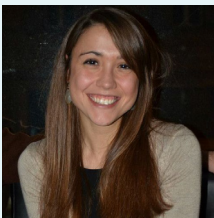




# Rapid coordination is key to respond to an emergency

Photo: FSC/Eleonora Corsale



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## What was the situation in Türkiye?

On 6 February 2023, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck southern and central Türkiye and northern and western Syria. The earthquake triggered over 50,000 casualties and 107,204 injuries. Three million people were relocated out of their homes, with two-thirds (1.59 million) staying in informal settlements. The humanitarian community joined forces to support the Government-led response to assist 5.2 million people affected by the earthquake.

The sector mechanism was established, and the Food Security and Livelihood Sector was set up to coordinate the food security response during the emergency.

## What did the sector do in Türkiye?

The global FSC deployed several members of their team together with me, to support the sector. On site, the FSL gathered approximately 40 partners conducting



Photo: FSC/Eleonora Corsale

weekly in-person coordination meetings in Gaziantep, and set up sub-regional coordination structures in Hatay, Adiyaman, Kahramanmaraş , and Malatya. The response comprised the distribution of hot meals, food packages, cash, and livelihood activities.

In the region, around 376 mobile kitchens were dispatched by the Turkish Red Crescent, AFAD, Ministry of National Defense (MoND), Gendarmerie General Command, UN Agencies, and I/NGOs to provide first-line food assistance to approximately 2.3 million people every day.

## What did it take to co-ordinate the sector in an earthquake-affected area?

I was deployed to Türkiye, in Gaziantep, to join the coordination team at the end of February. It was not my first time there, and my immediate impressions after landing are still hard to explain. Gaziantep was less impacted by the earthquake than other cities in the region, but you could still sense the magnitude of what had happened that night. The airport was almost empty, with cracks on the walls and no water. At the baggage carousel, people of various ages were waiting for boxes and bags full of food and basic needs items. Entering the city, you could see life slowly back to normal, surrounded by collapsed or heavily damaged buildings.

UN agencies established its office and accommodated the staff in a hotel. I worked and lived there for two months, and it was like living a long day that lasted for years. Since I arrived in Türkiye, I spent my working days in meetings with other UN agencies, NGO partners and government officials. Some days I went on missions in other provinces to assess the situation. In Türkiye, the affected provinces were 11, each with a different and changing context in terms of suffered damages and food availability.

It was tiring but fulfilling. Despite the challenges and intensity of the work, this experience made me cross paths with new colleagues from different organizations and built new connections that I missed on my way back to Rome.