

Media Release

5 February 2024

One year of supporting earthquake-affected communities in Syria

6 February marks one year since the devastating earthquakes shook Syria and Turkey, claiming the lives of thousands, and causing more destruction and trauma to millions more Syrians who were already surviving 12 long years of conflict.

In response to this emergency, Jesuit Mission Australia launched a Syrian Earthquake Response Appeal to provide immediate assistance to those people most affected living in Aleppo, where the Jesuits were already actively supporting refugees.

Thanks to the generosity of the Australian Catholic community, in one year, over 44,000 women, men and children have been provided with emergency assistance, including food, warm clothing, shelter, healthcare and vital psychosocial support. This life-giving response is being delivered by Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Syria in partnership with Jesuit Mission Australia and the Xavier Network.

“A crisis will shake the foundations of any communities, but compassion and solidarity have the power to rebuild them,” said Helen Forde, CEO of Jesuit Mission Australia.

“We are so grateful for the heartfelt generosity of our Jesuit Mission family as Syria’s vulnerable population face more trauma and terror.”

Amidst the somber reflection on the one-year anniversary of the devastating earthquakes in Syria and Turkey, Jesuit Mission remains steadfast in its commitment to rebuilding shattered lives.

Using the funding already raised, the Jesuits are committed to continue the program of emergency support activities into 2024 that will help the long-term recovery of women, children and men affected by the earthquake and conflict.

“Thank you to those who supported our Earthquake appeal, your generosity continues to restore hope and empower resilience,” said Ms Forde.

As the journey towards recovery extends into 2024, Jesuit Mission urges supporters to continue to keep the people of Syria in your thoughts and prayers. To make a donation to Jesuit Mission Australia’s Emergency Response Fund go to <https://jesuitmission.org.au/actionfund/> or call 02 8918 4109.

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Caption: One month after the earthquake a family builds a make-shift home on the street.
Photographer: Mikhail Demian – JRS MENA



Caption: The earthquake collapsed thousands of buildings in Aleppo.
Photographer: Mikhail Demian – JRS MENA



Caption: A child receives an emergency food package.
Photographer: Mikhail Demian – JRS MENA



Caption: Food distribution delivered by our partner JRS Syria.
Photographer: Mikhail Demian – JRS MENA

Supporting Links:

Jesuit Mission Emergency Action Fund

<https://jesuitmission.org.au/actionfund/>

About Jesuit Mission Australia

Jesuit Mission Australia works in over 10 countries across Asia and Africa to uphold the innate dignity of people living with the effects of poverty, especially the most marginalised and vulnerable. Funds from our supporters:

- Break cycles of poverty through teaching and education
- Protect the health of communities by providing medical care and programs that improve access to clean water and toilets
- Develop independent, sustainable communities through livelihood training and income-generating projects
- Provide vulnerable individuals with pastoral care, social inclusion and advocacy
- Support refugees in crisis
- Enable effective disaster response and relief.