



CRS is supporting Caritas Rabat with emergency response efforts for the most vulnerable in remote areas.



An injured woman is rescued from rubble in the city of Amizmiz after an earthquake toppled homes and infrastructure. The 6.8 magnitude earthquake, which struck on September 8, was the worst to hit Morocco in over a century. Photo by Ximena Borrazas/SOPA Images/Sipa USA

CONTEXT

On Friday, September 8, a magnitude 6.8 earthquake struck Morocco near Marrakech. The impact of the quake was felt as far north as Casablanca, though its epicenter was in the High Atlas Mountains, where hard-to-reach communities suffered the most severe damage. More than 300,000 people are affected and at least 2,600 were killed. Access to remote areas with the worst destruction—especially in mountain towns—remains difficult.

This is the strongest earthquake to hit Morocco in over a century. Hundreds of thousands of people are struggling to contact loved ones and access immediate aid, including safe shelter, clean water, food and medical assistance. As search and rescue efforts continue, mosques throughout Morocco are holding prayers for victims. The enormity of loss and grief is widespread as people navigate the aftermath of the quake—and any potential aftershocks.

CRS SUPPORT OF CHURCH PARTNERS

Catholic Relief Services is supporting Caritas Rabat, whose teams mobilized within 24 hours to the hardest-to-reach areas. Parallel to a robust response from the Moroccan government and bilateral assistance from a number of countries, Caritas has identified priority areas for support where essential relief supplies will be sent to families in the coming days.

The global Caritas community, including CRS, is supporting Caritas Rabat with meeting urgent, lifesaving needs, as well as planning for long-term recovery. Priorities are likely to include:

- Emergency safe shelter.
- Food.
- Clean water and hygiene supplies.
- Living supplies such as blankets and kitchen wares.
- Support for medical assistance and counseling.
- Plans for the support of longer-term recovery for homes, infrastructure and livelihoods.

During and after such profound crises, the Church and Caritas are often the first to respond due to their long-standing presence in hard-to-reach communities where they are already a trusted source of care. Our Caritas partners are adept at pivoting quickly to meet emergency needs in ways that directly involve the people they serve in decision-making. This is a strategy that upholds CRS' commitment to subsidiarity—the belief that local challenges are best met at a local level.