

Army responds to 8.2-magnitude earthquake in Chile

Thousands of people evacuated

[chilecampaign](#)

The Salvation Army Chile Central division launches a campaign via social media to collect donations for the earthquake response | Courtesy of Salvation Army Chile

The Salvation Army in Chile is providing assistance to those affected by the 8.2-magnitude earthquake that struck the nation on April 1, which was followed by several aftershocks and a subsequent tsunami that hit coastal regions in the north of the country.



More than 2,600 houses were destroyed and many thousands of people were evacuated from their homes when tsunami alarms sounded. Eight people are known to have been killed in the disaster, but the swift evacuation enabled most people to reach safety.

Salvation Army leaders in Chile report that the worst-hit area appears to be around Alto Hospicio, in Iquique Region. The main road is blocked due to holes and mudslides, making it very difficult to reach the community.

“Besides physical support, the officers, soldiers and volunteers are already giving spiritual support as needed,” said Lt. Colonel Alex Nesterenko, chief secretary for The Salvation Army’s South America West Territory.

Salvation Army teams are working with the local authorities to find the best way to reach Alto Hospicio in order to provide assistance. Reports say that many families have lost their homes and are sleeping in the streets. The area currently has no water or electricity supplies.

Local fishermen will also need help as many have lost their boats, leaving them without a means of earning an income.

Officers and soldiers from corps in the town of Calama and from the Chile North District office are working in three teams, distributing water, milk, coffee and basic food supplies. The soldiers and officers of the Iquique Corps are providing soup at night. Power is a particular problem, so the teams are sourcing generators.

The Chile Central division has also launched a campaign via social media to acquire donations for the earthquake response.

Donations to support The Salvation Army's response can be made at www.salvationarmy.org.