline.

Most recently, their work has included a focus on addressing the urgent need for specialised, sexual and reproductive health care. Serving these needs and educating the population on its importance is a vital step in reducing rates of Gender-Based Violence, as well as reducing rates of STIs and empowering women in society.

Reporting for this programme is due at the end of the month and will be set out in our next programme report, but we know that over **21,100 patients** have been treated since January 2023, by the **22 medical staff**.

[*https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/around-40000-syrians-return-turkey-after-quake-2023-02-28/](https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/around-40000-syrians-return-turkey-after-quake-2023-02-28/)



PROGRESS & IMPACT

PRIMARY HEALTHCARE CLINIC

From January to July 2023, the team helped 21,132 patients through 28,973 consultations. From January to March 2023, these included*:

- 3,949 for women, 36%
- 2,235 for men, 21%
- 2,279 for girls, 21%
- 2,426 for boys, 22%

*Further reporting is due at the end of July for this programme.

From January to March 2023, paediatric services were the most commonly required at the clinic, representing 30% of all consultations, with internal and OBGYN following in demand, representing 29% and 15% (respectively).

Over the reporting period, all running costs were covered to ensure that the community can continue to access quality primary health care services, free of charge. These include, but are not limited to, reproductive health services, dental services, and services for leishmaniasis (a flesh-eating disease).

In March, SAMS was also able to extend its outreach to remote communities, through their Mobile Clinic, funded by Hands Up. Despite delays in the arrival of the Mobile Clinic, due to the earthquake, the team have already given 4,813 consultations. We are delighted to be reaching more people with vital services and look forward to reporting on the impact in our next Programme Report.





Education Centre
Bekaa Valley, Lebanon

EDUCATION

In May, we were in Lebanon with the team, and as always were bowled over by the inspirational teachers, students and setting. We are so proud that SAWA's education centre continues to provide **280 Syrian refugee children** with the opportunity for education, despite harsh conditions. The economic crisis in Lebanon has continued to worsen; the currency lost more than **98%** of its pre-crisis value by February*. Severe storms have hit the area, and mass deportations to Syria threaten the community**. In this context, the centre gains greater importance as a safe space for children, in a very uncertain world.

In February, flooding caused by storms displaced many of the children who attend the centre from their camps along with their families. While the camps were rehabilitated, SAWA supported families with temporary shelter and accommodation. During this time, the centre acted as a safe, warm and nurturing environment for students to learn, with the heating required to combat the freezing temperatures which claim the Bekaa Valley in winter.

With Lebanese public schools showing no signs of providing the spaces needed to accommodate Syrian refugee children, SAWA's centre is critical to ensure that these children do not fall further behind and continue to have access to learning. Yet, in the current economic crisis, raising the funds required for the centre is a constant struggle. We are actively fundraising to keep this centre open and continue its life-changing work. If you'd like to help, please contact us: contact@handsupfoundation.org.

*<https://tinyurl.com/b33jkek>

**<https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/07/05/lebanon-armed-forces-summarily-deporting-syrians>



PROGRESS & IMPACT

EDUCATION

Despite the challenging conditions faced this year, **266 children** have finished the school year at SAWA's education centre, with a remarkable **94%** attendance rate and **95%** showing improved knowledge. This is an incredible achievement in a year marked by worsening economic crisis. During such turbulent times, a coping mechanism for many families is to remove their children from education and place them into wage-earning work, or child marriage. To retain students during this period is testament to the services SAWA provide and the high regard with which it is held by the community. When compared with the outreach which was necessary to convince the community of the importance of education at the onset of the project, this achievement is all the more impressive.

We believe that equipping these children with critical basic and core skills gives them opportunity for a brighter future. By funding the salaries of the **17 teachers**, and **5 support staff** at the centre, we also provide stability to the community. While the school only directly educates its students, we have seen that there are no boundaries to this learning. Pupils share what they have learnt with their siblings and families. In the case of the life-skills taught at the centre, such as the importance of washing hands properly to avoid cholera, this really can have life-saving effects.



HISHAM'S STORY

Although Lebanon did not experience any destruction as a result of the **7.8 magnitude** earthquake on 6th February, many of the students in the Bekaa Valley had family members who had been greatly affected in Turkey and Syria, as well as experiencing aftershocks of up to **6.3 magnitude** themselves.

Hisham, a Grade 2 student at the centre, was badly affected by the fear and trauma of this earthquakes, constantly asking his teachers to be in the same classroom as his older brother. His academic performance declined, he took to hiding under his desk during classes, and he refused to go outside to play with his friends at break time like before.

At the education centre, academics are, of course, considered extremely important. But so too is a child's wellbeing and emotional state. This is why the Protection Team introduced individual sessions with Hisham, which aimed at helping him to express his feelings, help him feel safe again, and gain his confidence back. After several of these sessions, Hisham was back to his normal self, attending classes normally and playing carefree with his friends in the playground, as each and every child should be able to do. Although we cannot change the trauma these children have lived through, from displacement, to poverty, and now the earthquakes, we can support them in dealing with these experiences. We are so grateful to you for your part in this.



A close-up photograph of two hands, one natural and one prosthetic, both giving a thumbs-up gesture. The background is dark and out of focus.

Prosthetics Programme

Syrian Turkish Border

PROSTHETICS

**Please note, this is also part of our long-term earthquake response.*

In June, Hands Up and the Koalaa team travelled to Gaziantep, Turkey, to run training with PAC's technicians on fitting the updated Koalaa prosthetics, as well as provide their own feedback. Such collaboration is key to innovation, and we were delighted to hear their excitement for the programme.

This programme is designed to provide people with limb difference with the tools – their Koalaa prosthetic – to build a life beyond limb difference, to regain independence and confidence. In Syria, an estimated **86,000 people** live with amputations caused by the conflict*. Following the earthquakes, the number of amputees has grown, dramatically increasing the demand for prostheses, although full needs assessments are yet to be done.

We cannot reach all of these people, but with this programme we can provide a solution, making Koalaa prostheses an alternative, sustainable option for as many Syrians as possible. We are delighted that the next **50 prostheses** are now in Syria, and will be fitted in the coming months, with the results informing the feasibility of expanding the programme. We look forward to reporting on the impact in our next Programme Report.

*<https://onenationuk.org/projects/syria-appeal/prosthetic-artificial-limbs-clinic-in-syria>



PROGRESS & IMPACT

PROSTHETICS

Programme highlights so far:

- 6 staff trained
- 43 patients provided and fitted with upper limb prosthesis
- 86 physiotherapy rehabilitation sessions provided
- 86 psychosocial support sessions provided

The displacement of patients, along with severe damage to PAC's headquarters in Gaziantep, has caused delays to this programme over the reporting period. Yet, despite these extreme challenges, PAC worked diligently to re-implement the running of the programme and have now fitted **43 patients** with Koalaa prostheses.

Patients received physiotherapy rehabilitation sessions, and they and their caregivers were provided with psychosocial support sessions. This support is vital for ensuring that patients are given the best possible chances of adapting to life with a prosthetic.

So far, patients have reported a **74%** satisfaction rate, an incredible achievement given the harsh reality that even the best prosthetic is not an equal replacement for a now missing limb.



THANK YOU

15.3 million people need humanitarian assistance in Syria*. When we set up Hands Up, nearly a decade ago, we had no idea the crisis would go on for this long, or that the needs would continue to grow. But, this is the reality we face. It is also why we refuse to give up. This year, more than ever, we have been blown away by your support and your willingness to help. To have been able to provide aid to over **26,000 Syrians** (including **14,400** earthquake survivors), while continuing to provide the health and education services needed to foster happy, healthy, and educated communities, is something we never take for granted. None of this would have been possible without you, thank you.

We always love hearing from you, please get in touch.

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*<https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/syria-unhcr-operational-update-may-2023-enar>





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