



PRESS RELEASE

Moroccan Children's Trust (MCT) Earthquake Response

Following the deadly 6.8 magnitude earthquake MCT is working with local partners based in Taroudant to identify urgent needs and support the most vulnerable families and children.

TAROUDANT, 11th September 2023 - [Moroccan Children's Trust](#), a UK based NGO supporting vulnerable children and their families in Morocco (since 2010) is working with its long-time partner based in Taroudant, [Fondation Amane pour la Protection de l'Enfance \(FAPE\)](#), to identify urgent needs and respond to the impact of the earthquake in the town and province of Taroudant.

Communities are in shock and fear given the unprecedented scale of the disaster and resulting destruction. Many are without the basic necessities of shelter, food, clothing, and water. There are a lot of efforts currently underway by the government and civil society to provide relief to all the affected communities, but we are faced with many obstacles.

Taroudant is the largest province in the country with 89 communes, a large population, and many dispersed villages. Its size makes it very difficult to reach all the small villages that have been affected, particularly those in the mountains. Some villages have been completely destroyed and there are many deaths and injuries. The hospital in the town of Taroudant is overwhelmed as residents from surrounding villages make their way to the provincial centre to seek treatment. We anticipate many additional needs in the coming days and weeks, including psycho-social support, as everyone is in a complete state of shock and fear. We also know that more and more individuals living in the surrounding villages will continue to migrate to Taroudant to seek help. Our social work team is anticipating and preparing for an influx of referrals for children at risk of abandonment, orphaned children, or children that are now experiencing a new disability caused by an injury from the earthquake.

Our ongoing social work will be highly impacted by the increased vulnerability within our community and the need for psycho-social and material support in the coming days, weeks, and months. We are focused on immediate and medium-term relief, but are also forced to consider how we can plan for long-term support to families and children that have lost their homes, their livelihoods, their access to education and healthcare. All of these vulnerabilities require our attention now and in the future, as our community repairs and rebuilds. While the government and civil society are

doing an incredible job responding, we are contending with the massive need for support on the ground and are mobilising our team to support children and their families affected for the long-term future.

MCT and FAPE have responded by [launching an online appeal for donations](#) that has already surpassed the £5000 initial mark. We are sending those funds out to our team in Morocco to respond to the immediate material needs in our community. We have already received three truckloads of supplies from Casablanca, which our core social work team and group of over 30 volunteers are sorting and distributing to those affected.

In the medium and long-term, we will be reinforcing the direct social work we undertake to scale up our capacity and support the anticipated additional need from children who have been orphaned or lost family members, are at a heightened risk of abandonment or are in need of physical or mental health support. Our aim is to ensure that all children have access to education and health services, and our team will be working tirelessly to ensure that we can support the most vulnerable affected in Taroudant and the surrounding province.

Any and all support is welcomed, and we are grateful for the international solidarity and support that has already taken place.

Immediate term: Families are fearful and staying in the streets for safer shelter, as homes are damaged and/or vulnerable to aftershocks:

- Food
- Clothing
- School supplies
- Basic medicine

Medium term: Centre Amane expects to receive referrals from residents of nearby villages who are coming into the town of Taroudant:

- Support abandoned children.
- Provide services for children with new disabilities.
- Obtain psycho-social support for residents.

PLEASE NOTE: At this time, monetary donations are the best way to support our emergency response on the ground. We are not calling for donations in-kind (clothing, food, blankets, etc.) as they would only complicate our relief efforts at this stage. Donations will be used to support children and families in meeting their most urgent needs, including purchasing basic necessities, by our local colleagues.

For more information please contact:

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About Moroccan Children's Trust

Moroccan Children's Trust supports vulnerable children and families living in poverty or disadvantage in Morocco. They work in three key areas at the local level: social work with vulnerable children and their families; development of child protection systems throughout the region; and supporting the improvement of the national birth registration system.

Alongside our direct work with disadvantaged children and their families in Taroudant, we are working to improve conditions for children in the wider community and across Morocco – drawing on both Moroccan and international expertise in social work, paediatrics, education, safeguarding and children's rights, our work continues to play an important role in shaping Morocco's newly established child protection system.

Find out more here - <https://moroccanchildrenstrust.org/>