

## **Caritas Australia remembers victims of the Türkiye-Syria earthquake, a year after the tragedy.**

On February 6th, 2023, a devastating 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck north-west Syria and Türkiye, followed by another of similar strength just hours later, killing over 50,000 people. With hundreds of thousands of buildings having collapsed, some 9 million people were affected, with 3.6 million left homeless and internally displaced. As of August, the UN [reported](#) that over 180,000 households were still living in temporary sites.

In the earthquake's immediate aftermath, the Caritas network launched an emergency appeal to address immediate needs such as shelter, food, blankets, and clean water.

“In the months since support has been given to tens of thousands of people struggling to rebuild and recover. From the provision of hot meals to shelter, hygiene kits, and fans to cool temporary shelters over summer,” said Sally Thomas, Humanitarian Emergencies lead at Caritas Australia.

Beneficiaries include Kamile, who used to live in Ovakent, Türkiye, and had just finished secondary school when the earthquake struck.

“When the earthquake destroyed our house, we set up a tent here. We are a group of six people living here. I have siblings who are 7, 6 and 3 years old. Our father has passed away” Kamile said. “Before the earthquake, we used to live in a proper house. But now we have lost everything. My mother is sick, and the cold temperature worsens her health.”

Reflecting on the role of community in their survival Kamile explained, “Our neighbours gave us a heater, thank God. We pulled some blankets and pillows out of the wreckage of our own home. Our clothes, all our belongings, we lost everything in the earthquake. Caritas gave us diapers and a wheelchair. Friends of ours helped us provide food, shoes, and clothes.”

“Life remains extremely hard, and the future is incredibly uncertain for families like Kamile’s. People affected are still in need of our enduring compassion and support,” said Sally Thomas.

With the region in its coldest months, and many homes yet to be rebuilt, the care of families is urgent and needed for months. Especially in need are marginalised people such as women and refugees, and those in more rural areas, who have reduced access to vital resources such as food, medicine, and shelter.

To support Caritas Australia’s Türkiye-Syria Earthquake Appeal, visit [www.caritas.org.au/turkey](http://www.caritas.org.au/turkey) or call 1800 024 413 toll free.

**ENDS**

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