

TÜRKIYE EARTHQUAKES

2023 response report

ShelterBox responded to a series of powerful earthquakes that struck southern Türkiye, near the northern border of Syria in February 2023. In partnership with Rotary in Türkiye, ShelterBox was quick to respond, providing shelter and vital household items including mattresses, stoves, and blankets to more than 12,500 people who had been left with nothing.





THE CRISIS IN TÜRKİYE

On 6 February 2023, two devastating earthquakes, measuring 7.8 and 7.5 magnitude on the Richter Scale, struck Kahramanmaraş, Türkiye.

Two weeks later, another powerful earthquake hit Türkiye, close to the border with Syria. More than 16,000 aftershocks occurred in the following weeks, with the impact felt across the 10 provinces in which a three-month state of emergency was declared. Three million people were displaced by the earthquakes; more than 50,000 lost their lives and another 100,000 were injured. These earthquakes are the largest to hit the region in the last century.

WORKING WITH ROTARY

Rotary in Türkiye supported the Government led response, which was coordinated through AFAD, Türkiye's Disaster and Emergency Management Authority, and supported by the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC). Rotary in Türkiye worked closely with AFAD, gaining permission to operate in some of the affected areas. Rotary's connections with AFAD, search and rescue organisations, supply chain and logistics businesses, and municipalities were critical in enabling the ShelterBox response and getting aid on the move in a dynamic and complex emergency.

Through its network of Clubs at city/municipality level, Rotary in Türkiye was very well connected to Governmental mechanisms and able to support ShelterBox in obtaining permissions to operate and be a part of the relief effort. The ability of ShelterBox to be present at distributions, to collect baseline data and to follow up with endline surveys, was only possible due to our partnership with Rotary International and the permission to operate that this gave us with local municipalities.



32-year-old Aleu lives with her husband and two children--one-year-old Beste and four-year-old Boris--in Azurs district, Türkiye.

When we first met with Aleu in March 2023, the family were sleeping in a small camping tent, not big enough to fit the four of them. Now, they are sleeping in the tent provided by ShelterBox.

"This tent is not a small [gesture]. For us, it's a huge support. It makes us feel safe."

The family have hopes to one day move to a more permanent place to call home. "We are going to buy some land and build a prefabricated home made from lighter materials, but no concrete. We do not want to go inside concrete anymore."



NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A ShelterBox team travelled to the affected regions of Adiyaman and Hatay with members of Rotary Club of Istanbul and Rotary District 2430, who were leading in Rotary's emergency response in the region, within 48 hours of the first earthquakes. During these visits, the team carried out impact assessments based on the shelter situation that already existed within the affected area.

Our teams' attention was increasingly drawn towards rural populations whose numbers had swelled due to urban displacement. Although in urban locations, there had been a move towards favouring more durable shelter options, such as containers, it became clearer that in more rural areas tented accommodation remained a viable option. This allowed families to stay at their homesites, to continue with livelihood activities, or to feel safer in smaller localised settlements as they did not have to relocate to seek shelter assistance in larger cities.



The ShelterBox team worked with Rotary and municipality staff in Arzus, leading 'train the trainer' sessions, which focus on sharing knowledge and best practice on tent setup. Kivilcim Aksüt from Seyhan Rotary Club for acted as translator.



ShelterBox distributions in association with Rotary in Türkiye and local volunteers, provided aid for those affected by the earthquakes including hygiene kits.



Following conversations with Rotary, AFAD and local Government Municipalities, the deployed team developed an assistance package with a focus on tents and household items, to allow people to stay in their homesites and not have to relocate to larger cities in search of assistance.

Following a request from the Turkish Red Crescent, an immediate 'gift in kind' was made by ShelterBox just days after the earthquakes. 528 tents were shipped on flights provided free of charge by Turkish Airlines, from our warehouse in Panama, and sent directly by AFAD for distribution in Hatay.

IN COLLABORATION WITH ROTARY PROJECT 1 IN TÜRKİYE HAS SUPPORTED MORE THAN 12,500 PEOPLE AFFECTED BY THE EARTHQUAKES, WITH:



2,528
family tents



6,000
mattresses



8,000
blankets



1,000
solar lights



2,000
Hygiene Kits



1,000
solid fuel stoves*

(* solid fuel stoves provided to the first 1,000 families during the coldest winter months)



With a special thanks to Rotary International members

We'd specifically like to thank DG Emre Ozturk who played a pivotal role in the response. We also offer our thanks to members of Rotary and Rotaract clubs of Istanbul, Gaziantep, Iskenderun, Seyhan, Antakya, Ecology, Istanbul Erenköy and Merrin.

THE IMPACT OF OUR AID

The aim of the project, as developed in conjunction with Rotary in Türkiye, was to contribute to people's immediate safety by providing access to emergency shelter and basic household items. An emphasis was placed on our ability to remain mobile and adapt to needs as they became clear. As such, we were able to reach the additional locations of Malatya, Maras and Antep, and double the number of people supported with ShelterBox aid.

Our partnership with Rotary International and the permissions to operate that this gave us with local municipalities, allowed us the opportunity to be able to capture household data and conduct reporting activities. This was key to understanding how individuals had benefitted from our aid.

Overall, respondents expressed positive views towards the assistance package provided, with 79% agreeing that their living conditions had improved thanks to the help they received from Rotary and ShelterBox.

We also found through interviewing people who received ShelterBox support, that they felt much safer, with 67% of people saying they felt safe in their shelter, compared to 13% prior to

When interviewed before receiving ShelterBox support, 31% of people reported being able to conduct their daily routines to some extent, this increased to 68% as a result of receiving our aid.

Furthermore, 84% of people said they had more access to household privacy and improved dignity as they no longer had to stay in shared accommodation and overcrowded spaces. 70% of people said they had increased protection from extreme weather conditions e.g. cold, wind



While coordinating with Rotary members during community assessments in Adiyaman, the ShelterBox team were able to help unload supplies that the Rotary network were providing as part of their own immediate response activities.



Yunus Emre, the President of Istanbul Erenköy Rotaract Club was one of many Rotaract members involved in the response; assisting with distributions and supporting the ShelterBox team as a translator during visits to affected areas.

When we spoke to Emre, he said "I want to thank ShelterBox and all its supporters. I see the impact that you have made in Türkiye – in my own country and hometown. But I see [ShelterBox's] impact everywhere, not just in Türkiye. It is very important to work together. "

"In particular, I want to thank everyone who I worked with in Türkiye. They are always working – it's like they're Superman! So, I thank you so much."