

USAR Poland



POL-01

Our team was deployed to Besni (Adiyaman province) on 6 February 2023. The mission lasted 10 days.



Wins and challenges

We successfully used our specialised equipment and trained dogs. We also provided medical and psychological support to survivors and their families. One of the biggest successes was the rescue of a family of 4 (including 2 children) and the rescue of the elderly woman over 120 hours after the earthquake.



Our biggest challenges was the lack of access to infrastructure and resources such as petrol stations and trucks to transport rescuers and equipment. We overcame this by working closely with the local authorities in Besni. The team worked continuously despite frequent aftershocks. To reduce the risk of secondary collapse, structural engineers monitored the buildings with a total station theodolite to monitor the stability of the buildings. Another challenge was the harsh weather conditions, which hampered our operations and posed health risks to our team members. We mitigated this by ensuring our team had adequate shelter, clothing and heating, regular shifts, and by monitoring their physical and mental well-being.



Lessons Learned

We learnt that effective communication and coordination with other stakeholders is crucial to a successful response. We established regular contacts with local authorities, the EU and UN, and other NGOs to share information and resources. We also learned that cultural sensitivity and respect are essential to build trust and relationships with affected communities. With the help of local interpreters and guides, we were able to follow local customs and norms and involve community leaders in our decision-making process. We also discovered how useful modern satellite internet can be. Using new technology, we were able to ensure a broadband internet connection for the entire duration of the mission.

