



1 March 2023

Joint advocacy statement by the World Rehabilitation Alliance regarding the Turkey and Syria earthquakes

As members of the World Rehabilitation Alliance (WRA) we remain deeply saddened and concerned for the devastation wrought by the series of earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. There are over 120,000 persons with injuries, including complex limb fractures, spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, amputations and nerve injuries. The disaster is understood to be the worst sudden-onset emergency of the past decade.

Rehabilitation has been identified as a priority across the emergency response, with expectations that in addition to the enormous immediate need for early rehabilitation, ongoing access to quality rehabilitation services will be essential to ensure the best possible outcomes for those with injuries.

While there is an understandable focus on those with new injuries, it is also essential to ensure ongoing access to essential rehabilitation services for those with pre-existing needs, including people with disability.

Emergency medical teams meeting WHO minimum standards and including rehabilitation professionals have been mobilized in support of the national and international responses. A number of WRA member organizations are also engaged directly in response efforts. Rehabilitation is an essential component of emergency response, and we encourage all actors to ensure timely integration of rehabilitation services.

We would like to express our solidarity, admiration and gratitude towards the Syrian and Turkish rehabilitation professionals, our colleagues, who are working tirelessly under challenging circumstances to help those affected in their countries.