TÜRK KIZILAY

MIGRANT GROUPS AFFECTED BY DISASTER II

AUGUST 2023

DEPARTMENT OF MIGRATION PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION

“We would like to express our gratitude to the Community-Based Migration Programs, which contributed to the creation process of this study, and also most especially to our field staff for their outstanding efforts in the affected provinces since the first day of the earthquake.”

Prepared for publication by the Department of Migration Programme Development and Coordination
Graphic Design: Necip Eren KOÇYIĞIT

This report is published by the Turkish Red Crescent.

Turkish Red Crescent Society Publications
Ankara, Türkiye
August 2023

Cover photo: The helping hand extended to a migrant immediately after the Kahramanmaraş Earthquake.

Abbreviations

ABPRS: Address-Based Population Registration System
AFAD: Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (in Türkiye)
MoFSS: The Ministry of Family and Social Services
UN: United Nations
ERG: Education Reform Initiative
FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GIB: Presidency of Migration Management
IFRC: International Federation of Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies
INGEV: Human Development Foundation
MoNE: Ministry of National Education
MHPSS: Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
OCHA: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PSB: Presidency of Strategy and Budget of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye
SIM: Center for Social Innovation
CSO: Civil Society Organization
SNF: Special Needs Fund
TPA: Turkish Pharmacists' Association
WFP: World Food Programme

Tables

Table 1: Key basic needs in the earthquake region according to the survey participants 10
Table 2: Distribution of the needs of the disaster-affected beneficiaries of the community center for migrants 10
Table 3: Most rapidly supplied basic needs in the earthquake region according to the survey participants 12
Table 4: Change in the demands for medical supplies in community centers after the earthquake according to the survey participants 12
Table 5: Key protection risks that arose after the earthquake according to the survey participants 13
Table 6: Key vulnerabilities for migrant women in the earthquake region according to the survey participants 14
Table 7: Protection interventions received from the community center by migrants affected by the earthquake 15
Table 8: Most common external referrals from community centers for migrant beneficiaries in the earthquake region 15
Table 9: Key obstacles for migrants in earthquake regions to access means of livelihood according to the survey participants 19
Table 10: The groups with the highest psychosocial support needs in the earthquake region according to the survey participants 22
Table 11: Key healthcare needs and demands in earthquake regions according to the survey participants 25
Table 12: Key referrals of medical equipment demand in earthquake regions according to survey participants 27
Table 13: Key places where migrants in earthquake regions are faced with language barriers according to the survey participants 28

Contents

INTRODUCTION 6

1.METHODOLOGY 7

1.1. Aim of the Study 7

1.2. Scope of the Study 7

1.3. Method of the Study 8

1.4. Limitations of the Study 8

2. KEY CONCERNS 9

2.1. Shelter 9

2.2. Protection 10

2.3. Education 16

2.4. Socioeconomic Status 18

2.5. Healthcare and Psychosocial Support 21

2.6. Social Cohesion 28

3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 30

REFERENCES 33

Migrant Groups Affected by Disaster
Introduction

On 6 February 2023 Monday two large earthquakes with magnitudes of 7.8 and 7.6 occurred in Türkiye with their epicenter being in Kahramanmaraş Pazarcık (04:17) and Ekinöz (13:24). The high magnitude, the high number of affected areas, and the long duration of the earthquake resulted in significant loss of life and property.

According to the official announcements from the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD), the earthquake caused 50,096 fatalities and 107,204 injuries. As a result of the destruction caused by the earthquake ,11 provinces were declared as disaster areas (Adana, Adıyaman, Kahramanmaraş, Hatay, Malatya, Diyarbakır, Şanlıurfa, Osmaniye, Gaziantep, Kilis, Elazığ), and since February 6, 2023, these regions have been undergoing significant transformations in terms of demographics, socio-economic conditions, education, and healthcare.

The earthquake caused millions of people to lose their living spaces either destroyed or rendered unusable, to experience injuries or disabilities, to lose their livelihoods, and to face disruptions in their education. Migrant communities living in the provinces which are declared as disaster areas were also profoundly affected by these losses. Among the 16 million people affected by the earthquake, there are 1.8 million migrants.

The emergency aid appeal (FLASH APPEAL) initiated by the United Nations (UN) immediately after the earthquake, with a total value of 1 billion dollars, was concluded on May 17, 2023. This appeal received a response of 513 million dollars and reached approximately 4 million people providing basic life support (shelter, clothing, hygiene, food, sanitation, contributions in-kind, cash support etc.) (OCHA, 2023). While emergency aid support plays a crucial role in providing immediate assistance to both local and migrant communities, the need for sustainable and long-term arrangements continues.

In order to address the humanitarian needs arising after the Kahramanmaraş earthquake, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has issued an aid appeal with a total value of 350,000 Swiss Francs (CHF). The goal of this appeal was to meet humanitarian needs within one year from the time of the earthquake. Now, it has been more than 6 months since the earthquake. Under the IFRC's appeal, a total of 128,551,000 CHF has been raised through flexible and firm commitments, which corresponds to 33% of the target.

Numerous governmental and non-governmental organizations, associations, civil society organizations, and volunteer movements have carried out field support activities related to the vulnerability and mobilization of migrants affected by the earthquake. In addition to the distribution of basic vital needs such as nutrition, clothing, and heating, and other assistance activities there is also a need for medium and long-term restorative interventions. Department of Migration Programme Development and Coordination has completed the second and expanded version of the "Information Note on Migrant Groups Affected by Disaster" (the first version was published in March 2023). While the first study consists of existing concerns and emergency interventions, the second study includes assessments based on current field research and survey data, in addition to literature review.

Methodology

1.1 Aim of the Study

- The aim of the study is to clarify the current situation regarding needs and expectations of migrants, who are one of the prominent vulnerable communities in disaster areas, as well as their communication with local institutions and organizations, and advantageous and disadvantageous aspects of their status.
- In line with this aim, a survey was planned to be conducted with the personnel working in the disaster areas, along with the examination and documentation of the outputs of the activities and needs assessments conducted by other institutions and organizations, as well as newly developed local approaches.
- The goal is making use of the experience gained in the field in order to contribute to institutional memory, provide guidance for future work, and serve as a reference for stakeholder institutions and organizations.

1.2 Scope of the Study

- Within the scope of the study, it is aimed to conduct a situation analysis based on the observations and experiences of the field personnel regarding the following aspects:
- The contents of the primary basic needs of migrants affected by disaster that live in earthquake regions such as housing, clothing, and heating;
- Healthcare and psychosocial support, including emergency protection interventions and intra/inter-agency referral mechanisms for migrants who have been moved to temporary accommodation centers, tent or container camps after the disaster;
- The availability and the extend of the communication between migrants affected by disaster and local communities and institutions in disaster areas; and their ability to benefit from community centers and other local facilities;
- Communication between migrants and local communities affected by disaster, and their attitudes towards each other;
- The tendency of increase in applications for missing persons investigations, family reunification, and voluntary return after the earthquake.

1.3. Method of the Study

During the preparation process of this study three methods were followed as described below. The output of each research method is instructive and complementary to the others.

- Comprehensive Field Personnel Survey: An anonymous survey, conducted through Google Forms, was sent to personnel who were involved in field support activities. The questions of the survey covered topics related to protection, healthcare and psychosocial support interventions, access to livelihoods, voluntary return, family reunification, and changing province.
- Internal Institutional Activity Outputs: The general status of the activities carried out by the Migration Services Directorate within the scope of the disaster response is outlined. In this context, collaboration with relevant entities was undertaken.
- Literature Review: Following the Kahramanmaraş Earthquake, academic institutions, civil society organizations, government agencies, and associations published numerous field research and observation reports. Updated content from these supporting documents was included and cited as references to enrich the study.

1.4. Limitations of the Study

- The number of affected individuals and regions after the Kahramanmaraş Earthquake is quite high. Especially in the initial weeks, aid and relief supplies were directed from various regions to facilitate urgent delivery. For this reason, it was not possible for the organizations supporting disaster fieldwork to accurately track distribution numbers.
- Due to the extensive destruction and losses caused by the earthquake, there were significant evacuations in many provinces.
- Despite the significant number of reports on field observations after the earthquake published by academic, governmental, and non-governmental organizations, there is a lack of resources that provide detailed data regarding the demographic characteristics of migrants affected by disaster, their access to social assistance and livelihoods, and their migration movements.
- As there are no records of irregular migrants, data such as social assistance, travel permits, household information etc., are unavailable (For example, many migrants reside in low-standard housing without rental agreements). Consequently, these matters make it much more difficult to understand the extent of how much the earthquake affected these people.

Key Concerns

2.1. Shelter

In provinces affected by disaster, a significant number of residential and commercial buildings have been destroyed, leaving many people homeless in the aftermath of the earthquake.

The number of collapsed buildings has been recorded as

210 thousand.

In addition to this number, damaged buildings which were at risk of collapsing, though not collapsed, have also been evacuated.

The number of moderately and severely damaged buildings has been recorded as

890 thousand

Approximately 37% of all temporary and internationally protected migrants in Türkiye were residing in the earthquake region.

The significant shelter problem that emerged after the earthquake also deeply affected the migrants in disaster areas. The fact that migrants generally live in poor neighborhoods of the provinces, in neglected and cheap rental houses, has increased the extent of their losses and injuries.

After the earthquake, it was widely observed that local communities moved out of the province to stay with relatives or acquaintances or settled in rural areas. This trend was also seen in migrant communities; however, it was not as widespread as it was in the local population. Presidency of Migration Management (PMM) facilitated the movement out of the province by temporarily cancelling travel permit procedures. Finding a safe shelter for migrants who did not leave the province has been a prominent challenge.

It was widely observed among Syrian migrants living in disaster areas that they preferred voluntary return. The provinces with the highest number of voluntary returns were Hatay and Şanlıurfa, where the migrant population decreased by approximately 4.5% (Sağıroğlu, 2023). After the earthquake, voluntary return movements resulted in resettlement in safe areas in Syria.

PMM continues to carry out irregular migration interventions. Border security and procedures for preventing unauthorized migrant crossings and implementing deportation decisions continue without any interruption in provinces that are both disaster and border regions.

After the earthquake, 2.4 million people settled in official or informal temporary accommodation areas. 118,000 people were accommodated in public buildings, and 218,000 people were recorded in container cities. However, 1.5 million people still live in informal settlement areas with very low standards (UNICEF, 2023).

According to responses to the question "Is it common for migrants affected by disaster to be turned down when renting a house or to be excluded from tent areas, or any other similar situations?" directed to field personnel, 38.89% of them reported observing this situation.

Official statements made by the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change (MoEUCC) suggest that a rapid new housing arrangement will be provided in disaster areas. The Ministry announced on its official website that the construction process has started for 148,252 permanent residences, 5,731 barns, and 37,779 village houses in 11 provinces (MoEUCC, 2023). Due to damage in more than 1,000 rural areas that are distant from city centers, the process of constructing village houses and barns is crucial for re-establishing development momentum.

Temporary Accommodation Centers have provided housing opportunities for both migrants and the local population who lost their homes after the earthquake. According to July 2013 data, 65,000 Syrian nationals were accommodating in temporary accommodation centers.[1] In addition to Syrians; Ukrainians, primarily Ahıska Turks, who were displaced due to the Ukrainian Humanitarian Crisis in 2022, have also been placed in temporary accommodation centers. Temporary accommodation centers built as collective living spaces after the Syrian Humanitarian Crisis have become places that address the urgent housing needs of both the local and migrant populations after the earthquake.

[1] Number of Sryrians in Turkey https://multeciler.org.tr/turkiyedeki-suriyeli-sayisi/-

2.2. Protection

After the Kahramanmaraş earthquake, the need for not only emergency but also long-term, systematic, and comprehensive protection interventions have increased. It is essential to make the provision of basic needs such as nutrition, heating, shelter, medication and treatment, legal support, and clothing sustainable. In addition to this, vulnerable groups like women, children, migrants, and people with disabilities should be supported with multifaceted assistance to enhance their resilience and help them return to their pre-disaster routines.

Since the first day of the disaster, Turkish Red Crescent's Community-Based Migration Programs Coordination Unit has deployed 299 personnel from both disaster-affected and neighboring provinces.

Professionals with various competencies, such as social workers, clinical psychologists, child development experts, interpreters were assigned from all programs to provide support for both emergency and long-term interventions in the field. Protection assessment and intervention efforts have been prioritized.

According to the Turkish Red Crescent's case management system, earthquake survivors who have been evacuated predominantly seek assistance at Community Centers. **The provinces with the highest number of cases recorded in the system are, in order, Ankara, Istanbul, Hatay, Adıyaman, Kahramanmaraş, Bursa, Adana, İzmir, Gaziantep, Mersin, Şanlıurfa, Mardin, and Malatya.** The number of applications in Ankara and Istanbul stands out with percentages of 21.3% and 14.5% respectively, compared to other provinces.

A comprehensive observational survey was conducted with a sample consisting of personnel supporting fieldwork. The aim of the survey was to share experiences and observations of 36 individuals assigned to the disaster area regarding the needs, expectations, and current situations of the areas affected by disaster.

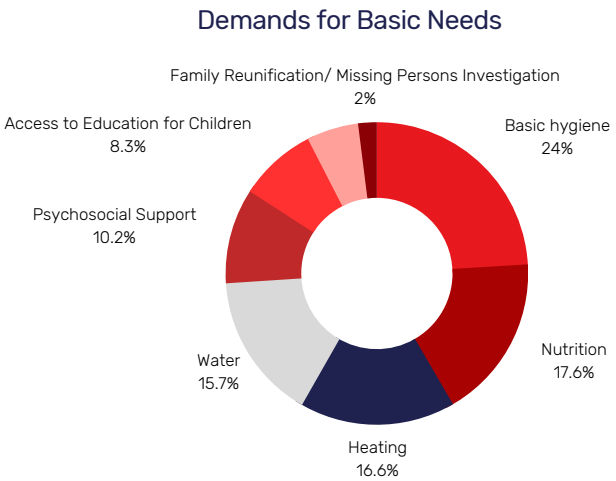


Table 1: Key basic needs in the earthquake region according to the survey participants

In addition to the field personnel survey, findings from the case management system, which records the data on the identified needs and the activities conducted in the field, were evaluated. When examining the distribution of needs identified for earthquake victims, it was observed that the request for the provision of basic needs such as nutrition and hygiene stood out significantly.

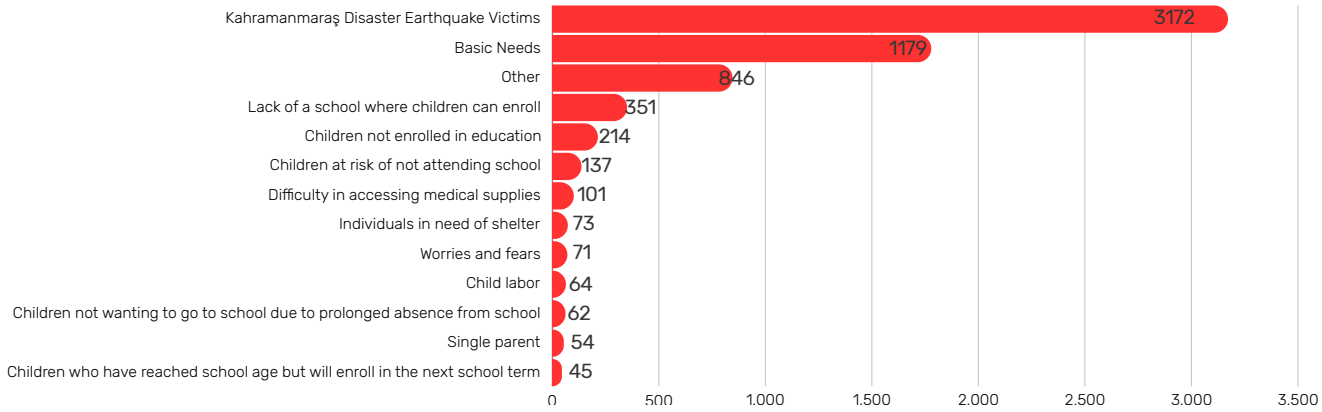
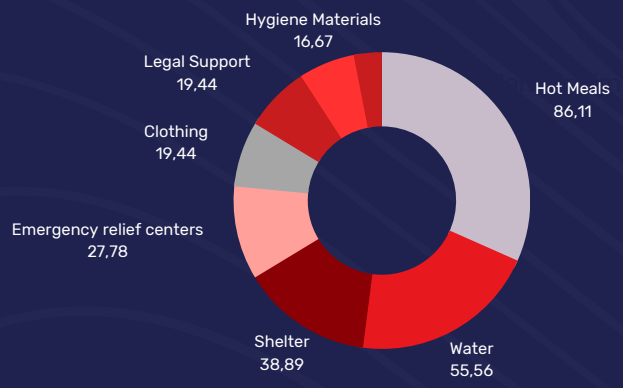


Table 2: Distribution of the needs of the disaster-affected beneficiaries of the community center for migrants

"It has been observed that the results obtained from the survey are consistent with the beneficiary records in the community center case management system."

According to fieldworkers who participated in the survey, the most common request from migrants settling in tent areas and containers has been the provision of basic hygiene materials. This has been followed by other essential needs such as nutrition, heating, and water. Additionally, due to the impact of going through a traumatic process, there has been an increased demand for psychosocial support. Ensuring the educational continuity of children affected by the earthquake, supporting the completion of relocation procedures, family reunification, and missing persons investigation have also gained importance.

"Migrants' vulnerabilities, which were already prominent before the disaster, have deepened further and their vulnerability to harm has increased after the disaster. Losing their living spaces, facing discrimination and exclusion due to increased hate speech and disinformation on social media, the need for psychosocial support to cope with the loss and grief process, the need of guidance and awareness in terms of resettlement, the damage to the buildings of the institutions they received support for official procedures, restricted mobility due to language barriers, children taking on the household income, school absenteeism, and the difficulties in tracking cases of violence and abuse especially for women and children in terms of social services, have all contributed to an increased need for protection interventions for migrants that live in disaster areas."



To understand which vital needs (such as nutrition, shelter, clothing, and heating etc.) migrants could access most rapidly, field personnel were asked questions based on their observations and experiences. The quick and mobile organization of hot meal distributions by organizations in the field, especially Turkish Red Crescent, provided access to a large number of people within a short period of time.

Table 3: Most rapidly supplied basic needs in the earthquake region according to the survey participants

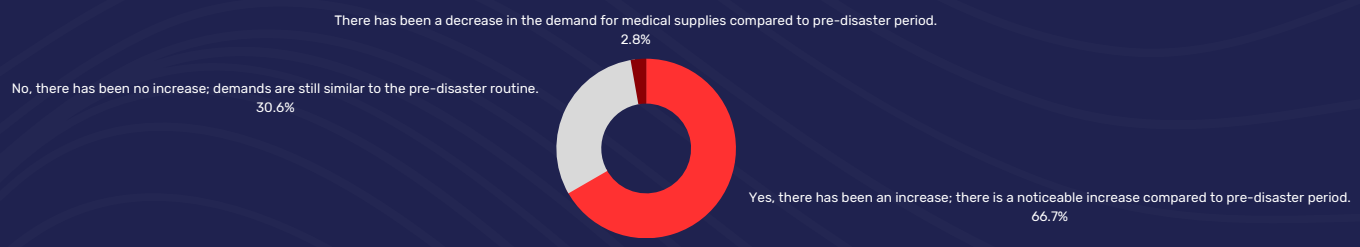


Table 4: Change in the demands for medical supplies in community centers after the earthquake according to the survey participants

Before the earthquake, one of the most active endeavors in community centers related to protection, health, and psychosocial support programs was the ones carried out within the scope of the Special Needs Fund (SNF). With this activity, medical supplies are provided to individuals in need based on their subjective requirements and specific criteria (such as a health report, socioeconomic status, current medical diagnosis etc.). Field personnel working in the affected provinces after the earthquake were asked whether there was a significant increase in demand for medical supplies. 66.67% of the personnel answered "yes, there has been an increase." Meanwhile, 30.56% of survey participants stated that there had been no increase, and it continued as in the pre-disaster routine, and 2.78% mentioned a decrease in demands. The provision of medical supplies has become crucial for a significant number of individuals who have been injured or disabled as a result of the earthquake's destruction and damage.

Key Protection Risks for Migrant Children After the Earthquake

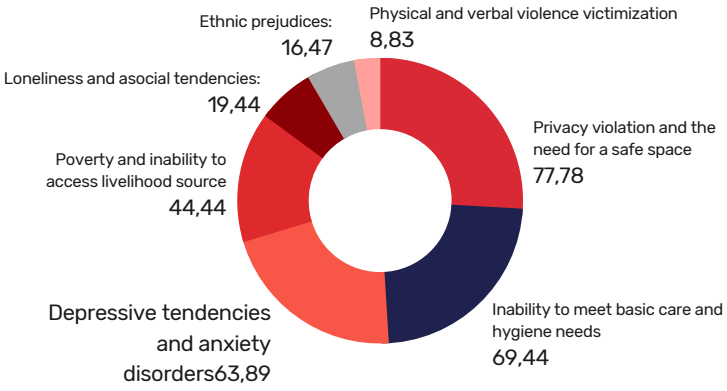


Table 5: Key protection risks that arose after the earthquake according to the survey participants

According to the field personnel survey, the most common protection risks related to migrant children are, in order, school absenteeism, post-traumatic stress disorder, lack of self-care, unmet basic nutrition needs, peer bullying, domestic violence and unrest, and a tendency towards factionalism and marginalization. Based on the observations and experiences of community center staff, multifaceted protection support should be developed for migrant children, including health and psychosocial support, self-care, nutrition, social integration, and harmony.

Women, like children, are among the most vulnerable groups in the earthquake regions. Especially single parents, those without access to livelihood, victims of violence, and women who cannot meet their self-care needs have faced a higher risk of not being able to meet even their basic needs after the earthquake.

Key Vulnerabilities for Migrant Women

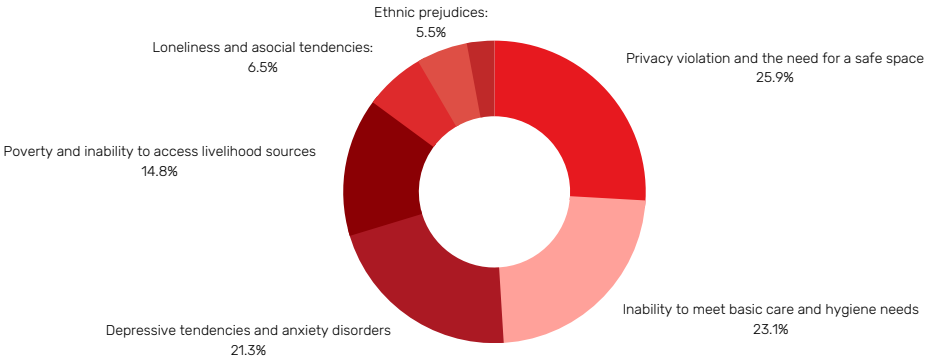


Table 6: Key vulnerabilities for migrant women in the earthquake region according to the survey participants

According to the survey conducted with field personnel assigned in earthquake areas, the most prominent risky situation for migrant women is their need for privacy and a safe space. Ensuring the privacy of women and girls in tent and container areas is of great importance. In addition, their access to basic self-care materials needs to be supported. Also, a high prevalence of depressive tendencies and anxiety disorders are widely observed.

Among the case interventions carried out within the scope of the protection services provided by the Turkish Red Crescent Community-Based Migration Programs, the ones specifically for migrants most commonly include aids in-kind, translation support, legal support, and school enrollment services in terms of frequency. The most common services provided during the period between the day of the earthquake and July are presented in the table.

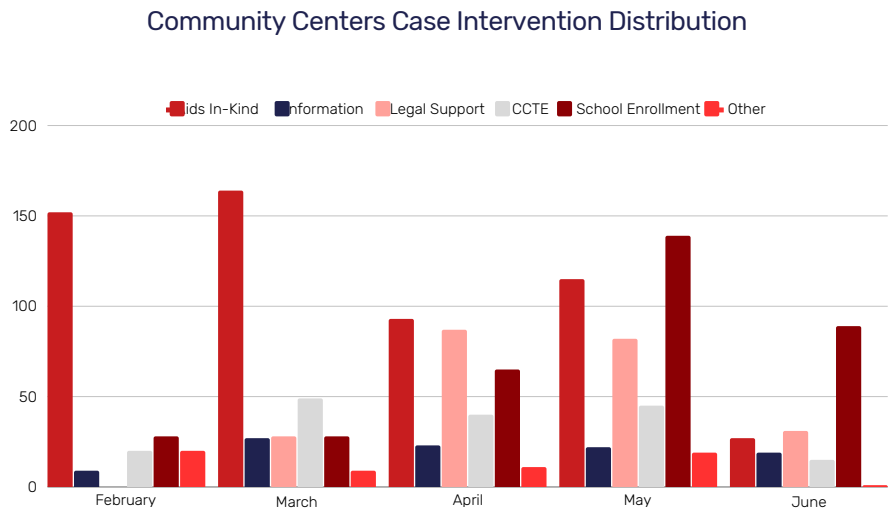


Table 7: Protection interventions received from the community center by migrants affected by the earthquake

Among the external referral topics, the following, in order of frequency, have been recorded as cash assistance, school transfer, school enrollment, non-food assistance, food aid, official procedures, psychosocial support, and identity registration or update. The distribution of case referrals in terms of content by months is presented in the table above.

According to the community center case management system, during the intervention period right after the earthquake, specifically in March and April, the most requested referrals were for non-food assistance and official procedures. In the following months, even though it was the end of the school year, there has been an observed increase in requests for school enrollment/school transfer and cash assistance. On the other hand, requests for non-food assistance, official procedures, and psychosocial support are also at a non-negligible level.

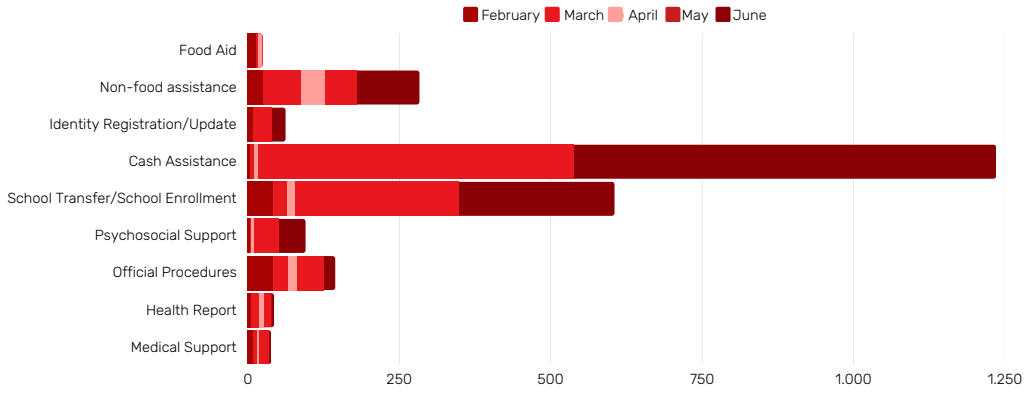


Table 8: Most common external referrals from community centers for migrant beneficiaries in the earthquake region

"It should be noted that during the emergency response period right after the earthquake, the community center case management system was not actively used due to inadequate conditions and time constraints. Therefore, it is important to note that the services provided in February and March have not been entered into the system."

2.3. Education

The continuity of education for students of secondary and higher education age in disaster areas has been disrupted after the earthquake. Factors such as loss of life and household, the collapse or unusable state of schools and other educational buildings, and the mandatory relocations have inevitably affected the continuity of education in disaster areas.

In order to ensure the sustainability of formal education for students, Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) has developed new local and national comprehensive initiatives. The first announcement made by the Ministry after the earthquake was the removal of attendance conditions to prevent students affected by the earthquake from experiencing repetition of a grade due to absenteeism. Furthermore, schools, dormitories, practice hotels, and teacherages were made available for families in need of shelter.

Out of 252,829 students who were transferred from disaster-affected provinces to other provinces in the initial phase, 94,012 students returned to their pre-earthquake provinces (MoNE, 2023). This demonstrates the importance of efforts to ensure the continuity of education in earthquake-affected provinces. According to a research conducted by Education Reform Initiative (ERG), the provinces with the highest rates of return to educational institutions are Kilis (77.9%), Adana (70.2%), and Gaziantep (68.0%).

"Increasing the access of the families of students returning to earthquake-affected provinces to housing solutions, as well as reducing the vulnerabilities in socio-economic, healthcare, and protection areas will increase the continuity of education."

After the decision by the Presidency of Migration Management to lift the travel permits for immigrants for a period of 60 days, school-age migrant children who relocated to different provinces with their families were able to register at schools in other provinces. Especially in provinces with high immigration rates such as Mersin, Kayseri, and Elazığ, the capacity of schools, both in terms of personnel and physical resources, to adapt to this significant change has become crucial. The continuity of education for immigrant children hindered by many challenges even before the earthquake such as traditional attitudes, language barriers, children undertaking the role of providing for the household, and poverty. After the earthquake, these vulnerabilities have increased and diversified. Therefore, it is important for relevant institutions and organizations to monitor the continuity of education and for field personnel to track and report on these risks.

Child-Friendly Spaces were created in the tent cities established in earthquake areas, and activities have been carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Family and Social Policies and UNICEF. In addition, Mobile Child-Friendly Spaces trucks were sent to the earthquake areas. Furthermore, Mobile PSS vehicles have been visiting especially the areas that are distant from the city centers in earthquake regions to conduct activities with children. The number of educational trainings and activities conducted within the scope of the Child Programs up till July 2023 is as follows:

Sociocultural Activities
3.539

Psychosocial Support Program Activities
1.994

Child Protection Activities
4.076

Privacy Education
1.436

Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Training
2.073

2.4. Socioeconomic Status

The socioeconomic profiles of the provinces affected by the Kahramanmaraş earthquake have undergone significant changes. Many workplaces, shops, production facilities, service centers, accommodation facilities, institutional buildings and premises were either destroyed or rendered unusable after the earthquake, leaving them idle. Additionally, the share of these provinces in the country's total exports is 8%, affecting not only the domestic but also foreign trade balances adversely. In addition to the damages to businesses, many employees lost their lives, were injured, or had to relocate.

These provinces provided livelihoods for millions of local and migrant communities due to their productive agricultural lands, agriculture-based production, livestock, and large industrial establishments. 13.3% of domestic employment was in the disaster-affected provinces (TUIK, 2021). When informal service sector workers are taken into consideration, it becomes evident that the economic losses caused by the earthquake are considerably high both at the micro and macro levels.

It is of utmost importance to construct new livelihood areas for local and migrant communities in the affected provinces, to repair damaged infrastructure and agricultural systems, to renovate or reconstruct businesses and buildings, and to focus on work permits and employment guidance for migrants.

According to a study among Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) conducted by the Human Development Foundation (INGEV) in Adıyaman and Kahramanmaraş provinces: Only 11% of the SMEs in the region have earthquake insurance; 44% of the businesses stopped working, and 45% of the work vehicles have been significantly damaged (INGEV, 2022).

SMEs are crucial for local development, and in the earthquake provinces their functioning require increased support including collaborations, funding sources, supplementary grants, mentorship, and work permit guidance.

"In the earthquake provinces, in addition to the substantial migration out of the province, unemployment, and reduced production capacity; also, many places of historical significance which increased the touristic value of the provinces were also damaged. Particularly in provinces with considerable domestic and foreign tourism movements such as Gaziantep, Hatay, Şanlıurfa, and Adıyaman, the destruction of historical touristic sites and accommodation facilities negatively impacted their livelihoods."

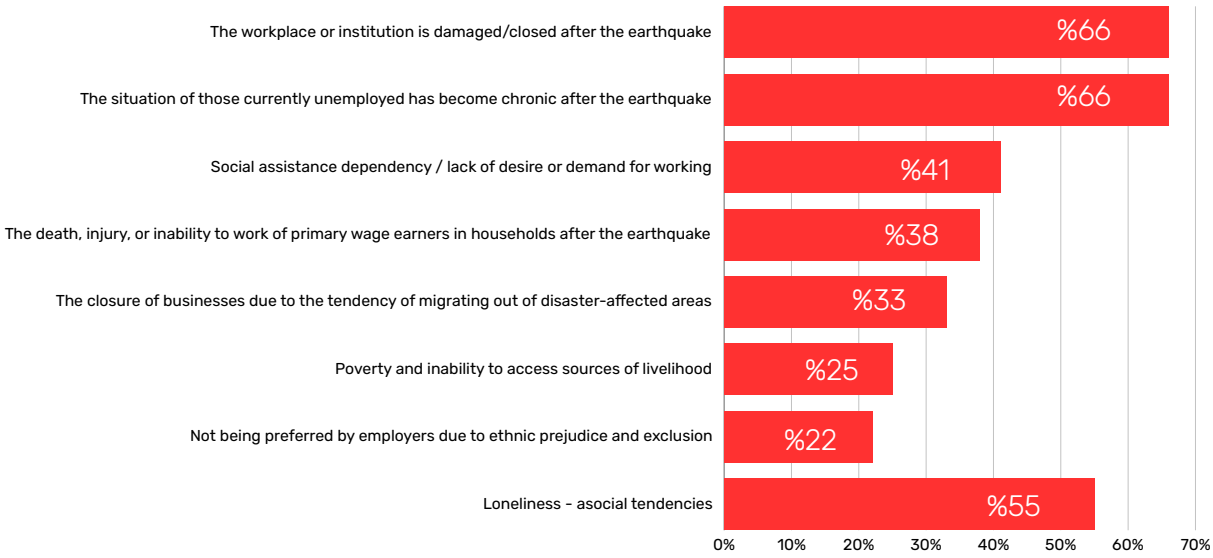


Table 9: Key obstacles for migrants in earthquake regions to access means of livelihood according to the survey participants.

"In disaster areas, employment of migrants informally or without completing their social security procedures, unreported employment of underage migrant children, especially in the service sector or in agricultural areas with low wages are very common. After the earthquake, these individuals have not only lost their jobs but also have been facing difficulties in pursuing their legal rights since they had been working without social security."

"The maintenance and repair of damaged agricultural lands and agricultural production facilities, pastures and grazing areas, and irrigation channels are important for local and macroeconomic welfare."

The key common features of disaster areas in terms of climate and location include productive agricultural lands, efficient agricultural production facilities, and irrigation systems. 20% of Türkiye's agricultural product exports were supplied by the 11 provinces in the disaster region (FAO, 2023).

In order to understand the changing trends in the means of access to livelihood for migrant communities, several questions were directed to the field personnel assigned to the affected provinces. Since it was common for migrant communities even before the earthquake to not regularly working in formal jobs, not having social security, and facing ethnic exclusion; the tendency for these situations to become chronic has increased after the earthquake. Within the scope of the Children First Project [1], whose stakeholders are UNICEF, MoFSS, and Turkish Red Crescent, it was planned to grant a one-time cash aid program for families affected by earthquakes which have children between the ages of 0-17. This one-time support payment made to families with children aims to help them pay for basic needs such as food, personal hygiene products, clothing, stationery, and transportation. The payment of 900 TL is granted to families with children which currently reside/used to reside in one of the following provinces; Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Malatya, Adıyaman, Gaziantep, Osmaniye, and Diyarbakır. The one-time cash transfer within the scope of the CHILDREN FIRST Project, totaling 110,038,500.00 TL for 122,265 households, was made on 23.06.2023.

Collective Kindness Project (BİZ) [1] by WFP (World Food Programme), Turkish Red Crescent, and IFRC was developed in April 2023 to provide cash support to the most vulnerable segments of the population affected by the earthquake to meet their basic needs. AFAD, the supporting partner of the project, has reported which households should be prioritized according to the damage status of their houses, including the ones which are collapsed or damaged; while MoFSS has reported the most vulnerable households. The cash support was provided to the local population as well as migrants twice, each amounting to 3,000 TL. The project covers the provinces which were damaged and affected by the earthquake (Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Adıyaman, Malatya, Gaziantep, Diyarbakır, Şanlıurfa, Osmaniye, Adana, Elazığ, Sivas). In August 2023, an FLA Amendment was signed between WFP and Turkish Red Crescent as a part of the project. Within this framework, WFP's project share was increased from 50% to 100%. According to the new arrangements, households that received only one of the two payments would receive 5,600 TL per household (2,600 TL + 3,000 TL), those who received both payments would receive an extra 2,600 TL per household, and those who could not receive any payments before due to accessibility issues would receive 8,600 TL per household (2,600 TL + 6,000 TL). The approximate number of beneficiary households to be assisted is determined as 117,847 (approximately 460,000 beneficiaries).

"According to the data on cash assistance granted within the scope of the ESSN, and Conditional ESSN projects which are two of the Red Crescent Card projects, it is observed that card usage rates in the provinces affected by the earthquake have either remained unchanged or increased compared to pre-earthquake period. Exceptionally, in Hatay province, Conditional ESSN Project card usage has decreased from 88% to 86.46% after the earthquake."

Healthcare and Psychosocial Support

After the Kahramanmaraş earthquake; deaths and injuries, significant damage to healthcare institutions and organizations rendering a substantial portion of them unusable, and the destruction of road and sewage infrastructure systems have exposed millions of people to severe health risks.

Access to clean water and toilets was restricted due to the destruction of electricity, water, and sewage systems in the earthquake. Although mobile support was immediately provided to collective settlements, there was still a necessity for developing systems that can meet the needs of millions of people. Earthquake survivors, unable to meet even basic hygiene and self-care needs, have become vulnerable to various infections and epidemic threats. Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) have become urgent priorities of many national and international institutions supporting post-disaster recovery efforts. Hygiene and self-care are immediate and recurring needs, both for individual and public health.

"WASH support which will be provided in the earthquake region must be not only an emergency intervention but also offered systematically in the long-term. The top priority for institutions and organizations should be the improvement of the destroyed infrastructure with a focus on restoring water, heating, and electricity systems."

The deployment of mobile healthcare and psychosocial support initiatives to regions affected by the earthquake is crucial for reaching earthquake survivors whose health and psychosocial well-being has become vulnerable. It is inevitable for earthquake survivors to experience trauma witnessing the loss of lives, injuries, destruction, and the devastation of living spaces not only themselves but also in their close community. It is particularly essential to prevent the lasting physical and mental health impacts of these experiences on children.

"Approximately 46% of Syrian nationals in provinces affected by the earthquake are between the ages of 0-17 (ABPRS, 2022). This indicates that almost half of migrant children are of primary school age. These children need to continue their education either in the provinces affected by the earthquake or in new settlement areas. It is important to develop social service mechanisms to address increased risks for children (undertaking the role of providing for the household, early marriage, neglect and abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, marginalization etc.). Therefore, it is important for the representatives of institutions and organizations to provide systematic and long-term support through observation reports, case tracking, risk reporting and follow-up by the MoNE and MoFSS, as well as translation and accompaniment."

After the Kahramanmaraş earthquake, ministries and affiliated institutions, notably the Ministry of Health, provided mobile healthcare vehicles, personnel, medical supplies, social workers, child development and mental health experts, and volunteers to regions affected by the earthquake. Considering the magnitude of the earthquake and the number of affected provinces, the needs in healthcare and psychosocial support are remarkably high. Government agencies and non-governmental institutions, associations, universities, professional chambers, and many entities organized fieldwork earthquake regions for social services, psychosocial support, medical screenings, and primary healthcare services. In addition to these, many government institutions and civil society organizations and faculties of health sciences of universities launched free remote psychosocial support hotlines.

Groups with the Highest Need for Psychosocial Support

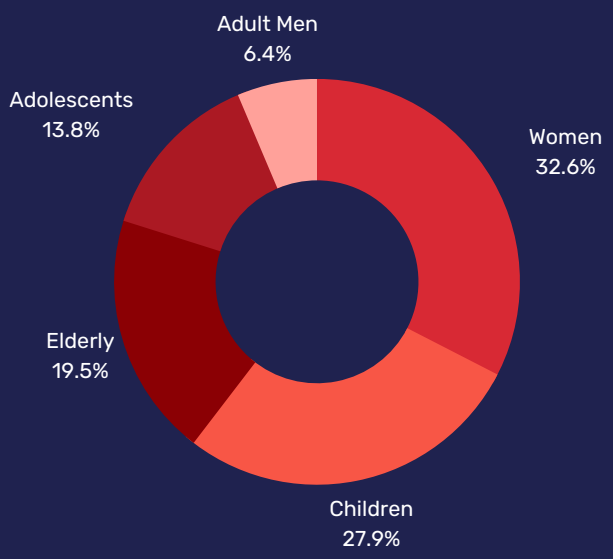


Table 10: The groups with the highest psychosocial support needs in the earthquake region according to the survey participants

In a survey conducted with 36 community center staff working in provinces affected by the earthquake, according to the observations and experiences of the personnel, it is observed that almost half of the groups requiring psychosocial support are women and children. It is evident that the elderly and adult men, generally overlooked, but are also among the groups that need post-trauma support.

Turkish Red Crescent has coordinated mobile health support for local and migrant communities in cooperation with the Turkish Ministry of Health. 5 healthcare vehicles of Turkish Red Crescent have been providing primary healthcare services in 41 regions. 30 health personnel have been assigned to conduct field needs assessments while providing medical screenings in tent areas and rural regions. In coordination with the Ministry, 60,000 medicines have been distributed.

Turkish Red Crescent is also conducting comprehensive psychosocial support activities in provinces affected by the earthquake as well as in those that have received a high number of migrants. Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) tent areas have been established in 7 locations. In addition to MHPSS tents, 7 child-friendly spaces, 2 mobile mental health vehicles, 2 mobile counseling units, 788 service points, and a team of around 200 personnel and volunteers specializing in mental health and psychosocial support have been activated in the field. When providing services to local and migrant communities in the earthquake region, key concerns have been taken into account. Interpreters have been included in order to overcome language barriers so that migrant communities can also have access to psychosocial support.

Aside from the traumatic effects of the earthquake, risky situations have emerged in collective settlements such as violation of privacy, security threats, vulnerability to violence, and abuse.

To fight against these situations, especially against those that increase the vulnerability of women and children; it is important to provide social service interventions, accessible support hotlines and counseling offices, translation support in informing migrants and to raise awareness of privacy and security. In order to ensure the rapid and effective provision of relevant support, it is necessary to expand the reach and increase the visibility of support hotlines, mobile applications, and web sites. Migrants affected by the earthquake need to be informed about the various means of accessing these services in various language options.

"Turkish Red Crescent Community-Based Migration Programs have been actively reaching out to local and migrant communities through community center personnel in provinces affected by the earthquake. Since the first day of the earthquake, disaster response efforts have been ongoing through community center personnel not only those assigned in provinces affected by the earthquake but also transfer of those working in other provinces. In light of the experiences of the community center personnel already working with migrants, services such as regular case detection and intervention, healthcare and psychosocial support, and educational continuity are being carried out with the assistance of assigned interpreters. 20 personnel have been assigned to provide translation assistance in facilitating access to protection and psychosocial support for migrants in provinces affected by disaster. Provision of healthcare and psychosocial support, protection interventions, counseling, and referral services to migrant communities have gained momentum with the support of competent interpreters."

In the Kahramanmaraş earthquake 107,204 people were injured (AFAD, 2023). After the earthquake, there were many survivors who became temporarily or chronically disabled, requiring immediate dialysis or physical therapy. After initial first aid interventions, it was crucial to rapidly provide them with medical supplies, medication, inpatient treatment, dialysis, and access to physical therapy centers. After the earthquake 42 public, private, and university hospitals were severely or moderately damaged (PSB, 2023). Domestic and international field hospitals, medical intervention units set up around tent cities, and blood donation centers were established to provide access to the communities that required urgent assistance. However, even this extensive network still couldn't meet the magnitude of the need; thus, the number of out-of-province referrals increased. For example, in Hatay province, two fully equipped hospitals were destroyed, and a significant portion of the others was too damaged to be used.

In the areas affected by the Kahramanmaraş earthquake, along with the surrounding regions, there has been a significant presence of CSOs due to the ongoing migration movements from Syria for the past 10 years. These organizations' knowledge of the vulnerable communities in the areas where they operate and their familiarity with the field dynamics have facilitated the distribution of aids and needs assessment processes after the earthquake (SIM, 2023). Preparations have been made to facilitate referrals and transfers from the provinces affected by the earthquake not only at the nearby hospitals but also for all full-fledged hospitals across the country. In total, 26 field hospitals and mobile pharmacies have been established in the provinces affected by disaster (TPA, 2023).

Table 11: Key healthcare needs and demands in earthquake regions according to the survey participants

"Migrants living in provinces affected by the earthquake can proceed with hospital referrals and transfers with their identity numbers. The convenience to receive free treatment and medication from state hospitals, benefit from various organizations' medical supply support, and receive assistance, translation, and guidance from community centers and similar organizations in the field by just using their temporary protection IDs have facilitated migrants' access to healthcare. On the other hand, many migrants, who need physical therapy and does not have a regular income due to the earthquake, have been experiencing distress since they do not have free access to physical therapy."

The demand for access to healthcare services by migrants in the provinces affected by disaster has increased significantly. The most prominent need is meeting the basic care and nutrition needs for infants. Furthermore, the magnitude of the need for medication and medical supply support underscores the importance of mobile pharmacies and mobile healthcare centers. The need for hospital appointments and out-of-province referrals has increased, highlighting the importance of facilitating immigrants' access to healthcare and official registration processes. Services such as individual consultations, case follow-up and referrals, child-friendly spaces, and education provided by Turkish Red Crescent and other governmental and non-governmental organizations, with the support of numerous social workers, psychologists, child development experts, and pedagogues, and other competent professionals are crucially important in overcoming this traumatic process.

Turkish Red Crescent Community Centers in earthquake regions primarily focus on medical needs through case referrals, with the main components being field distribution points, inter-organizational and intra-organizational referrals, and SNF requests. Based on the responses provided in the survey, it is evident that the information flow and interaction between Turkish Red Crescent staff and other organizations in the field is very important.

The Turkish Red Crescent Directorate of Social Services and Community-Based Migration Programs Coordination Unit have collaborated with staff and volunteers to address the needs in the 10 provinces affected by the earthquake. Within the scope of this collaboration, various support services have been actively provided to over 164,000 individuals e.g. individual consultations, group activities, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), Psychological First Aid, Educational Trainings and Seminars.

Initial Referrals for Medical Supplies, Medication, and Medical Care Requests

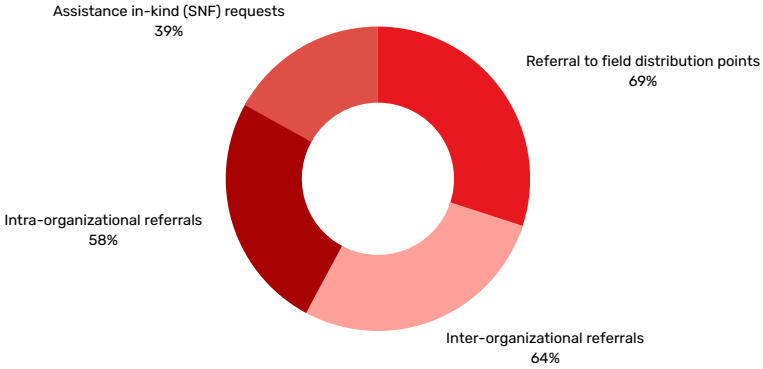
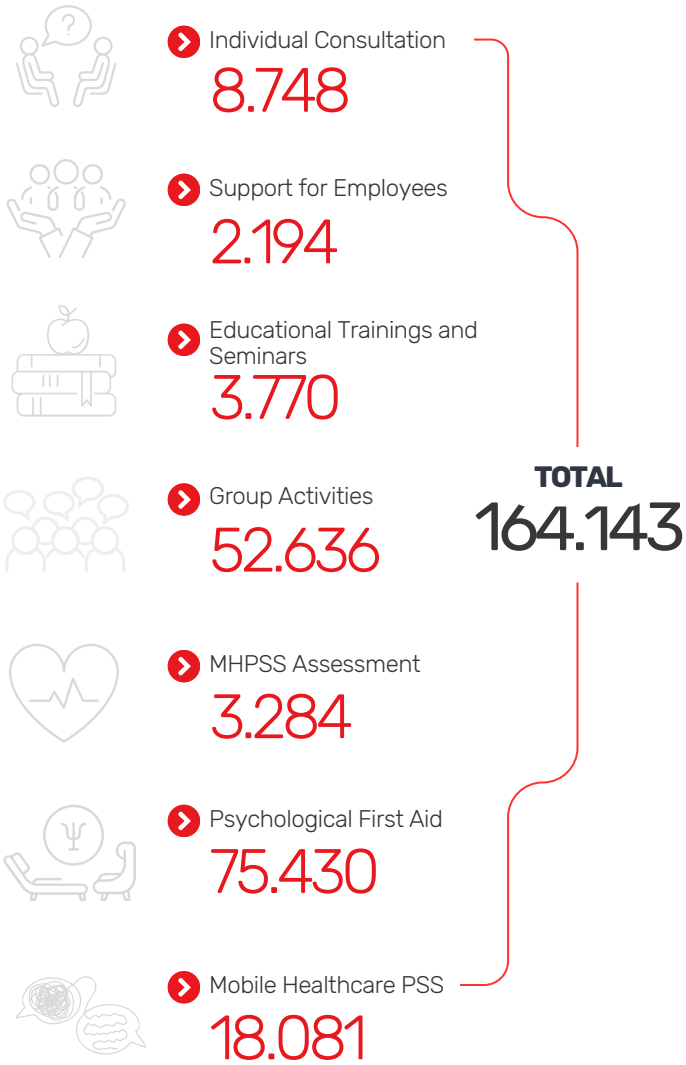


Table 12: Key referrals of medical equipment demand in earthquake regions according to survey participants



2.6. Social Cohesion

The provinces affected by the Kahramanmaraş earthquake have a dense population of migrants, the majority of whom are Syrian nationals. 1.8 million of those affected by the earthquake are migrants. This situation indicates that approximately the same number of migrants as the population of a major city have been affected by the earthquake, just like the local community. The earthquake amplified already heightened vulnerability risks that migrants face in various ways by causing damage to their homes due to the low standard housing conditions of migrants in the provinces affected by disaster, high fatality and injury rates, and the destruction of most of the survivors' homes and businesses.

Considering that 6,500 Syrian nationals lost their lives in the earthquake and approximately 36,000 people have returned to their home countries, it is plausible to suggest that a transformative process has begun for the demographic and social structure of migrants in Türkiye.

Disinformation and false news circulating especially on social media have led migrants to face negative experiences in both collective settlements in provinces affected by disaster and in new settlement areas. Due to the disinformation, even meeting their basic vital needs such as renting houses, settling in, and creating safe areas especially for women and children, have become more challenging. The Ministry of the Interior has announced that in order to combat exorbitant rent increases in housing that occurred after the earthquake, illegal rent increases can be reported to all kinds of hotlines and also to law enforcement agencies [1].

According to the responses to the question posed to the fieldworker survey participants, "Have you observed an increase in factionalism, prejudice, and ill-communication between migrant communities and the local population in the disaster area?" 36% of the participants stated that they observed such a vulnerability. Despite the highest percentage has stated observing such a vulnerability, 27.78% also stated that it was not widespread or only partially observed. This situation indicates that marginalization, exclusion, and prejudice tendencies among the local population and migrant communities may differ between settlement areas. For the purpose of observing the social integration and solidarity in areas where local and migrant communities coexist, it is imperative to not only undertake general analyses but also develop region-specific assessments.

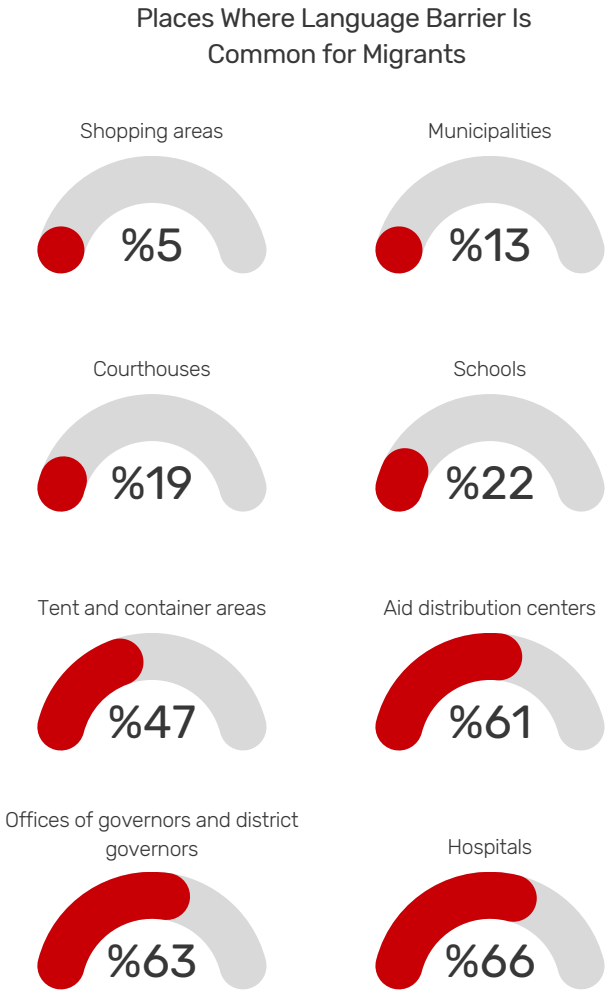


Table 13: Key places where migrants in earthquake regions are faced with language barriers according to the survey participants

"Migrants, who are evacuated from their current provinces to other provinces, need to meet their basic needs by learning about the locations of institutions and organizations (healthcare facilities, schools, PMM, associations, CSOs, municipalities etc.) and revenue-generating job opportunities, establishing social connections, and continuing any follow-up treatments in their new living areas. Syrian migrants affected by the earthquake, who had already been forced to leave their home countries following the post-war situations, recently faced a second major involuntary displacement. This experience has been psychologically, economically, and socially challenging for them. In addition to this, the spread of unfounded rumors on social media (migrants are prioritized while providing accommodation and social aid, in-kind and financial assistance is exclusively provided to migrants, looting, theft etc.) has contributed to an exclusionary and hostile attitude towards them. Other groups of migrants, such as those from Afghanistan and Pakistan, who are under international protection, also live in these precarious circumstances although not to the same extent as Syrians."

Conclusions And Recommendations

- It is imperative that the provision of basic needs such as medical care, heating, shelter, clothing, and nutrition, which have arisen in the aftermath of the Kahramanmaraş earthquake and necessitated urgent intervention, to be sustained systematically in the long-term. These needs constantly renew and increase over time. Therefore, the funds and support provided for post-earthquake recovery and interventions should be sustained, even updated, to adapt to the current situation.

- When providing funds and support, due consideration should be given to the distinctive attributes of each province. Factors that contributed to their socioeconomic profile before the earthquake (livestock, tourism, agricultural production, handicrafts, gastronomy etc.) should be considered, and revitalization should be aimed through utilizing the geographical and cultural capacity. To achieve this, separate field analyses and needs assessments should be conducted and negotiations for local cooperation should be initiated for each province.

- As many workplaces and production facilities, especially those in the production and service sectors, were destroyed or damaged, a significant number of migrants lost their sources of livelihood. Due to the widespread practice of employing migrants in informal and low-wage labor, there are no reports or information available regarding social security and labor rights. Therefore, it is crucial to monitor the employment procedures ensuring migrants' secure employment with work permits while rebuilding the provinces affected by the earthquake.

- The reconstruction process for damaged rural land, pastures, barns, and houses has already been initiated by the Turkish Ministry of Environment and Urbanization. It is of utmost importance to enhance the support for rural development, and to expand grants and loans related to irrigation and feeding channels, agriculture, and animal husbandry. The revitalization of damaged local cooperatives and the establishment of new cooperative initiatives involving migrants and local communities should be further supported.

- In order to support the livelihoods of individuals transitioning to a new settled life after the earthquake, regular income-generating job opportunities should be created, and vocational training programs should be provided for unemployed youth and adults. Providing mobile education support programs tailored to individuals' interests and characteristics can enhance their effectiveness.

- It is imperative to ensure the provision of long-term housing that conforms to safety and health standards for earthquake survivors, including both migrants and the local population. New constructions should meet legal regulations and awareness campaigns should be conducted to inform residents about these standards.

- Due to the influx of migration to other provinces in the country, the rapid increase in rent and property prices has made solving housing problems more challenging. The Turkish Ministry of Interior Affairs has activated law enforcement and complaint hotlines for imposing penalties and sanctions on uncontrolled price increases. Raising awareness among migrants about the legal mechanisms they can access for addressing excessive rent and purchase price hikes is important.

- Children's mental and physical health has become highly vulnerable in terms of dealing with the earthquake and the subsequent traumatic process. Along with a sudden disruption of their school, home, neighborhood routines, children also faced with death and losses. Some migrant children remember the war and forced migration period, therefore this makes the post-earthquake involuntary displacement process particularly traumatic for them. For children, interventions led by competent social workers, child development experts, psychologists, and medical professionals to ensure protection should be maintained.

- It is conceivable that challenges that are prevalent among migrant children during ordinary circumstances, such as early marriages, undocumented employment, and absenteeism from school, may exacerbate following the earthquake. Detailed field surveys should be conducted to identify vulnerable situations, such as children leaving their education to support the family, neglect of their basic needs, and early marriages, and to develop urgent interventions when such vulnerability risks are identified. In instances where children are identified to be in vulnerable conditions, formal reports should be submitted to the relevant authorities, notably MoFSS.

- Tendencies towards group formation and marginalization have increased among the youth of local and migrant communities. This situation may fuel tendencies towards violence or asocial behavior. Social responsibility projects that bring groups together for common goals and results, as well as recreational activities, therapeutic and counseling groups, should be established to address this issue.

- After the earthquake, women are the most vulnerable group among the migrants. Observations have shown that an increase in women's economic and social dependence has reduced their chances of accessing support services in cases of violence, pressure, and abuse. It is important that institutions and organizations that have on-site psychosocial support, and protection teams should create therapy and support groups for women. They should also increase the availability of support hotlines in multiple languages, ensure regular access to personal care and hygiene needs, and facilitate referrals to healthcare facilities.

- Women and girls staying in collective settlement areas are reported to be vulnerable in terms of privacy and security. Especially in tent areas, enhancing security and monitoring, as well as increasing social work and child protection interventions, are necessary. As access to essential hygiene and personal care products becomes more challenging, the risk of infectious diseases increases. This situation should be taken into consideration while distributing kits and products. Promoting awareness about privacy and personal boundaries, both among parents and children, would be beneficial.

- Systematic and long-term distribution of medical supplies to disabled and bedridden individuals is crucial. The identification and follow-up of medical supply needs in remote districts and villages should be conducted. Organizations providing support should ensure and maintain the systematic provision of medical supplies that need to be renewed at specified intervals, such as adult diapers, orthopedic boots, and hearing aids without neglecting this aspect.

- Elderly people living in tent areas and containers have high healthcare needs. Protection interventions should be increased for the elderly who have chronic illnesses, require regular medication or treatment support, and have limited physical mobility. Prioritizing services like transportation, access to physiotherapy and rehabilitation, vaccination against infectious diseases, and hygiene products should be prioritized for the elderly.

- The rate of voluntary return among migrants has increased after the earthquake. Campaigns aimed at raising awareness among migrants who seek to utilize the nationally supported voluntary return programs, which include in-kind and financial assistance, should be extended. Support may be provided for awareness-raising endeavors through the distribution of brochures, announcement materials, seminars, and information dissemination in multiple language options.

- In order to ensure that vulnerabilities and needs in remote districts and villages are not overlooked, it is essential to establish mobile support mechanisms and mobile assistance/intervention points in those areas. It is important to provide support for facilitating transportation of individuals in remote areas who require assistance for reasons such as official documentation procedures, access to healthcare, education, and employment.

- Efforts should be made to combat false or misleading news targeting migrants that rapidly spread on social media channels. Widespread, generalized news that accuses migrants of looting, theft, involvement in crimes, and not allowing anyone into tent areas has led to the development of an exclusionary attitude towards migrants. As a consequence of this attitude, migrants who relocated to other cities following earthquake have encountered challenges, including challenges related to rent houses, social marginalization, and exposure to hate speech. To address this situation which exacerbates factionalism and inclinations towards violence between the local community and migrants, it is imperative to provide information on the channels for reporting the sources that disseminate the false information. Institutions and organizations in the field should refrain from sharing information unless they are verified by official sources in order to prevent such disinformation.

- Six months after the Kahramanmaraş earthquake, due to the magnitude and impact, communities are still vulnerable and require multi-faceted interventions. The projects and practices carried out in the earthquake regions show that it is essential to develop local capacity, create opportunities to improve the well-being of individuals affected by disaster and help them establish daily routines. The collaboration among institutions and organizations that are active in the field is very important in terms of time and resource management.

References

- Youth Deal Cooperative (March, 2023). Quick Assessment Report: To What Extent Were Cooperatives Affected from the February 6th Kahramanmaraş Earthquakes?" https://gencisi.org/kahramanmaras-depremlerinden-kooperatifler-nasil-etkilendi/
- Human Development and Sustainable Development: Local Governments https://ingev.org/raporlar/IGE-SKA-YerelYonetimler-Rapor-2022.pdf
- Impacts of the Earthquakes in Kahramanmaraş on February 6, 2023 - Information Note - 2nd Education Reform Initiative https://www.egitimreformugirisimi.org/kahramanmaras-merkezli-depremlerin-egitime-etkileri-bilginotu-2
- MSF (Médecins Sans Frontières) (June, 2023). People's needs stack up months after earthquake in Türkiye. https://reliefweb.int/report/turkiye/peoples-needs-stack-months-after-earthquake-turkiye-entr
- OCHA (May, 2023). Today's top news: Myanmar, Ethiopia, Sudan, Syria and Türkiye. Accessed on: July 12, 2023 https://www.unocha.org/story/todays-top-news-myanmar-ethiopia-sudan-syria-and-t%C3%BCrkiye
- Türkiye Earthquake Situation Report #4 https://turkiye.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/turkiye_tr_sitrep4.pdf
- UNICEF (May, 2023). UNICEF Türkiye Humanitarian Situation Report No. 13 (Earthquake) 11 - 18 May 2023. UNICEF Publications . https://reliefweb.int/report/turkiye/unicef-turkiye humanitariansituation-report-no-13-earthquake11-18-may-2023
- UN WOMEN (May, 2023). THE IMPACT OF THE EARTHQUAKES IN TÜRKİYE: PERSPECTIVES OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS WORKING FOR THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS .https://eca.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-05/Her%20Aftermath_26052023-1.pdf
- Report on Kahramanmaraş and Hatay Earthquakes https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2023-Kahramanmaras-ve-Hatay-Depremleri-Raporu.pdf

Web Sites

Ministry of Interior Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD), Republic of Türkiye - https://www.afad.gov.tr/
Ministry of Interior, Republic of Türkiye - https://www.icisleri.gov.tr/
Presidency of Migration Management (PMM) - https://www.goc.gov.tr/
Ministry of National Education, Republic of Türkiye - https://www.meb.gov.tr/
Presidency of Strategy and Budget of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye (PSB) - https://www.sbb.gov.tr/
Turkish Red Crescent - https://www.kizilay.org.tr/
Kızılaykart Cash Based Assistance Programmes - https://kizilaykart.org/
Reliefweb - https://reliefweb.int/
The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies GO Platform - https://go.ifrc.org/emergencies/6345
OCHA - https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/1150/summary

TÜRK KIZILAY

MIGRANT GROUPS AFFECTED BY DISASTER II

AUGUST 2023

DEPARTMENT OF MIGRATION PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION