



After the earthquake in Lorca

by Agnieszka Byrczek
 aga@cazalla-intercultural.org



The life here in Lorca is slowly coming back to normal after the earthquakes that happened here on 11 May 2011. During the first one I was at home and I didn't know what was happening, why everything was shaking and things were falling down. When the second one started, I was on the street. A woman caught my hand and hugged me, so we went through it together.

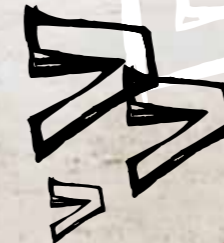


I had a lot of luck because by midnight I had managed to escape from the city, and shortly afterwards I got to know that the house where I live had been evaluated and was given a green sign, that means it is safe to live in. Not everybody had such luck. We called all of our friends and the people with whom we worked. For instance, we discovered that a friend of ours had been forced to leave her home; she is a woman who was a 'book' in our 'Living Library' project. She stays in a camp with all her family – husband, four children and parents. When I came back to Lorca with two of my friends to help with the preparation of food for displaced people, we went to the camp. There were only migrants and the Roma community, most of them did not have tents and they passed their days standing in the queues for water or food. I saw my friend who was crying and she told us many stories. This time I didn't feel bad anymore about staying in the same clothes for a few days. We changed our plans and instead of going to the factory to prepare food, we spent the whole day shopping, cooking the first hot meal for the people in the tents, and simply spending time with Gertrudis and her family. I was shocked how

such small things like a toothbrush or shampoo can really change a lot for someone. After this day I felt satisfied not only because we managed to help, but also because I discovered more meaning and the impact of our previous projects.

During the last few days I have seen a lot of solidarity in Lorca. Despite the fear, many people got involved in the emergency actions. I have seen over 300 people cutting tomatoes (I was one of them), making sandwiches, and packing food for a whole day; many others working in the camp, others helping to clean the streets in their neighbourhoods.

In my organisation, we had just had a co-ordination meeting to plan further actions that would target youth and migrants in the community. Right now it is time to come back to normal life and continue with our work because right now I realise how important it is and how big an impact even one person can have.



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