



YOUTH ACTIVITIES

A MODEL FOR POST-DISASTER
INTERVENTION



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Young Lives Foundation has been working since 2008 for the 11-18 age group's access to education and active participation in life, with no discrimination whatsoever. Following the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes of 6 February 2023, the Foundation embarked on disaster intervention activities with its professional team immediately. During the year after the earthquakes, the Young Lives Foundation has used its disaster intervention experience, as well as experiences in training, development of livelihood and employability skills, protection, child protection and social adaptation, in providing support to disaster victims in Hatay, Adıyaman and Diyarbakır provinces and in İstanbul, İzmir and Sakarya provinces where earthquake victims migrated.

Until now, the Young Lives Foundation has published two reports regarding the earthquake based on field observation¹. This report, entitled 'Youth Activities: A Model for Post-Disaster Intervention' is about the Foundation's activities during this last year related to children, adolescents and young adults, who constitute its primary focus. It consists of the data derived from the Post-Disaster Experiences and Opinions of Adolescents and Young Adults research conducted with 1638 adolescents and young adults in addition to the activities of this past year, observation notes, future projects and proposals. The said proposals have been prepared in the light of the Foundation's activities and experience and observations of the field team who are well-acquainted with the local culture and are for the benefit of the civil society institutions, public and private sectors and academia. The Foundation's activities and proposals are needs-based, sustainable and in conformity with the conditions determined by the prevailing culture, the period and the epoch. The Foundation is currently carrying on a model activity with the children, adolescents and young adults as the primary focus, in order to improve the efficiency of its medium and long-term work.

The earthquakes have created great sorrow and despair all over Turkey, yet after the initial six months, the subject has lost its prominent position on the country's agenda. The Young Lives Foundation is aware that the economic, social and administrative consequences of the earthquakes have had a profound effect on the country as a whole and continues to work with a holistic and collaborative approach, cognizant of the significance of meeting the still existing basic needs in the disaster region, provision of psychological and emotional support and reverting to the routines for the continuation of post-disaster healing.

The model developed by the Young Lives Foundation constitutes the focus of this report and aims to provide a holistic support to adolescents and young adults during the post-disaster times. It focuses on access to basic necessities, access to education and social participation. Its primary goal is to ensure young adults' access to safe accommodation, healthy nutrition, clean water and basic medical services, thus contributing to their physical and psychological wellbeing. Secondly, it ensures the uninterrupted continuation of education processes and access to quality education, thus contributing to the cognitive and social development of the young adults. Finally, it aims to encourage them to adopt active roles in the society and develop their social skills through activities and programs motivating social participation. The aim of this model is to ensure the post-disaster social integration of adolescents and young adults as more active and resilient individuals, thus improving the general resilience and sustainability of the society.

¹ Depreme Yönelik Acil Durum Müdahalesi Raporu - Kahramanmaraş Depremleri (06-26.02.2023): https://genchayat.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/GHV_report_eng-1.pdf
Afet Çalışmaları Raporu II - Kahramanmaraş Depremleri (06.02-01.05.2023): <https://genchayat.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/DISASTER-RELIEF-REPORT-II.pdf>

2. INTRODUCTION

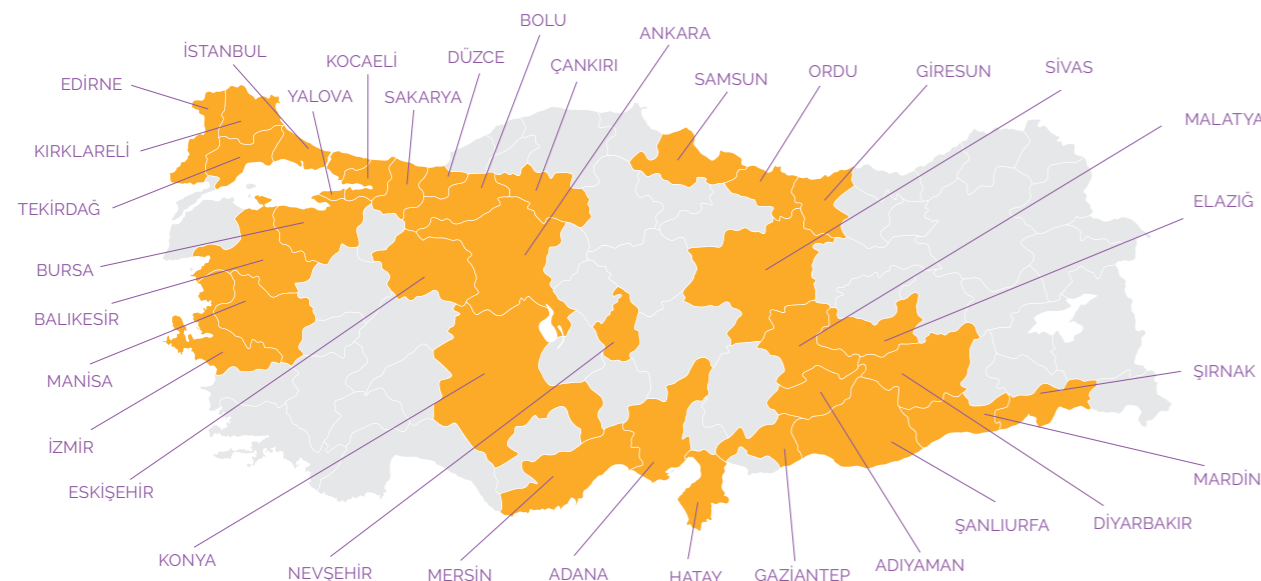
2008 - 2023

65.000+
children and young adults

33
provinces

25+
projects

4
researches



The Young Lives Foundation has been active since 2008, supporting the access to education, participation in life and psychosocial wellbeing of children and adolescents in the 11-18 age group, with a people-oriented approach and without any discrimination whatsoever. Adolescence is a challenging period of rapid physical, cognitive, psychological and social change and development during which intense and complicated emotions are experienced. Experiencing a traumatic event such as earthquake and being exposed to post-disaster hardships in addition to these challenges inherent to adolescence have a much more destructive impact on this age group. While planning its post-disaster activities, the Young Lives Foundation adopts an 'adolescent-centered approach', engaging in preventive and intervention activities which contribute to the adolescents' psychosocial wellbeing and increase their psychological resilience and coping skills.

The Young Lives Foundation has adopted a holistic approach in all its activities, having the children and young adults as its primary focus and involving all related groups in the said activities. The Foundation's objective of helping the children and young adults to discover their true potential, and supporting their access to education and active participation in life as well as all its activities in the disaster region reflect this holistic approach.

The urgent/acute interventions, determining and meeting the changing needs, trainings, the Community Centers and support for the field team's wellbeing correspond to the Foundation's rights-based perspective and holistic approach.

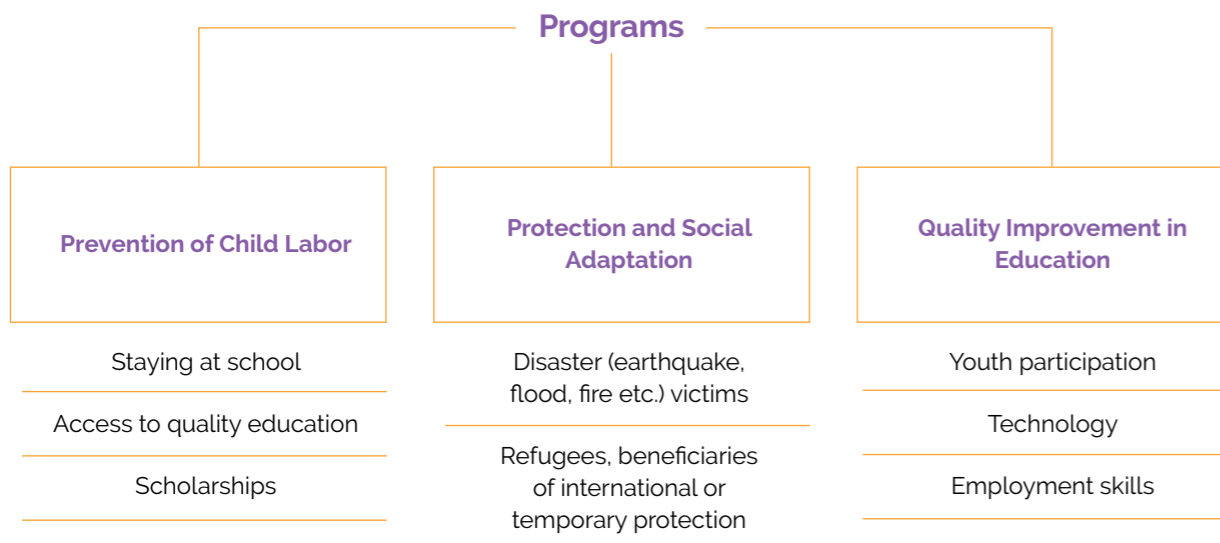
The Young Lives Foundation's model activities related to adolescents and young adults are based on three fundamental elements, namely access to basic necessities, access to education and social participation.

This model encompasses all activities undertaken after the earthquakes of 6 February 2023. This report aims to focus on the topic of access to education in Adiyaman and Hatay and present a detailed analysis of the current state of education in the said region. In this context, it is a significant point of reference that a primary priority of Young Lives Foundation is access to and participation in education. The content of this section of the Report consists of our fieldwork in and the data obtained from the two above-mentioned regions, and thus exhibits in detail the comprehensive scope of the Foundation's activities and the positive impact thereof on education.

Adiyaman

“A 16 year-old highschool student we contacted today told us he wanted to quit school and become a crane operator.”

“It is better for my child not to go to school at all rather than having to use these roads to go.”



1. In Adiyaman, there are 749 school buildings, 460 transitory learning spaces, 5 transitory school buildings, 28 prefabricated schools and 24 classrooms, hosting 18,086 preschool, 50,450 primary school, 48,724 junior highschool and 63,272 highschool students, totaling 180,532. 413 of the 804 school buildings have suffered damages, and 55 are beyond repair.
2. Double-session teaching has been adopted, but the classes are still too crowded. This contributes to a lack of willingness to go to school among the students.
3. Regarding access to education, schoolbus and transportation problems are being experienced. Transported education accounts for approximately 70 % of education overall, and 100 % of highschool education. Schools are far away and parents don't want their children to travel far; they are particularly anxious about the increase in traffic accidents due to the condition of the roads damaged by the earthquake. Also, both the students and their families are still concerned about the safety of the school buildings, although these fears have been alleviated somehow with the passage of time.
4. Child labor is a significant issue, particularly regarding the refugee children who are involved in risky activities such as waste paper and scrap metal collecting.

5. Approximately 80 % of students are experiencing a decrease in their motivation to go to school, as a result of having to change their schools. A change of school means a change of teachers, friends and peer groups. It has been observed that many students are having trouble getting used to their new teacher and are finding it hard to form new friendships.
6. Vulnerable children such as refugee children and children with special needs are facing serious obstacles in accessing education, particularly with respect to physical conditions and social adaptation issues.
7. Children and adolescents experience despair as a result of the earthquakes, while the psychosocial support sessions are having a positive impact.

Hatay

“The young adult who spent the last evening before the earthquake with his friends and whose friends died in the earthquake does not want to go to school any more.”

“The student who said they studied hard for the highschool entrance examinations and earned the right to register at a high-quality highschool, yet that school was heavily damaged by the disaster and is therefore attending another school thinks all their efforts have been in vain and so does not want to go to school.”

1. 636 of the 1,315 schools in Hatay have not suffered any damages, and repair work in the damaged school buildings is continued. Education is also continued in some prefabricated schools and classrooms in container cities, yet a learning space deficiency is observed in some districts.
2. In the districts with too few schools, the classes are overcrowded, with the number of students averaging twice the capacity. Double-session teaching is adopted as a remedy. There was a significant migration to the districts which suffered less earthquake damage. This led to an increase in the student population in these districts, and the schools fail to respond adequately to this increased demand.
3. Access to education varies between regions, it is said that school facilities are restricted and transportation services are insufficient.
4. Undesired situations such as bullying, exclusion and conflicts are witnessed in schools where children under temporary protection are together with children of the local population.
5. The fact that the children can't get used to their new teachers and friends, and their memories of their friends and of the earthquake make the process of going back to school harder.
6. Parents also have concerns about their children going to school. They believe that school buildings are not strong enough and don't want their children to go to school. The continuing aftershocks keep the fears of going into school buildings alive.
7. Child labor has increased in the earthquake region. It is observed that children are joining the workforce to support their families, that the demand for day jobs with no social security has increased and that adolescents aged 13-18 are working in scrap collection and construction.
8. Due to post-disaster accommodation conditions, children are not able to have private space or a space to study. This has a negative impact on their motivation and academic achievement.
9. Especially highschool students with high motivation for continuing their education want to be better educated so that they can attain a certain level in life in order to support their families.

3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our Dear Supporters, Sponsors and Partners,

We, the Young Lives Foundation would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to you, our esteemed individual and corporate supporters, national and international sponsors, and also to the public institutions with whom we have collaborated for your contribution to our projects aiming to meet the needs of our young people during the recent earthquake and post-disaster period.

Your extraordinary support and contributions during these difficult days are extremely significant as they contribute to the hopefulness and resilience of our young people who constitute the most vulnerable section of our society. The material and moral support of each and every one of you has played a crucial role in alleviating the damage of the disaster and in helping our young adults to reconstruct their lives.

Our individual supporters; the contribution of each and every one of you has been a vivid example of our society's solidarity during this difficult period. Your compassionate contributions have directly supported our Foundation's activities and the assistance provided our youngsters.

Our corporate supporters and sponsors; the resources and expertise you provided, have expanded the scope and influence of our projects immensely. We owe our achievements in the national and international arenas to your support.

Our collaboration with public institutions has enabled us to meet our youngsters' needs more effectively during this period. The resources and expertise of your institutions have played a crucial role in improving the quality of our post-disaster social services.

We would like to thank you once more for your faith in and support to our Foundation during these challenging times, and express our wish to collaborate with you in future projects as well. Together we will continue to work to provide our young adults a better future and to contribute to the healing of our society.



4. OUR PRIMARY FOCUS: CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS

I don't want to wake up to this world With just myself and my lonely soul And this pile of thoughts burdening me Is life so meaningless and aimless

Is the cost of this huge joke so heavy
To go far away and stay here
To exist and to completely disappear
Stare at the stars in the sky at times,
And to burned away memories at others
To start life yet again with every stone that slips from your hand
You will keep thinking,
Where do all these passing years lead
Do they get away with everything
Life leaves you and me at the edge of the abyss
Lack of meaning is believed to be the meaning itself
But don't you see the battle they are waging?
Why do you attach so much importance to your life in this unending battle
Your brain is frozen, the feathers are waiting to melt
Your soul does not want to wake up alone
It needs another soul, it feels this
When it wakes up in the morning alone and with its lonely soul

With every query and every question And every answer that loses its meaning
This life will be started anew every day At first I did not care for this ancient story
But now I see a way out
Even if the sky you look at is gray and clouded
If you are a bit happier
The Sun may initiate a fairytale
I know, there is an end to everything
Still life will continue with the
Dreams of the hope for a brighter future
Where the trees are greener
Your words imagined
Even if I can't change this world I will change my own one
I will paint it with the lightest of colors
Its light will be seen from stars afar I will tell its story to the whole world
This eternal peace
Whose door is opened by love

Arda Buluç, Hatay, 17 years old

The Young Lives Foundation adopts an adolescent-focused approach and carries on various activities with 6-9, 10-13 and 14-17 age groups, characterized as pre-adolescents, early adolescents and adolescents. Within this context, psychosocial support activities, soft skill trainings, sports activities, cultural and artistic activities and trainings related to 21st century skills (such as software and coding) in conformity with the level of development and age group are organized. The Foundation also organizes trainings for parents, teachers and public institution employees, with a view to increasing the competence of all actors having an impact on adolescents.

Our disaster relief work as well as our previous experience has shown us that adolescents are generally considered a difficult group to work with, that adolescence has been regarded as part of the passage from childhood to adulthood, that education and health services generally have had children and adults rather than adolescents as their primary focus, and that as a consequence of all of this the adolescents have remained the 'uncared for group'. As adolescence consists of an intense change and development process, the negligence of this period creates a crucial gap in understanding and responding to the adolescents' needs.

The period of adolescence is related to concepts such as search for identity, body image, independence, relations with peers and risky behavior, and adolescents have unique needs and worries. These needs which can change over time are generally not understood or met sufficiently. Post-disaster activities in the earthquake regions have revealed the same picture. It has been observed that the support and opportunities provided to the adolescents to express themselves, to become aware of their emotional needs and to discover their real potential are non-existent in certain regions and extremely limited in others. The Young Lives Foundation has been developing programs which focus on adolescents, providing services in conformity with their unique and changing needs helping them to have a positive experience about this period, aiming to ensure that they feel safe, realize their potential fully and participate in social life more actively. The activities in the disaster regions are organized with this perspective and carried on by professional teams experienced in working with adolescents, so that they can benefit in the maximum.

The Young Lives Foundation made a questionnaire survey in November and December 2023 in order to have a better understanding of the young adults' post-disaster experiences and to be able to provide more effective support and services based on this understanding. The Foundation also wanted to engage in fact-based advocacy regarding adolescents and young adults. Some conclusions of this survey entitled **Post-Disaster Experiences and Opinions of Adolescents and Young Adults** will be presented as part of this report¹.

1638 adolescents and young adults aged 12-21 participated in this survey aiming to determine the post-disaster needs of adolescents and young adults, to conduct a situation analysis regarding adolescents and young adults and learning their opinions and proposals about disaster interventions. Their average age is 14.86. 74.1 % are female and 24.9 % are male. 84.4 % are highschool students.

Some of the questions asked the youngsters and their answers are as follows:

Access to technology:

“There used to be infrastructure in our neighborhood, but now, after the earthquake it is said that it will take 1-2 years for the infrastructure to be completed.”

“I got more immersed in gaming.”

1557 young adults have answered the question **“Evaluate your post-disaster access to technology.”** Of them, 403 say that after the earthquakes they have been having trouble accessing technology, while 771 state that they had trouble accessing technology in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, but that they have no trouble now. 131 young adults say that there has been an increase in their access to technology, compared to the pre-earthquake times, while 303 state there has been no change whatsoever.¹

The obstacles to access to technology are enumerated as "prohibition of technological devices where they reside, lack of access to/insufficiency of network, infrastructure problems, families not giving permission, absence/lack of technological devices, power cuts".

¹ A report encompassing all results of the survey, and analyzing in detail the significant data obtained regarding access to technology, the role of social media, addictions, social activities, strong points, changes in values, worries related to future and education is currently being prepared. The report will be shared in Young Lives Foundation's website (genchayat.org) and with concerned stakeholders, and announced through social media accounts.

The impact of post-disaster access to technology on life:

“...to see on the internet the state of the city, the videos, the views shared naturally made me feel awful.”

The question **“How did the level of your post-disaster access to technology impact your life?”** was replied by 1575 young adults. More than one option could be selected, and the answers are given below, in descending order of frequency:

1. It raised my level of stress and anxiety. (494 replies)
2. It did not have a significant effect, but I used it for entertainment in order to cope with the situation. (443 replies)
3. I was bored because I did not have access to technology. (435 replies)
4. In general, I had trouble accessing information. (430 replies)
5. I had difficulty related to education due to lack of access to education/e-learning materials. (413 replies)
6. I did not experience any such impact. (395 replies)
7. It made me feel more isolated and lonely. (304 replies)
8. It helped me cope with hardships and stress. (265 replies)
9. It prevented me from focusing on my feelings. (231 replies)
10. I was able to access new support sources, thanks to technology. (209 replies)

Data from the survey has enabled us to gather significant information regarding the youngsters' access to technology and the impact of this on their lives:

- **Level of access and changing conditions:** Answers of 1557 young adults show that significant difficulty was encountered in accessing technology after the earthquakes. 403 are still encountering difficulties, while 711 state that they had difficulty in the immediate aftermath of the disaster, but are not encountering any difficulties currently. This indicates that infrastructure and access have improved.
- **Impact of access to technology on life:** Access to technology after the disaster has had varying effects on the lives of young adults. The most frequently mentioned impact is the increase in stress and anxiety levels. This reflects the traumatic effect of the disaster and the psychological burden caused by the continuous flow of information. Boredom and entertainment-oriented use are also frequently mentioned, indicating that technology has a significant effect on young adults' emotional state.
- **Education and access to information:** Difficulties encountered in education and access to information constitute another major issue. Especially the lack of access to e-learning materials has caused serious problems in education. This stresses the increasing role technology plays in education and the importance of ensuring the continuity of education under disaster conditions.
- **Technology's dual role:** Some note that technology has helped them in coping with hardships and stress while others have indicated the negative impact on their emotional state. This shows that technology can have both a positive and a negative psychological effect in the post-disaster period.

The survey highlights the post-disaster difficulties the young adults have faced regarding access to technology and the impact this access had on their education and social being, thus underlining a significant factor in planning disaster management and support services.

The role of social media in the post-disaster period:

“It facilitated my access to aid.”

1569 answers were given to the question regarding the role played by social media during the post-disaster period. 1057 believe that social media proved very useful in ensuring fast news and information sharing, while 634 think that social media also contributes to the dissemination of false information. 602 think social media has increased awareness about earthquakes.

Addiction in the post-disaster period:

1596 answers were given to the question “Have you personally experienced or observed in friends or family either an increase or decrease in addiction?”

Table 1: Types of Addiction

Type of Addiction	Number of Young Adults Afflicted
Technology	400
Smoking/Tobacco	242
Alcohol	65
Narcotics	14

The Young Lives Foundation’s survey sheds light on social media use and addiction behaviors of young adults in the post-disaster period.

The role of social media:

- **Information sharing and relief:** 1057 out of 1569 believe that social media is very useful in fast news and information sharing. This indicates that social media constitutes a critical source of communications and relief in post-disaster circumstances.
- **Dissemination of false information:** On the other hand, 634 think that social media also contributes to the dissemination of false information. This indicates that a more effective management of social media platforms is required for the dissemination of correct information and correction of false information in post-disaster circumstances.
- **Increased awareness:** 602 believe that social media has increased awareness about earthquakes. This shows that social media plays an important role in increasing social awareness about disasters and mobilizing the society to take action.

Addictive behavior:

- **Technology:** 400 out of 1596 say that their addiction to technology has increased. The post-disaster increase in the importance of technology has been accompanied by addiction risk.
- **Smoking/Tobacco and alcohol:** An increase in smoking and tobacco (242 young adults) and alcohol (65 young adults) consumption has also been observed. This reflects the tendency to resort to harmful habits in the search for alleviating post-disaster stress and anxiety.
- **Narcotics:** The increase in narcotics abuse (14 young adults) is smaller, but nevertheless constitutes an indication that the frequency of risky behavior can increase in such post-disaster circumstances.

To sum up, social media use and addiction play a significant role in the young adults’ process of coping with disaster. Social media has a positive impact with respect to information sharing and increasing awareness, but at the same time increases the risk of false information dissemination. The post-disaster increase in addictive behavior stresses the need to provide support and guidance to young adults during such periods. These data provide significant input for disaster management policies and the design and application of youth-oriented social service programs.

Youth-oriented social activities in the post-disaster period:

“I would like to be heard, I wish someone would listen to me attentively and without judging.”

62 % of the young adults who answered the question, “Do you find the current level of social activities (sports, concerts, exhibitions, etc.) sufficient?” have answered in the negative, while only 12 % find it satisfactory, and another 26 % partly sufficient.

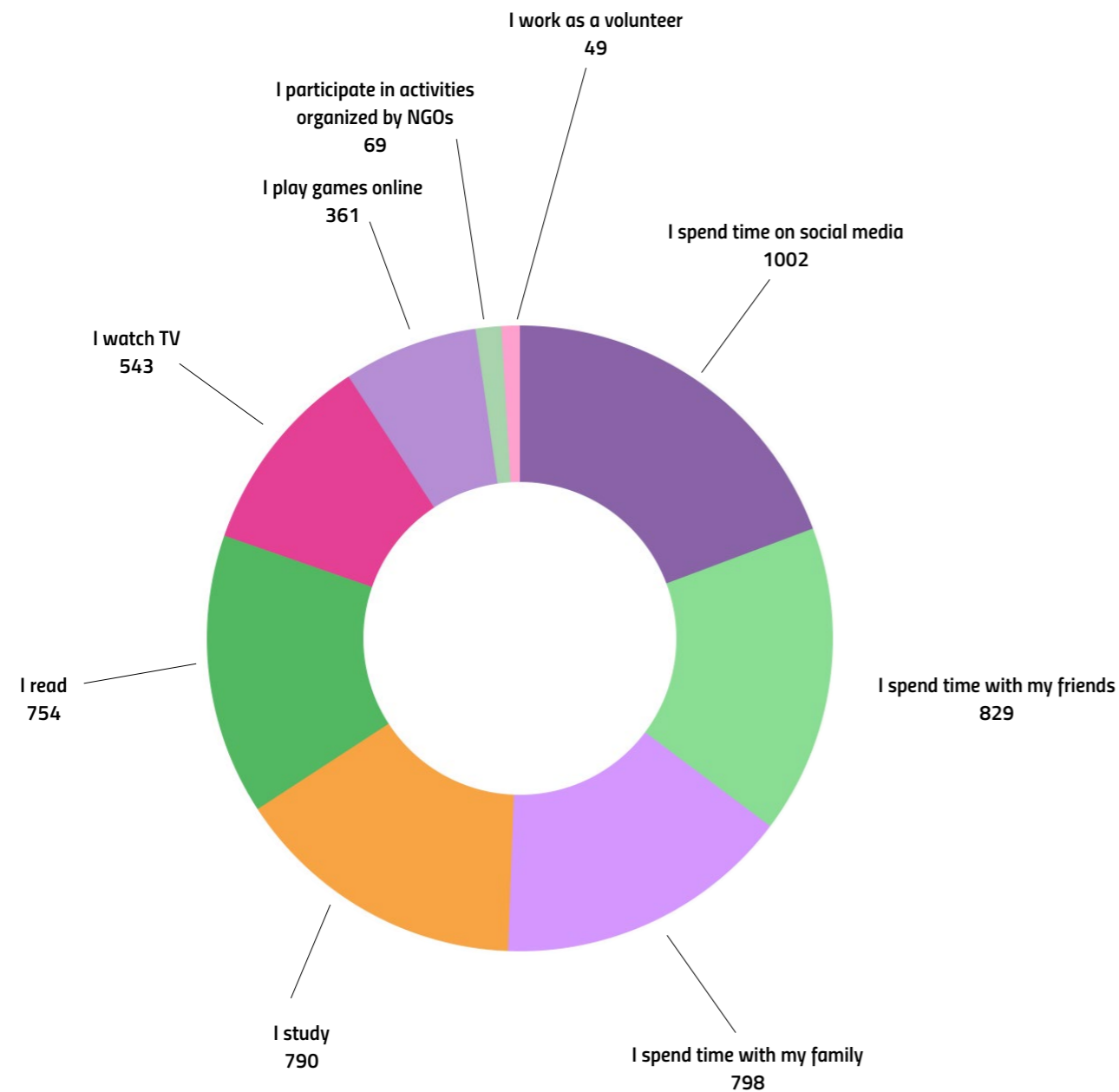
In response to the question regarding the kinds of social activity they need, they have mentioned concerts/musical events, excursions, movies, exhibitions, sports activities (volleyball, football, basketball, track and field, handball, baseball, table tennis etc), group activities, picnics, trekking, informatics activities, arts and crafts, youth camps, mind games based on knowledge and reading activities.

Related to this is the question, “What are your favorite methods for socialization?” They were asked to choose the three methods they preferred most. 1516 participants answered with 3497 methods selected. 33 % of the replies (1168 replies) state social media. The options selected are enumerated below in descending frequency:

- Social media (1168 replies; 33%)
- Sports (football and similar games, physical activities) (754 replies; 22%)
- Cafés, parks (595 replies; 17%)
- Online games (483 replies; 14%)
- Activities organized by civil society organizations (185 replies; 5%)
- Volunteer work (184 replies; 5%)
- Internet café (128 replies; 4%)

The most common reply given to the question, “*What do you do in your free time?*” has been, “I spend time on social media.” The distribution of replies to this question is shown below.

Graph 1: Free time activities



Another finding of the survey is about the significant tendencies regarding young adults' ideas about post-disaster social activities and socialization.

- **Insufficiency of social activities:** Post-disaster youth-oriented social activities are found insufficient by the majority, by 62 %. This should be considered a sign for striving to get a better understanding of their needs and expectations and to organize activities accordingly.
- **Preferred social activities:** The young adults have expressed their wish to engage in activities such as concerts/musical events, excursions, movies, exhibitions, sports activities, picnics, trekking, informatics activities, arts and crafts, youth camps, mind games based on knowledge and reading activities. This indicates that they are interested in social and cultural activities spanning a wide range.
- **Socialization:** 33 % of the young adults prefer social media as a way of socialization. Traditional socialization media such as cafés, parks and sports activities are also popular. Online games and internet cafés are also among prominent socialization media.
- **Free times:** Replies to the question “What do you do in your free time?” indicate that the majority of young adults spend their free time on social media. This shows the popularity of digital platforms and indicates the significant role played by social media in the post-disaster period.

Young adults' post-disaster preferences regarding social activities and socialization channels reflect the range and scope of their multi-dimensional social needs. The dissatisfaction with the current level of activities shows that post-disaster social support and activity planning should be made more carefully and in accordance with the young adults' expectations. Also, the crucial role played by social media and digital platforms in the social life of youngsters should be taken into account while post-disaster support and communications strategies are being developed.

Newly discovered strengths:

“My attachment to my city, to my birthplace, my country, my home, I mean to the things which are mine and my desire to protect them increased.”

“I realized how strong I am and I learned to wait patiently in the face of all.”

The question “*In the post-disaster period did you discover any new strengths in yourself, and if yes what were they?*” was answered in the negative by 1027. The 523 affirmative replies mostly cite qualities such as “strong, brave, calm, coolheaded”. Qualities related to sports are also numerous. These replies may indicate that in the post-disaster period, a number of individuals discovered their psychological and emotional strengths they were hitherto unaware of, as well as developing new skills to recover their equilibrium in moments of crisis or when faced with hardships.

Social responsibility:

More than one option could be selected in reply to the question *"If you were to participate in a post-disaster social responsibility project, what would the focus of that project be?"* The three most common replies were:

Psychological wellbeing (812 replies)

Empowering women and girl children (520 replies)

Youth participation (344 replies)

Coping with difficult emotions:

More than one option could be selected in reply to the question *"How do you cope with difficult emotions (anxiety, stress etc.)?"* 1566 selected at least one of the options listed. The most frequently selected options were:

Socialization (769 replies)

Reading (660 replies)

Praying (587 replies)

Playing games (511 replies)

These replies of adolescents and young adults provide significant insight regarding their post-disaster experience and coping strategies.

- **Newly discovered strengths:** Youngsters facing the hardships caused by the disaster have discovered in themselves qualities such as strength, courage, calmness and coolheadedness which they were not aware of previously. Physical activities such as sports have been a significant tool in feeling strong and coping with hardships.
- **Social responsibility priorities:** Their social responsibility priorities consist predominantly of post-disaster psychological wellbeing of their community, equality of opportunity in education and active participation of youngsters. This underlines the crucial role of these subjects in the post-disaster reconstruction of the society.
- **Emotional coping strategies:** Socialization, reading, praying and playing games are the prominent means of coping with post-disaster stress and anxiety. This indicates that youngsters resort to various strategies to satisfy their emotional needs and increase their psychological resilience.

These findings show us that youth-oriented post-disaster support and intervention programs have to be designed in accordance with their personal development, social needs and psychological wellbeing. The importance of the internal strengths the young adults have discovered in themselves and of social connections in coping with post-disaster hardships can provide guidance in designing the types of such programs.

Access to education:

1577 students have answered the question *"Do you currently have access to education?"* 78 % of those who said they had access to education stated that they were continuing their education. Among the reasons stated by those who replied that they did not have access to education, the most common ones were "insufficiency of facilities", "safety concerns", "lack of willingness" and "lack of materials".

Eğitim ve kariyer:

More than one option could be selected in reply to the question *"Has there been a change in your perspective regarding education and in your career objectives?"* The most common replies were:

I care more about my education now (726 replies)

I feel more uncertain about my education and career objectives (458 replies)

I feel that I have become more distanced from education (440 replies)

When the replies were disaggregated by gender, the order of frequency remained unchanged for girls, whereas only the position of the most common reply remained unchanged for boys, with "I feel that I have become more distanced from education" statement taking the second place (103 replies) and "I feel more uncertain about my education and career objectives" statement the third (101 replies).

48 % of girls and 40 % of boys have selected the option "I care more about my education now". These findings may indicate that the change in perspective regarding education has been more pronounced in girls.

Gender-based differentiation is also observed in the answers to the question *"What are the reasons for the change in your perspective regarding education and in your career objectives?"* The three most frequent replies given by the 1268 youngsters are given below, disaggregated by gender:

Table 2: Post-disaster Changes Regarding Education and Career

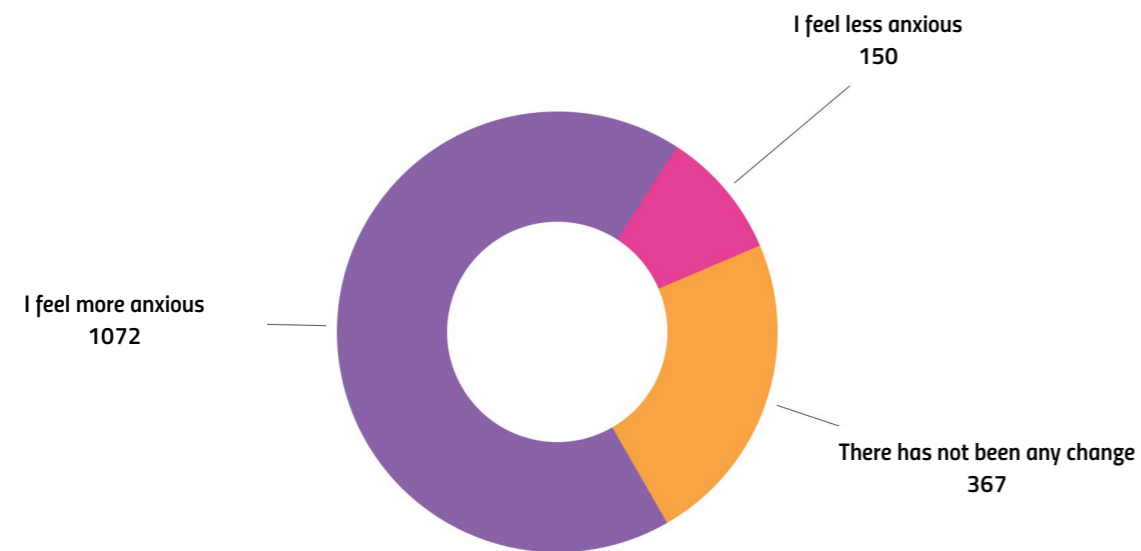
Replies	Girls	Boys
Economic uncertainty	403 replies (43%)*	166 replies (51%)*
Desire to earn more income	305 replies (33%)	135 replies (42%)*
Change in area of interest	327 replies (35%)*	107 replies (33%)*
Desire to avoid risk	313 replies (34%)*	81 replies (25%)

These data indicate that the main reasons underlying the change is economic uncertainty and desire to earn more income for boys, while economic uncertainty is also the prime reason for girls, yet there is no significant differentiation between the other reasons.

Anxiety about the future:

The question “Can you evaluate your level of anxiety about the future prior to the disaster?” was followed by the question “Has there been a change in your level of anxiety about the future after the disaster?” 67 % of the 1589 who answered stated that they felt more anxious after the earthquake.

Graph 2: Anxiety About the Future



The proportion of feeling more anxious is 71 % for girls and 56 % for boys.

These findings provide us with insight regarding young adults' access to education, education and career objectives and anxiety about the future:

- **Access to education:** 78 % state that they are continuing their education at school, while those who don't have access to education note the insufficiency of education facilities, safety concerns, lack of willingness and lack of materials as the main issues. This underlines the importance of improving the education infrastructure and support systems in the post-disaster period.
- **Education and career objectives:** In the post-disaster period some students have started to care more about their education while others felt more uncertain regarding their education and career objectives. The number of those feeling more distanced from education is also noteworthy. Girls care more about education and boys have a higher tendency of dropping out. Economic uncertainty appears to be the main source of changes in the education and career objectives, particularly for boys.
- **Anxiety about the future:** 67 % state that they have started to feel more anxious after the disaster. The proportion of girls feeling a higher level of anxiety in the post-disaster period is higher than that of boys. These data show that the disaster has a significant psychological effect on young adults which varies with gender.

These findings indicate the key points to be taken into consideration in developing policies and programs targeting the education and psychological needs of young adults in post-disaster periods. Improving education facilities, providing a safe and supportive learning environment, ensuring that students have guidance and advising services regarding education and career objectives and improving the psychological support mechanisms to help them cope with the increased levels of anxiety about future appear to be crucial. It is particularly important to be aware of gender-based needs and differences and to design the interventions accordingly.

These findings and analyses constitute a sound foundation on which the Young Lives Foundation bases its training programs, activities and future activities.

- **Access to education:** Insufficiency of education facilities, safety concerns and similar problems have led the Foundation to develop programs aiming to strengthen education infrastructure in the post-disaster period. It has developed and continues to improve the current education model and venues as a solution to the said problems.
- **Change in education and career objectives:** The change and uncertainty in the young adults' education and career objectives show the need for the quality education provided them by the Foundation.
- **Increase in anxiety about the future:** The students' increased levels of anxiety about future underline the importance of psychological support and advice. The Foundation organizes workshops, group therapy and individual consultation sessions helping to alleviate this anxiety, PSS and MHPSS (Psychosocial Support and Mental Health Psychosocial Support) being the best examples.
- **Addiction:** The post-disaster increase in addiction has led the Foundation to develop trainings for combating addiction for parents and for young adults. These trainings provide information on the causes and symptoms of addiction as well as combating strategies, and are aimed at decreasing the risks which emerged in the post-disaster period.

Generally speaking, these findings have been guiding the Young Lives Foundation in designing future programs and activities in accordance with the youngsters' post-disaster education and psychological needs. The Foundation uses the results of this survey to get a better understanding of the actual needs of adolescents and young adults, and to continue to develop effective solutions accordingly.

All findings of this survey provide the Young Lives Foundation with a sound basis for improving its efforts to ensure more effective and unique assistance to vulnerable and fragile groups which constitute its other primary focus.

4.2 Vulnerable/Fragile Groups

■ ■ In a village where we organized trainings, there was a student who was continuously excluded by everyone around him because s/he had autism. We talked with the students in our group about individual differences and emotions. Our student with autism would be a little late for the next session, his/her family had informed us. Just as we were about to begin our session, one of the students said, 'Our friend has not arrived yet, shouldn't we wait for him/her, s/he may be sad if we begin without him/her'. Other students immediately made supporting statements. There were even those who wanted to go to his/her home to call him/her."

In the earthquake regions, access to fundamental rights, basic necessities and psychosocial support services is laden with difficulties, and this can be much more challenging for vulnerable groups such as individuals with special needs, refugees/asylum seekers and adolescents. Natural disasters such as earthquakes have a negative impact particularly on children and adolescents with special needs. They face a series of difficulties in accessing education, medical and special care services in addition to obtaining their medication and transportation issues due to damaged roads and buildings. The difficulties thus caused in accessing basic necessities have a negative impact on their psychosocial wellbeing. Activities in the disaster region and interviews with families have shown us that the psychological support activities targeting children and adolescents with special needs have been insufficient. Feasibility studies sensitive to the special needs of individuals have been carried out in our Hatay Community Center. The content of our psychosocial support programs have been improved to ensure the participation of children and adolescents with special needs and our field teams have been empowered through trainings regarding working with individuals with special needs. The Foundation thus aims to contribute to the psychological wellbeing of children and adolescents with special needs, to the improvement of their self-expression skills, to their increased active participation in life and to their socialization with their peers.

Another vulnerable group facing difficulties in accessing basic necessities consists of refugee children and adolescents. Natural disasters such as earthquakes add to the difficulties already experienced by refugee children and adolescents. Disintegration of families due to the disaster, education problems caused by constant relocation, lack of official identification and residence documents, absence of support mechanisms, social discrimination caused by the scarcity of post-disaster resources have a significant effect on refugee children and adolescents. We ensure the participation of refugee children and adolescents in our psychosocial support programs with the aim of contributing to their psychological wellbeing and to social adaptation processes. Thus, in our Hatay Community Center we provide environments facilitating the integration of refugee children, adolescents and their families with the local population, as well as continuing psychosocial support activities and trainings in a manner supportive of the culture of coexistence.

Information related to the two-story prefabricated school within the container city established for refugees in Bebek village, Adiyaman province provides a noteworthy example. None of the 16 teachers who work on a contract basis speak Arabic. This constitutes a barrier to communication between students and teachers and is among the underlying causes of bullying and violence against refugee students. Due to these problems the school was temporarily closed and the schoolmaster was changed. Such negative experiences dampen the children's enthusiasm to go to school. Refugee children who don't have identification documents can't enroll in school and child protection processes take a long time, and both of these factors render accessing education more difficult. The fact that refugees live only in certain container cities with limited contact with the local population has a negative impact on social adaptation.

The case of children who have lost limbs due to the earthquakes show the difficulties experienced by children with special needs in accessing education. These children live in physically unsuitable conditions and face many obstacles in accessing education. Physical conditions have to be improved for amputated children, and their adaptation to their new life, following the trauma they suffered must be supported. A container city specially

designed for amputated individuals (K-7), with ramped accesses, accessible toilets and a rehabilitation center has been built. Also, group trainings aimed at assisting the social adaptation process of amputated children are organized in Adana. Such activities constitute significant steps in facilitating the access of refugee children and children with special needs to education.

In Hatay, individuals with special needs and refugee children face remarkable difficulties with respect to access to education and social integration. The integration of individuals with special needs in container cities and schools is not given the necessary priority. This limits these individuals' participation in education and in public life.

The deficiency in meeting the basic rights and necessities of refugee and asylum-seeking children is accompanied by numerous risk factors. Factors such as unsafe accommodation, unsatisfactory hygiene and self-care facilities, limited access to medical services have a negative impact on the children's physical and psychological wellbeing. It is difficult for a child devoid of healthy living conditions to concentrate on education and achieve academic success.

In education, discrimination and exclusion due to language and cultural differences constitute significant barriers in learning environments. Due to such differences, refugee and asylum-seeking children can not fully participate in education and are socially excluded.

Child labor is another serious issue for these children. Children who can't participate fully in education and in public life enter the labor market due to economic hardships, thus being removed from education.

Lack of social adaptation processes and positive integration systems cause refugee and asylum-seeking children to experience social exclusion. This prevents them from participating equally and actively in public life and causes them to continue living under risk. To sum up, the hardships confronting refugee and asylum-seeking children in Hatay and Adiyaman provinces have a negative impact on their access to education, social integration and general welfare. Comprehensive multidimensional strategies are required for the solution of these problems.

4.3 Adolescent parenthood in the earthquake region

The post-disaster period has had different effects on each of the three age groups, namely children, adolescents and adults. The Young Lives Foundation meets with adolescents and their parents in the adolescent-oriented projects it has been implementing in the earthquake regions and carrying on activities with the aim of providing solutions to the challenges encountered. We adopt an adolescent-oriented approach, focusing on them in all our activities, trying to understand their needs and to find solutions to satisfy them, while simultaneously trying to reach out to the people who influence them. Thus, we maintain close communications with their parents and take into account their observations about and wishes related to themselves and their children.

Adolescence, which is a critical period in personality development is also a period of rapid changes and intense developments and can be accompanied by emotional and behavioral changes and communication problems. The changes experienced in this process can be challenging for families. We observe that families find it difficult to communicate with their adolescent children, that they fail to understand them and that they don't know how to approach them. We are aware that the post-disaster process adds to the difficulties the caregivers face related to adolescence. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the issues caregivers face regarding adolescence and to organize activities to provide appropriate solutions.

Our communications with youngsters and their families during this period show us that the youngsters are facing difficulties in benefitting from their basic rights of development, health, accommodation, socialization and protection and accessing services oriented towards their developmental needs. During adolescence, it is important for psychological and developmental needs to be recognized and responded to. Therefore, the Young Lives Foundation strives to be sensitive to the needs of the adolescents and of the caregivers, to recognize the difficulties



encountered and to find appropriate solutions. The observations and family interviews in this context indicate that parents are anxious about their children's safety, physical and psychological wellbeing, school attendance, emotions and behaviors, and general wellbeing. Families are worried about their children and don't know how to behave as parents.

On the other hand, it is evident that parents have to feel well themselves in order to be able to support their children. We have all heard the safety announcement on the planes, "In case of emergency, put on your oxygen mask first, before attending to your child". Likewise, parents can assist their children only if they prioritize their own wellbeing. However, we see that parents tend to neglect their own needs and are psychologically challenged in the post-disaster process. Therefore, in the belief that parents should be concerned about their own wellbeing, we organize activities with this perspective.

In order to understand the needs of adolescents and their caregivers better, we will focus on the adolescent parents' experiences, describe the post-disaster period from their perspective and discuss the activities we have organized to support them and the adolescents.

4.3.1 Safety

The rapid post-disaster changes experienced regarding the destruction of buildings, the living conditions and adaptation to new living standards have caused safety concerns in planning and implementation stages. Our fieldwork in disaster areas has shown us that all family members, including children, adolescents and parents face many challenges due to safety concerns.

Reopening of schools has led to an increase in the families' fears about new earthquakes and their children's safety. Some families have stated that their children are afraid of new earthquakes and destruction of buildings and don't want to go to school, while others have said that they themselves are also quite worried and don't send their children to school so as not to endanger them.

Another area subject to safety concerns consists of the living quarters. Some families living in tent or container cities believe that safety can't be guaranteed inside or outside the living quarters and don't allow their children to go out. Families state that this causes disputes particularly with adolescents. After the earthquake, some adolescents have preferred to keep away from public spaces whereas socialization and being with friends continue to be an important need for others. For the latter group, the rules determined by parents can cause problems. Families can be overly protective towards their children, due to the traumatic experience they had. When the restrictions are severe and the underlying reasons not explained through effective communication, the adolescents and their families fail to understand each other.

👤 **My 16 year old son wanted to go to celebrate his friend's birthday at 10 pm. I didn't want him to go, because it is not safe. I told him I didn't give permission, but he didn't heed me.**

The above quote is from a parents training. As is evidenced by it, the safety concerns can be exhibited in various forms. This example shows that safety issue effects the parent-adolescent relation and can lead to a conflict.

Adolescents' experiences and families' statements indicate that in the post-disaster period, safety has constituted an obstacle to the youngsters' access to education, socialization and family relations in particular and rights and services related to their development and protection in general. Ensuring safety in the earthquake region should be considered a priority in enabling the youngsters to exercise their rights.

4.3.2 Privacy

Post-disaster living conditions have forced families to live in cramped quarters in tents or containers. This creates conditions concerning and challenging all members of the the family, children, youngsters and parents, as every family member needs a personal space and privacy.

Adolescence is a developmental period when the need for individualization arises. As adolescents have their private moments, they get the opportunity to ponder on their emotions and thoughts, discover their internal beings and personal values and become independent. Families frequently stress the adolescents' need to be alone. However the living conditions in the containers do not allow youngsters to have any personal space. Also, the families express the adolescents' wish to have private moments, yet can be critical of their need for personal space. They may consider this a behavioral problem, may think that their children behave like this because they are angry or rebellious or because they don't want to be together with their family.

While this need for individualization is very manifest in some adolescents, others don't want to be separated from their families, also due to the effect of traumatic experiences, losses and grieving processes. As containers don't allow for personal spaces, determining the privacy boundaries between adolescents and their parents and the return of the adolescents to their usual routines are harder.

With respect to privacy, the difficulties encountered by parents in maintaining their personal spaces and the sharing of personal care areas such as lavatories and showers also constitute significant issues for children and young adults. Information gathered from family interviews indicates that awareness raising activities related to child and adolescent safety and privacy aimed at increasing the awareness of parents regarding their own privacy and protection of their children's personal space would prove useful. Additionally, it is clear that having suitable spaces for adolescents to enjoy their free time and have private moments inside container cities is crucial.

4.3.3 Education

Ministry of Education and Ministry of Family and Social Services have organized various activities to alleviate the earthquake's negative impact on students and to provide support to them. In spite of these endeavors, problems regarding education and students' school attendance have been encountered in the post-disaster period. The youngsters' lack of willingness to go to school is a factor we frequently hear in our fieldwork and in interviews with parents. Parents state that youngsters are unwilling to go to school due to anxieties about a new earthquake or about losing their loved ones, losing their friends or teachers, lack of motivation, loss of hope, psychological challenges and similar causes. Additionally, traumatic experiences and grieving may be accompanied by problems related to cognitive skills such as paying attention, concentration, perception and memory. During our family interviews we frequently hear that youngsters have trouble concentrating on their studies and therefore don't want to study or do homework.

It is evident that adolescents need psychological assistance. The Young Lives Foundation assists the adolescents in their psychological wellbeing processes through individual psychological counseling and psychosocial support sessions. Below are some examples of the feedback from families regarding our training sessions with adolescents:

“My child's interest in education increased. S/he started to be more moderate in his/her actions.”

“My daughter had been bullied at school and felt alienated. This year started much happier. I believe this is thanks to you.”

Families have stated that, in addition to adolescents' personal concerns and psychological factors, shortcomings

of the education system also influenced the youngsters' school attendance. There are very few schools and/or classrooms in container cities and schoolbussing system prevails. Parents state that their children can't go to school or face difficulties due to the poor state of the roads, lack of mass transport and the high transportation fees:

“There is no space for the children to study. The containers are very small and they don't provide space for them to study. There is no space for them to study, no libraries in our container city either.”

“Children have become distanced from school. We want them to benefit from supplementary courses. Tutorials are few and very expensive. We can't find a source of academic support for them.”

Parents are worried about their children being distanced from education and encountering difficulties related to the education system. They state that they want their children to attend school regularly and willingly and to study diligently.

To sum up, youngsters are encountering obstacles caused by personal and external factors in accessing education, which is a basic right and a developmental requirement. We believe that supporting their psychological wellbeing, improving education practices in the earthquake region and providing accessible education services are of paramount significance in ensuring their uninterrupted access to education.

4.3.4 Psychological impact of the disaster

The traumatic experiences, loss and grieving processes related to the disaster exacerbate the adolescents' emotional and behavioral challenges. The sudden traumatic and undesirable changes accompanying the earthquake, added to the physical and emotional changes characteristic to their age make a negative impact on the adolescents. In our fieldwork and feedback from families during parent trainings we frequently hear about the adolescents' psychological challenges. Parents note that after the earthquake there has been a significant increase in their children's anger issues, anxiety levels and fears, that the youngsters don't want to leave the container cities, that they isolate themselves from friends and family, or that they want to be with their friends only.

Another issue we frequently hear about in our activities with adolescents and in the feedbacks from their families is the youngsters' loss of hope regarding the future. The unpredictability of traumatic experiences shows the youngsters that life can have unexpected and sudden developments with negative and challenging impact. This leads them to believe that life is devoid of meaning and that having dreams and making plans is meaningless.

These feelings of despair and meaninglessness and the depressive mood give rise to worries about suicidal tendencies. Our family interviews and observations in the field indicate that suicidal thoughts are on the rise amongst adolescents. Parents are extremely worried about this. The Young Lives Foundation assists determining the youngsters under risk and their urgent access to the necessary services through its psychosocial support and protection activities.

Families have stated that in the post-disaster period, they did not know how to respond to their children's emotional and behavioral problems and that they could not cope with these challenges. Caregivers having difficulty in approaching adolescents state that they experience frequent conflicts with their children. It is also observed that families are either having trouble in setting boundaries or they are setting very rigid boundaries. Therefore, the Young Lives Foundation considers parent-oriented awareness-raising and parental skill enhancing trainings in the earthquake region a priority. Families empowered through parent trainings get to recognize trauma and stress reactions, learn positive parenting methods and increase their awareness regarding post-disaster communication with children and youngsters, and so are able to assist their children. Thus, we improve the parents' communication with their children and contribute to adolescents' psychological wellbeing.

In addition to parent trainings, we also organize psychosocial support activities with adolescents to alleviate the disaster's negative psychological effects. Below are some examples of the families' feedback received after adolescent-oriented psychosocial support:

■■S/he did not talk to or play with anyone, was completely withdrawn. S/he is better now, after the activities. S/he started to talk and be with his/her friends."

■■Overcame his/her fears, it was wonderful that s/he was willing. It helped a lot in adaptation to school."

■■S/he was withdrawn. Now can express and defend himself/herself better. Now s/he is aware that s/he is an individual."

4.3.5 Addiction

Another issue of concern for parents is the post-disaster rapid increase in addictions. In the post-disaster period, the lack of security has rendered addictive substances more easily accessible to youngsters. Increased levels of addiction have been observed during fieldwork. On the other hand, families don't refer directly to their children's tobacco, alcohol or substance addiction. This can be due to the fact that youngsters keep their addictive behavior secret from their families. When families are given information about addiction and told that there will be a related training, parents are willing to participate in the training.

Parents are worried about their children's technology addiction. They state that the screen-time spent by their children has increased significantly after the earthquakes. They don't call this an addiction, but their sentences indicate an addiction risk:

■■Visitors come, but my son doesn't talk to them at all. Just takes the phone and goes inside. Doesn't sit with us at all. Is busy with the phone for hours."

■■Takes the phone and plays games for hours. Doesn't leave it even when I warn him. Stops for a while and then starts again."

Youngsters who are distanced from education, who don't want to or can't socialize and who want to be alone spend the majority of their time in front of a screen and don't want to leave it. Digital devices and internet can be utilized safely, yet families' feedback indicates that the youngsters are exceeding appropriate screen-time limits. Parents state that they warn their children and try to get them to reduce screen-time to no avail. Their feedback shows that parents are encountering difficulties regarding addiction, effective communication and setting boundaries. Thus, the Young Lives Foundation finds it important to organize positive parenting and offspring communication trainings including such methods as effective communication with adolescents and setting healthy boundaries as well as prevention of and approach to addiction sessions.

4.3.6. Special needs

The traumatic experiences caused by the earthquake and the negative impact of the disaster are more profound for vulnerable groups. Youngsters with special needs and youngsters who had to be amputated after the earthquake are encountering difficulties in accessing medical and educational services and social activities. The post-disaster interruption of medical, education, transportation and public services has rendered it more difficult for youngsters with special needs to access the services they needed.

During our fieldwork, we frequently hear from the parents that their children are having trouble accessing special education and that there are no activities for them. Special education facilities have been damaged by the earthquake, there are too few institutions working with youngsters with special needs, schools are far from container cities and hard to reach, all of which make it difficult for youngsters with special needs to access education. Youngsters with special needs who can't access education or social activities are bored as they have to spend all day inside the containers, increasing their screen-time and developing unhealthy technology usage habits. Parents note that they are extremely worried about this state of affairs and urgently require activities in which their children can participate. The Young Lives Foundation endeavors to satisfy this need by including adolescents with special needs in psychosocial support sessions and soft-skills trainings. Below is an example of the feedbacks received after such a training:

■■We use wheelchairs and so our mobility is quite restricted normally. We were very much at ease here."

4.3.7 4.3.7 Refugee parents

Refugee and asylum-seeking adolescents and families constitute another vulnerable group. The most frequently expressed need in our activities involving families is material resources. Refugee and asylum-seeking families state that they have difficulty meeting their material needs and that they need aid to obtain their basic necessities.

After the earthquake, asylum-seeking families initially lived in the same tent cities and container cities with the local population. The emergence of disputes between the two communities led to the geographical separation of the two, and the refugee and asylum-seeking families were moved to container cities devoted to them only. We were informed about cases of peer bullying during the coexistence period, yet the separation of the two communities has not provided a solution to either peer bullying or the tension between the two communities. The adolescents of the two communities meet at school. The feedback from families indicates that peer bullying against refugee youngsters continues.

Refugee parents are worried about other issues their adolescent children face regarding education. They state that they can't enroll their children in school due to procedural problems. Issues related to identity and enrollment as well as peer bullying cause the refugee youngsters to be distanced from education and exacerbate social adaptation problems.

Refugees are in the risk group regarding school dropout and child labor, and the post-disaster conditions have made them more vulnerable to such risks. Much remains to be done to ensure that refugee youngsters are kept away from dangerous living and working conditions, to support their participation in education and to satisfy their developmental requirements. The Young Lives Foundation is engaged in determining the youngsters under risk and helping them access the services they are entitled to through protective activities. We also encourage them to participate in psychosocial support sessions, thereby supporting their psychosocial development and social adaptation.

4.3.8 Parents living in the countryside

Damage suffered in the countryside was less compared to city centers, yet access to basic services was quite difficult. The earthquake damaged the roads to the rural settlements which were sparsely populated, so the aid and supportive services which reached these areas were limited. Education depended on schoolbussing and there were almost no highschools or junior highschools in the villages, so access to education has been difficult. The problems related to getting aid and services to rural areas also means that youngsters can not obtain education materials such as books and stationery.

An additional factor is the fact that the social activities provided by various ministries and civil society organizations are concentrated in and around the container cities at the city centers, which means the youngsters living in the countryside can't benefit from supportive education, sports and psychosocial support activities. Parents in the countryside frequently mention the lack of activities for their children and express the need felt for such support. Based on this need, the Young Lives Foundation reaches out to the adolescents in the countryside with mobile facilities and ensures that they participate in psychosocial support sessions.

4.3.9 Changing needs of the adolescents

Digitalization has been causing significant changes and developments in every aspect of life. These changes impact all individuals, yet it is clear that children and young adults adapt to them more quickly and easily. They are interested in technological devices and when they get the opportunity to use them, improve their knowledge and skills quickly. Digital media provide them with education, socialization and entertainment opportunities.

We know that parents try to ensure that their children, particularly the adolescents are impacted as little as possible by the risks accompanying the digital age, while benefitting as much as possible from its advantages. We are also aware that the parent has to be up-to-date, abreast of all the current changes all the time.

Together with the necessities emerging in the 21st century and together with digitalization, the level of knowledge and skills adolescents are expected to have is also changing. In addition to technical and academic knowledge, social skills, innovative thinking and problem solving skills, and skills where human relations such as cooperation and leadership play a major role have gained importance.

During the post-disaster period, the adolescents and their parents are trying to cope with the traumatic effects of the earthquake while simultaneously trying to keep abreast of the modern age's requirements. We recognize the parents' needs in the midst of all this development and change and focus on supporting them. The Young Lives Foundation's comprehensive adolescent-oriented projects are implemented under the headings psychosocial support, soft skills and technology and aimed at helping them cope with the negative effects of the earthquake, while providing support for the development of the necessary skills. We organize trainings with the purpose of improving the youngsters' 21st century skills and digital skills and strive to increase the awareness of their parents regarding these issues.

We have also realized that parents also wish that their children go back to their routines and pre-disaster activities. They want to appreciate their children's achievements, to applaud them and to see that their hopes about future blossom again. Thus, we support the youngsters to create concrete products and organize shows at the conclusion of our educational and cultural activities, we organize festivals, exhibitions, end-of-workshop activities to create space for the satisfaction of this desire.

To sum up, the Young Lives Foundation's projects have focused on understanding the effects of disasters on youngsters and assisting them during this difficult process. The data from our fieldwork and parent interviews show that disasters have a major impact on the general wellbeing of youngsters.

The challenges of adolescence combined with the disaster's traumatic effects have a particularly critical negative effect on the youngsters psychology. Therefore, we organized psychosocial support programs and trainings for the youngsters and awareness-raising activities for their parents.

The most crucial actor we should cooperate with in alleviating the destructive impact of the post-disaster period on youngsters consists of their families. We attach great importance to our activities involving them and we know that we have to listen to what they say and to improve their communication with their children.

Understanding and satisfying the youngsters' needs in coping with the post-disaster period is critical in increasing our society's resilience. The Young Lives Foundation strives to assist the youngsters to be hopeful about future, to be aware of their own values and to grow and develop well, and we continue to reach out to the important actors around them to create an effective supportive network.



4.4 Youth Activities

The Young Lives Foundation provides various programs aimed at healing the youngsters and increasing their social participation in the post-disaster period. These programs include scholarships, mentee-mentor program to help with their personal and professional development, and the Youth Advisory Board bringing together youngsters from different backgrounds. The Foundation focuses on supporting the youngsters in areas pertaining to innovation, employment and entrepreneurship, while also encouraging them to play an active role in the public sphere, through its activities aimed at preserving cultural heritage and creating historical awareness. The objective of these activities is to contribute to the individual and social development of the young adults.

4.4.1 Scholarships, Mentee-Mentor Program and youth participation

Young Lives Foundation scholarships disaster quota

The Young Lives Foundation's Scholarship Program involves a grant provided to the junior highschool and highschool students in Turkey who apply, whose applications are accepted and who get positive response from the Scholarship Commission, and consists of monthly payments during the 9 months between September and end of May.

For the scholarship period pertaining to the school year 2023-2024, a quota for 50 students from the earthquake region has been created. This scholarship program contributes to meeting the students' basic needs during the school year.

Mentee-Mentor Program

“Whatever I study at the university, I will be an NGO volunteer.”

“What subject must we study to be like the Young Lives team”

In addition to financial assistance, the Young Lives Foundation provides mental and psychosocial support to the scholarship students. The Mentee-Mentor Program has been designed to support their personal, academic and professional development. Experienced and specialized mentors are coupled with youngsters and provide them guidance, sharing their experiences and supporting them in attaining their goals and developing their potential fully.

The program strives to assist the youngsters in stress and anxiety management during exam periods which play a significant role in their lives, while aiming to create the awareness to help them in discovering themselves and their aims in life. They are also supported regarding professional orientation.

This year the Mentee-Mentor Program has been expanded to include 24 students aged 14-18, who are included in the Foundation's Scholarship Program, who are in the exam year and who are from the earthquake region. We aim to contribute to their academic and professional development in this way. Below are some examples of their feedback regarding this program:



“I knew it would be great, I found out about everything I wondered”

“It is nice to learn not to give up our aims”

“I am glad I participated in these sessions, they helped me develop in many ways.”

“Actually I could not study properly. My studies were continuously interrupted, I could not set up a schedule. I am ashamed to tell my grade, it is too poor. I want to study at the Conservatory and to be a composer. I will not give up striving for this, I will not quit.”

Youth Advisory Board

The Youth Advisory Board is a platform where youngsters from various socio-cultural backgrounds who are aged 14-18 come together to share their opinions regarding both pre-determined and spontaneously arising topics. It encourages active youth participation and gives the youngsters the opportunity to play an active role in decision-making processes. Board members discuss global and local issues such as natural disasters and peer bullying in the light of their own experiences. Bringing together youngsters from different socio-cultural backgrounds aims at enabling them to gain and help each other gain different perspectives.

Young Lives Foundation's youth-oriented projects benefit immensely from the opinions voiced in this Board's discussions. This year's Youth Advisory Board activity will take place in Adiyaman, with the participation of 10 youngsters, including those impacted by the earthquake. This activity is highly significant, as it will enable the young adults to be heard at a higher platform and it will increase their awareness about social issues.

4.4.2 Youth participation

“Youngsters who said ‘what are we doing here, are we little kids?’ said ‘I felt more valuable and more special’ later in the process.”

The Young Lives Foundation embarked on innovative activities targeting the earthquakes’ impacts on particularly the youngsters and aiming to improve their participation in public life immediately after the disaster. Based on the fact that the trauma has had a negative effect on their position in public life and their self-perception, volunteer teams aged 15-24 have been organized in Hatay and Adiyaman to ensure their active participation in urban reconstruction processes.



Through innovative approaches and strategies, the Young Lives Foundation develops projects and training programs encouraging youngsters’ active participation in the fields of innovation, employment and entrepreneurship. In this context, it works to support their career plans, increase qualified youth employment and encourage young entrepreneurship. Preserving cultural heritage and creating historical awareness among youngsters constitutes another focus of the Foundation. Our oral history projects and the peer-to-peer learning methodology improve the youngsters’ leadership skills in addition to enabling the youngsters in the earthquake areas to adopt more powerful and effective public roles. These projects contribute to the youngsters’ awareness and active participation regarding social and cultural issues as well as preservation of historical and cultural heritage. Particularly in the earthquake areas, such activities contribute to their processes of coping with the trauma and social integration. They provide the youngsters with the opportunity of discovering their own potential and playing an active role in social and economic life, thus contributing to the society’s future.



At the weekly meetings the content prepared by volunteering youngsters and enriched through professional contributions is discussed with the aim of creating cultural awareness in the cities of historical value. The Foundation also organizes cultural summits and talks to help with the youngsters’ mental health issues and capabilities of coping with their traumatic experiences. Such activities encourage young adults to make meaningful contributions to their communities and to make positive changes.

The innovation and entrepreneurship oriented approaches and capacity improving trainings organized in accordance with the young volunteers’ requests support the development of both their personal skills and capabilities of effective community leadership. The Young Lives Foundation is determined to attain higher goals during the second year after the earthquake, by expanding its volunteering projects and youth participation through activities aimed at increasing employment and improving youth representation.

4.4. Child labor

The Young Lives Foundation implements integrative and duplicable projects with the aim of ensuring that children, adolescents and young adults can receive and put into practice the quality education in accordance with their areas of interest. These practices consist of prevention of child labor, increasing youth employment, working with refugees, encouragement of social participation, developing 21st century skills, soft skills trainings, WASH (water, hygiene and sanitation) and temporary accommodation needs. The Foundation's approach is based on three main intervention strategies, namely ensuring that children's and adolescents' basic needs (accommodation, water, hygiene, health and education) are met, improving the quality of education and developing their social participation, and preventing child labor, thus preventing its negative impact on the children's physical and mental development and ensuring their school attendance, thus preventing their participation in the cheap labor pool in future.

The Foundation's Prevention of Child Labor Program, launched in 2014 focuses primarily on harvested crops and has encompassed thousands of youngsters. Some examples of the projects within this program are In a Nutshell project, implemented aiming to eliminate child labor in BALSU's supply chain, Last Stop for Child Labour: Eskişehir! project in cooperation with GIZ, Education for Children, Employment for Adults project in cooperation with Desip, Elimination of Child Labor in Seasonal Agriculture project in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor and Social Security and ILO, and Sustainable Hazelnut Villages project sponsored by Rainforest Alliance's Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO).

In the process of preventing child labor, the Foundation works in close coordination with the ministries concerned, universities, teachers, agriculture intermediaries and representatives of private sector. This approach, known as the systems approach provides a holistic perspective for the solution of complex social phenomena. The Foundation's activities' objective is to provide quality responses to the children's needs, in accordance with their best interests.

The Foundation also develops practical models for the continued education of the target group, in conformity with the needs arising after crises. It has developed the "in situ education practices" model when the mobility was restricted due to Covid-19, ensuring the seasonal agricultural worker families' children's access to education.

After the 2023 earthquakes, it has designed comprehensive projects aimed at supporting the population living in the disaster region, based on needs assessments of individuals and communities. These projects include psychological support, coping with post-trauma stress, creating a safe space for women and providing hairdressing services, informatics trainings for adolescents, sports, culture and art activities, trainings for adults, distributing clean water, providing services targeting the needs of informal spaces and sanitation.

The Foundation's projects combat the economic and social effects of natural disasters such as earthquakes, support the efforts for the elimination of child labor and takes into consideration the effects of climate change on agriculture. Particularly, the change in the hazelnut harvest timing caused by the climate change influences the families' strategies for coping with revenue loss and increases child labor risk. This development is accompanied by the risk of children's distancing from education. The multi-dimensional crisis experienced in the earthquake region increases the child labor risk even more. These risks also form the basis for the intensification of child labor in various sectors.

Observations regarding child labor risk in the earthquake region:

- Children are obliged to work in return for income in order to support their families and alleviate their financial distress.
- Demand for day jobs with no social security has increased, and thus 13-18 year olds have started to work in construction.
- Students with changed social environment and teachers may have the tendency not to go to school at all or to attend irregularly.

- The aftershocks cause the children to be afraid of going to school.
- Refugee children are encountering difficulties in the satisfaction of their basic rights and necessities. These difficulties include unsafe accommodation, insufficient hygiene and self-care facilities, limited access to medical facilities, discrimination in education caused by difference of language and culture, exploitation in work, failure to participate fully in public life and shortcomings in social adaptation. These may cause the children to be excluded from the society and live in risky conditions.
- Refugee children's access to education has become even more restricted after the earthquake, and the problems they face regarding education, such as exclusion, inability to enroll and peer bullying have increased.
- Children's accommodation issues have changed after the earthquake, they now have extremely limited private space, if at all.
- They are having trouble adapting to the living conditions they are not accustomed to.
- Children's education was interrupted first due to Covid-19 and then by the earthquake before they had the opportunity to get used to being back at school.
- The education and other social activities in the earthquake region are not continued over time.
- Transportation means to education spaces/schools are not sufficient.

The followup study in Adiyaman has shown that 105 of the 940 children in the region have joined the seasonal agriculture cycle. Approximately half of them are under high or medium risk of becoming part of the child labor force while the other half is in the low risk group. It has been noted that about 80-85 % of the waste paper collectors in Adiyaman are refugee children. This figure clearly shows that child labor and obstacles to accessing education are intermingled with factors such as migration and being a refugee.

A highschool student's wish to quit school in order to become a crane operator sheds light on the choices youngsters face between education and worklife. The said student is planning to quit education due to the high income potential of crane operating, reflecting the tough balance between education and financial opportunities.

Child labor in textile industry is particularly widespread in the Kahta region. Children work for lower wages and without any social security. Choices between education and worklife are determined by the population increase in the region and the limited economic opportunities. Children's cycle of working in summer and attending school during the academic year is an indication of the challenges of accessing education and the related interventions.

Lastly, children of seasonal agricultural worker families go to and work in Malatya and Giresun especially during summer. The dominance of textile sector and the increase of child labor in Kahta renders the difficulties encountered in accessing education more complicated. This necessitates a more profound understanding of the region's socio-economic structure and its impact on access to education.

Obstacles to access to education are aggravated due to various factors particularly in post-disaster situations. Our observations in the earthquake region indicate that child labor increases significantly during such periods. Post-disaster economic distress and poverty causes children to join the workforce in order to support the families. Particularly the 13-18 year olds work without any social security at day jobs, particularly in the construction sector.

There are problems regarding participation in education activities as well. For example, a 14 year old youngster chose to provide financial support to his family by working as a plumber and thus refrained from participating in our activities. In Hatay child labor was seen in agriculture before the earthquake, whereas it is now observed in construction and waste collection as well. This underlines how the extent and amount of child labor can change due to disasters.

Challenges to school attendance are exacerbated by the post-disaster living conditions. The new accommodation conditions don't allow children to have a private space or favorable study conditions. The process of adaptation to these new conditions has a negative impact on their motivation and academic success. This shows that challenges to access to education are not limited to economic and social factors but are aggravated by physical and psychological elements as well. Therefore, interventions with this aim have to be designed in a way to encompass these multi-dimensional issues.



5. ABOUT US

Since 2008, the Young Lives Foundation has been focusing particularly on the children and adolescents aged 11-18, supporting their education, active participation in public life and psychosocial wellbeing. It strives to alleviate the effects of traumatic events such as earthquakes which aggravate the challenges of adolescence. The Foundation reacted swiftly to the earthquake on February 6, 2023, activating emergency protocols, transporting aid to the region through staff and volunteers, and erecting prefabricated houses for the teammembers working in the field. It has also provided psychosocial support and education to children and youngsters and distributed clean water, thus helping to heal the society. This swift and effective intervention of the Foundation aims to focus on the needs of the children and youngsters in the post-disaster period and thereby to ensure that the society continues to make progress on a more solid foundation.

5.1 Our team

“I am an earthquake victim as well and I heal my wounds by working here.”

6 Şubat 2023'te meydana gelen Kahramanmaraş merkezli deprem sırasında, Adıyaman, Şanlıurfa, Mardin ve Our Foundation was directly affected by the earthquake through our teams in Adıyaman, Şanlıurfa, Mardin and Diyarbakır and staff living in the disaster area. 32 % of our staff suffered the effects of the disaster either personally or through their families. Thus, within the context of our humanitarian aid mission in civil society capacity, supporting our staff's healing process and contributing to the healing process of the society became our first priority.

The night of the earthquake we activated our emergency protocols, contacted our teammates in the region and learned about their wellbeing. We strived to provide safe spaces for them and their families through our countrywide communications network.

A team of 10, consisting of teammembers who were not in the disaster area started for the region that very day and reached their destination the next day. They set up camp in a parking lot for broken trucks, sleeping inside vehicles. Together with our staff other than the volunteering team, we obtained the first cargo of humanitarian aid materials with our own resources on February 10 and immediately started to distribute them. We simultaneously started fieldwork in Adıyaman with another team, consisting of 10 staff members who had personally experienced the earthquake.

As time went on, we transferred staff members from all over Turkey to the fields in Adıyaman and Hatay, obtained and transported the goods unavailable in the region, and continued to strengthen the morale and operational capacity of our team.

We employed 17 new personnel, all residents of the earthquake region, for our activities in the disaster area. We erected fully equipped prefabricated houses in response to the accommodation need of our colleagues, and thus provided them with a living space, equipped with hot water, electricity and electrical devices.

Our team active in the earthquake region acts with the conscious will to alleviate the damages of the disaster. We are aware that our teammembers are also earthquake victims, and we have provided them with continuous supervision support by psychologists and trauma specialists. This support has strengthened the will to overcome the destructive effects of the earthquake together, and we have designed workplans aiming to protect our team from emotional breakdown.



Within the framework of our projects in Hatay and Adiyaman, we distributed clean water, sanitized container and tent cities, set up safe spaces for women and provided hairdressing services, improved the conditions in informal tent areas, set up a gym, provided psychological support and trauma-oriented psychosocial support for adults and children, technology trainings to children in informatics classes and organized various physical activities. These activities initially carried on by 70 staff members are now continued in Hatay and Adiyaman by a team of 55.

5.1.1 Helping the helpers

Supporting and maintaining the wellbeing of the teammembers in contact with the beneficiaries of the services provided is crucial for the effectiveness and sustainability of post-disaster work. Particularly when earthquake victims trying to cope with loss, mourning and homelessness strive to provide assistance to other earthquake victims, they face a higher risk of post-trauma stress disorder, secondary trauma and burnout, and their psychological wellbeing is affected adversely. In disaster work regarding children and adolescents, it is very important to reach out to all actors who serve them and who influence their lives. The Young Lives Foundation is fully aware of this and organizes "Helping the Helpers" activities for all teams involved in post-disaster work. It also takes care to limit the time teams spend in the field and organize rotational rest and recreation periods, thus eliminating any negative effect the tough conditions can have on them. Supervision and psychological wellbeing assistance sessions moderated by psychologists have been organized in Istanbul to support the teams who worked in Hatay and left the region in coping with the tough experiences of the field and to support their psychological wellbeing.

Helping the helpers activities were organized to support the psychological wellbeing of the teams continuing to work in Adiyaman and Hatay after the disaster. The activities were moderated by psychologists and included group sessions, expressive arts therapy methods and mindfulness exercises. These activities aimed at enabling the participants to become aware of their emotions and thoughts, to assign a meaning to the challenging process they have been enduring, as well as improving their coping skills and strengthening support mechanisms. They were also informed about subjects such as post-trauma symptoms, self-care skills and coping mechanisms in order to assist their fieldwork.

Activities aimed at supporting the wellbeing of the teams in the earthquake region continue. An MHPSS specialist experienced in trauma and mental health has been employed to assist post-disaster activities and the team's wellbeing. Our MHPSS specialist provides supervision and psychological wellbeing support to the teams carrying on psychosocial support activities in the earthquake region, and refers those in need of individual psychological support to the related specialists.

Psychosocial support group sessions have been organized for librarians who were affected by the earthquake in Adiyaman, in order to assist their psychological wellbeing and thus ensure a better and stronger support system to be established for the children and adolescents. 30 librarians working actively with children and adolescents participated in these group sessions which aimed to create a space for self-expression, to help the participants to understand and share their emotions, to cope with the emotional challenges such as stress and anxiety they are experiencing and to endow them with new coping skills, thus strengthening their psychological resilience.

5.2 The Community Centers

5.2.1 Adiyaman Community Center

“Children say that the friendships they formed here are sustained, and that now they meet in the container city as well.”

The Living Space and Community Center at Adiyaman covers an area of 1240 sq. meters and provides ample space for the training and activity programs specially designed for children, adolescents and youngsters. Within the Center, there are three classrooms, each 42 sq. meters wide, and training sessions are conducted with 15-20 students in each of them.



The psychosocial support sessions primarily aim to provide a response to the emotional needs of children and adolescents suffering from post-disaster trauma and have been designed to help them understand the challenges they are faced with and develop healthy coping strategies.

Technology-based Trainings are organized with the aim of helping young adults acquire the skills required by the digital world and keep up with the technological developments, and play a critical role in enabling the students to use information technologies and digital devices effectively.

Sports activities contribute to the physical and mental wellbeing of children and adults, improving their stress management skills and physical conditions. Such activities provide a positive outlet for the students' energies and help them improve their social skills within a group.

Individual Interview Classroom is devoted to individual consulting and support services designed in accordance with the specific needs of children, adolescents and youngsters where they can discuss their personal problems and challenges with specialists.

With this wide range of programs and activities, the Living Space and Community Center at Adiyaman strives to meet the education needs of the children, adolescents and psychosocial needs of the adults living in the earthquake region, contributing to their social adaptation process. The Center constitutes a significant resource helping them cope with the challenges of post-disaster life and experience a healthy healing process.

The Young Lives Foundation living space at Adiyaman consists of two prefabricated structures and houses the staff members working in various Foundation projects. Each of these prefabricated structures which have been designed in accordance with the needs of the residents, consists of two rooms with two beds in each room. Thus, 16 teammembers can reside in this space.

A professional security system ensures the safety of the living space, protecting the staff and the facility 24 hours a day. There is also a fully equipped kitchen in each prefabricated structure. The kitchens have all the equipment and utensils necessary for the staff to maintain a healthy nourishment routine.

The office space, equipped with modern office equipment and technological devices enables the staff to work efficiently on projects, conduct their daily work and hold meetings.

The Young Lives Foundation's living space at Adiyaman has been designed in accordance with the staff's security, comfort and functionality requirements, and provides them with both safe and comfortable accommodation and the necessary facilities to work efficiently.

5.2.2 Hatay Community Center

Hatay Living Space and Community Center is a social center covering 1500 sq. meters, and serving everyone with its universal accessibility and wide range of services. The facilities are designed in accordance with the needs of the physically challenged individuals with special paths and lavatories, providing everyone with equal opportunities for an easily accessible and fully enjoyable experience.

The Center provides various activities, including psychosocial support sessions, soft skill trainings, parent trainings, youth activities, robotic coding trainings and sports activities to all members of the population, and in particular to adolescents and young adults. Each activity is carried on with care and with the purpose of endowing the participants with valuable knowledge and skills in various sections of the Center.

Each classroom is 48 sq. meters wide and accommodates 30 students. The classrooms have been designed in accordance with the principles of universal access. Two classrooms can be combined to provide a space of 98 sq. meters in case of need.

The hairdressing services provided in the Safe Space for Women provides personal care and relaxation opportunities in a space devoted solely to women. This space also serves as an area where they can socialize and find support.

The psychosocial support sessions organized at the Akdeniz and Defne classrooms inform and support participants in mental and emotional health issues, thus helping them to cope more effectively with the daily challenges they encounter, while the soft skill trainings focus on developing skills such as communications, teamwork and problem solving which are crucial for success in work and in public life.

Parent trainings provide guidance and practical information on child development and education, helping to build stronger family relations and to form a healthier environment for children to grow up in.

Youth activities include various activities designed to contribute to the youngsters' social, cultural and personal development, enabling them to develop their social skills, form new friendships and discover new areas of interest.

The robotic coding training in Titus classroom endows youngsters with critical skills related to the fast developing areas of technology, contributing to their capabilities in problem solving, analytical thinking and technological creativity.

Sports activities in the gym provide guidance to youngsters and other participants in maintaining physical health and fitness, encouraging healthy living habits and helping participants to improve their physical condition.

Psychological consultation sessions held in individual interview rooms have been designed to provide support and guidance regarding personal, educational or professional issues to adolescents, youngsters and adults, and constitute a major resource for the individuals in coping with the challenges they face and to continue their personal development.

Two prefabricated residences in the Center host 16 staff. They have been designed to provide a solution for the staff's housing needs, thus enabling them to work more efficiently. The administrative office with its 34 staff ensures the Center to operate smoothly and coordinates the programs for the youngsters. The security officer ensures the safety of the youngsters and staff at the Center.

Hatay Living Space and Community Center provides a wide array of inclusive services, responding to various needs of the local population, and aiming to contribute to the quality of life of individuals of all ages. Particularly adolescents and young adults benefit immensely from the education, social interaction and personal development opportunities provided by the Center, and with the help of these dynamic and innovative programs, continue their personal and social development. The Center proves its inclusive and accessible attitude by ensuring the full and equal access of physically challenged individuals to all activities, contributing to solidarity and participation of everyone. This diversity and inclusiveness renders the Hatay Living Space and Community Center a significant community center in the region.



6. WHAT WE HAVE DONE UP TO NOW



February

We set out for Hatay

We directed all our field teams to Hatay and Adiyaman

We rented warehouses

We distributed blankets, fresh bread, water and heaters

March

We started to work in tent cities

We initiated psychosocial support work

We set our priorities as children, adolescents, young adults and women



April

We set up our Community Centers, which included fully equipped prefabricated home and office structures for our teams

We continued our trainings at both our Centers and at the tent/container cities





May

We extended the scope of our activities, thanks to our sponsors

We went everywhere with our mobile PSS vehicles

We initiated our technology trainings

We worked with families who had migrated from the disaster region



September

We provided hygiene and sanitation for the showers and lavatories in the container cities

We started to distribute drinking water

We set up child-friendly safe spaces in Hatay and Adiyaman

We set up our safe space for women at our Hatay Community Center

June



We completed our project about students who had migrated to Izmir from the earthquake areas

Our mobile PSS activities were continued

October



July

We extended the scope of our adolescent-oriented activities

We set up our fully equipped technology classrooms

We continued our psychosocial support activities tailored to the needs of different age groups



November

Our emergency/acute relief work for the changing needs continued

We launched our scholarship campaign, the priority being students from the disaster area

We continued our intervention work in accordance with the needs evolving with the seasons or the periods

We established new goals together with our sponsors

August



We continued our activities with various age groups at our gym

Our activities with women and in support of children and adolescents continued

December - January 2024



6.1 Activities

ACUTE PERIOD INTERVENTION

Psychosocial Support			
Activity	Province	Number of Beneficiaries	
Psikososyal Destek	Hatay	600	
	Adiyaman	916	
TOPLAM		1516	

Aid Distribution			
Activity	Province	Number of Beneficiary Households	Description
Aid distribution	Hatay	3450	Foodstuffs: 12,880 boxes Blankets: 2,500 Mattresses: 80 Baby care kits: 28.000 diapers Stoves/electrical heaters: 1,092 Hazelnut shells 204.190 kg Generators: 8 400 containers of baby food First aid kits: 140 Tents: 89 Tarpaulin: 54.000 sq m
	Adiyaman	618	Pacifiers/feeding bottles: 500 Toys: 600 Garments (underwear, clothing, socks, gloves) 43.000 pairs Shoes: 3.000 pairs Sanitary kits: 5648 Water containers : 133,852 lt Water reservoirs: 6 Masks: 15000 Adult diapers: 4000 Kitchen sets: 160
TOTAL		4068	

Structures			
Activity	Province	Number	Description
Lavatories	Hatay	88	
Lavatories (For individuals with special needs)	Hatay	8	Lavatories and showers were provided in 6 separate temporary accomodation sites
Showers	Hatay	24	
Kitchens	Hatay	1	Kitchen with a capacity of providing food for 3000 was established

Helping the Helpers			
Activity	Province	Number of Beneficiaries	Description
Helping the helpers	Adiyaman	38	49 Young Lives Foundation staff and 10 public servants participated in the activities
	Hatay	11	
TOTAL		49	

Determining the Disaster's Impact on YLF Beneficiaries			
Activity	Number of Families	Number of Children	Description
Determining the disaster's impact on YLF beneficiaries	1746	3339	YLF beneficiaries living in the 16 disaster-struck provinces were contacted and the disaster's impact on them was learned.

INTERVENTION AFTER THE ACUTE PERIOD

Psychosocial Support		
Activity	Province	Number of Beneficiaries
Psychosocial support	Adiyaman	721
	Hatay	891
	İzmir	206
TOTAL		1818

Psychological Support		
Activity	Province	Number of Beneficiaries
Psychological support	Adiyaman	23
	Hatay	157
	İzmir	8
TOTAL		188

Child-oriented Activities		
Activity	Province	Number of Beneficiaries
Sports	Hatay	267
Coding	Hatay	51
Soft Skills	Hatay	63
Youth Participation	Hatay	55
Youth Participation	Adiyaman	13
Psychosocial Support	Adiyaman	2647
Psychosocial Support	Hatay	2727
TOTAL		5823

Parent-oriented Activities		
Activity	Province	Number of Beneficiaries
Post-disaster effective communication with children	Hatay	279
Psychosocial support	Hatay	856
Psychosocial support	Adiyaman	655
Positive parenting	Hatay	54
TOTAL		1844

Hairdressing Services (Safe Space for Women)		
Activity	Province	Number of Beneficiaries
Hairdressing services	Hatay	1547
TOTAL		1547

Needs Assessment		
Activity	Province	Number of Beneficiaries
Needs assessment	Adiyaman	1819
	Hatay	3131
	İzmir	256
	Diyarbakır	140
	Şanlıurfa	7
TOTAL		5353

Region-Neighborhood Profiling		
Activity	Province	Number of Beneficiaries
Region profiling	Adiyaman	304
	Hatay	86
TOTAL		390

Referral		
Activity	Province	Number of Beneficiaries
Referral	Adiyaman	245
	Hatay	40
TOTAL		285

Referral-related Financial Support		
Activity	Province	Number of Beneficiaries
Referral-related Financial Support	Adiyaman	202
TOTAL		202

Case Management		
Activity	Province	Number of Beneficiaries
Case Management	Adiyaman	180
	Hatay	39
TOTAL		219

Community Meeting		
Activity	Province	Number of Beneficiaries
Community meeting	Adiyaman	78
	Hatay	30
TOTAL		108

Informative Meeting		
Activity	Province	Number of Beneficiaries
Informative Meeting	Adiyaman	74
	Hatay	30
TOTAL		104

Materials Distributed		
Activity	Province	Number of Beneficiaries
Stationery	Adiyaman	721
Stationery	Hatay	419
Stationery	İzmir	199
Foodstuffs	Adiyaman	135
Foodstuffs	Diyarbakır	38
Foodstuffs	İzmir	50
Foodstuffs	Şanlıurfa	2
Hygiene materials	Adiyaman	7039
Hygiene materials	Hatay	6717
Toolbox	Adiyaman	16
Toolbox	Hatay	16
Clothing	Hatay	362
Clothing	İzmir	196
Solar lamp	Adiyaman	325
Solar lamp	Hatay	75
Water heater	Hatay	17
Clean water	Hatay	8042
Snow kit	Adiyaman	30

Sanitation		
Activity	Province	Number of Beneficiaries
Lavatory sanitation	Hatay	338
Shower cabin sanitation	Hatay	235

6.1.1 Urgent/Acute interventions and changing needs



“A child living in the space where a lamppost was erected said, ‘thanks to you, I am not afraid of the dark, because it is light now.’”

“Children say that, now that there is light they feel safer and go to lavatories confidently.”

The Young Lives Foundation has undertaken urgent/acute intervention activities in Hatay, Adiyaman and Diyarbakır since the first day of the earthquakes. In cooperation with AFAD, Provincial Directorates of the Ministry of Family and Social Services, Governor’s Offices of Adiyaman and Hatay, Red Crescent Disaster Platform and the initiatives emerging after the 6 February earthquakes, urgent/acute needs were met. Until now support was provided to 22,183 individuals with rapid interventions to meet their basic needs. These interventions are continued in basic areas such as first aid, water, sanitation, protection and accommodation, and in conformity with the changing needs.

The Young Lives Foundation has worked in effective coordination with its staff and volunteers determining, updating and planning the response to the needs of the disaster victims, in order to satisfy the changing needs. Within this context, information gathered with the needs tracking system was critical in satisfying the current needs of the earthquake victims.

The Young Lives Foundation initially distributed basic food and hygiene packages in Hatay, while simultaneously determining their needs. In Diyarbakır it joined AFAD’s relief work, determined the needs of the families in tent cities and distributed food, hygiene kits and clothing. In Adiyaman it cooperated with various institutions and businesspersons and strived to determine and satisfy the needs in the disaster area. It distributed food, water, heating devices, clothing, cleaning and hygiene products, first aid kits and various household necessities. In Hatay it provided equipment for erecting water reservoirs and search and rescue work, it carried on needs assessment and relief materials distribution in Diyarbakır and Adiyaman.

In addition, the Young Lives Foundation went beyond acute intervention work, and based on previous disaster and crisis management experiences, determined the needs in areas such as education, psychosocial support and protection and designed an integrated workplan for the disaster region. This plan focuses on and creates solutions for the social interaction and safety needs of the women, youngsters and adolescents in the region.

The Foundation’s efforts aim to create safe spaces for adolescents and design structured and sustainable programs going beyond temporary relief, in order to support and add meaning to their lives. These safe spaces and programs also provide them with opportunities of friendship, understanding and self-expression. This supportive environment encourages hope and resilience in the face of disasters and allows them to improve their capabilities of coping with difficulties and their potential for contributing to the community. The Young Lives Foundation’s medium and long-term projects aim to make a positive impact not only on the current state but also on the future lives of the adolescents, thus contributing to their growing up as healthy and productive individuals in the society.

It was determined that the harsh winter weather conditions gave rise to needs related to heating, transport, winter clothing and hot water. Solar water heaters were distributed in Hatay and Adiyaman, providing the earthquake victims with an environment-friendly access to hot water. Snow kits and toolboxes for common use to help with the repair and winter preparation needs frequently arising in the transitory accommodation areas were provided.

The Young Lives Foundation also works to alleviate the various infrastructure problems caused by the earthquake damage. Solar lamps have been distributed to accommodation sites to provide an environment friendly and sustainable solution to the safety issues related to the use of common spaces such as kitchens and lavatories, due to power shortages in the region. Fire extinguishers have been distributed and informative sessions regarding their use have been organized as a precaution against fires in the said sites.

The Foundation has anticipated that with the concentration of huge numbers in temporary accommodation sites and container cities and with being compelled to share common spaces such as kitchens and lavatories, problems related to the access to and hygiene of such spaces would arise, and has launched sanitation campaigns.

With all these activities, the Young Lives Foundation has not only provided a comprehensive assistance to earthquake victims, but also has engaged in various projects in cooperation with national and international entities to ensure the sustainability of such assistance and so that possible negative post-disaster effects can be predicted and necessary measures can be taken. Such projects cover a wide range of activities such as professional psychological support, psychosocial support, protection, setting up safe spaces for women and children, various trainings, sports activities, temporary accommodation sites and sanitation, in consideration of the needs which change due to many factors.



6.1.2 PSS and Mental Health

The Earthquake's Long-term Psychological Effects on Young Adults

1- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

- Continuously remembering the earthquake and nightmares
- Sleep disorders
- Avoiding persons, places or events associated with the trauma

2- Depression

- Continuous sorrow, grief or emptiness feelings
- Dejection, loss of interest and unhappiness
- Extreme loss or increase of appetite
- Sleep disorders

3- Anxiety Disorders

- Continuous sorrow, grief or emptiness feelings
- Dejection, loss of interest and unhappiness
- Extreme loss or increase of appetite
- Sleep disorders

4- Social Problems

- Relationship problems, academic failure and anti-social behavior
- Loss of friends and trust issues
- Family conflicts

What the Young Lives Foundation does?

1. Intervenes in the youngsters' post traumatic problems with psychologists who have a trauma-oriented perspective through individual psychological support interviews and a holistic approach.
2. Intervenes in the earthquake trauma at individual interviews, adopting preventive measures against possible future traumatic disorders through individual interviews.

Preparing the Trauma Education and MHPSS Manual with the Consultancy of Edinburgh University Instructor, Psychotherapist and Trauma Specialist Abigail Finnegan:

The Young Lives Foundation continues to organize helping the helpers activities and capacity development trainings in order to improve the effectiveness of its continuing activities in the earthquake region, to endow fieldteams with the competencies to cope with the current conditions and needs and to support their psychological wellbeing. Within this context it has been working with many specialists who are competent in their field, experienced in disaster and trauma issues and familiar with the earthquake region and the local population's culture, while also keeping track of the relevant literature, international studies and current intervention and prevention work. Thus, it has been receiving consultancy support regarding trauma education and MHPSS process management from Edinburgh University instructor, psychotherapist and trauma specialist Abigail Finnegan who has global experience in the disaster and trauma field.



The trauma education has been designed as two separate programs, one for the Young Lives Foundation head office staff, and the other for those working in the field at the disaster area. While the education program was being developed, it was noted that those two teams' working conditions, needs and demands were different and that the staff working in the field at the disaster area needed psychological wellbeing support as well as capacity building, and the opinions of Abigail Finnegan and the Young Lives Foundation specialists were taken into account. Thus, the first "Mind-Body Approach to Working with Post-Earthquake Trauma" education session was held in Istanbul with the participation of head office staff, and the second in Hatay with the participation of Adiyaman and Hatay field teams.

Abigail Finnegan's consultancy has continued after the trauma educations, as the supervision of the field teams working at the disaster area continued and a manual for the standardization of the MHPSS process was prepared. Abigail Finnegan and Young Lives Foundation specialists worked in Istanbul to develop the MHPSS mechanism and drew the MHPSS action plan. Online meetings were held with the Adiyaman and Hatay field teams, and based on their input and the needs expressed, the regular supervision meetings of the Young Lives Foundation MHPSS specialist with the field teams were structured and the MHPSS draft manual was drawn.

The education and supervision process carried on by the Young Lives Foundation specialists with the consultancy of Abigail Finnegan, enables the field teams to respond more effectively to the special conditions and needs in the disaster area. Work on structuring the supervision process and developing the MHPSS mechanism, has also enabled significant progress to be made in standardizing and optimizing the field teams' psychosocial support processes. Such work improves the quality and effectiveness of the Foundation's post-disaster interventions, increasing the effectiveness of relief aid to earthquake victims.

The Young Lives Foundation organizes multiple-session psychosocial support programs adapted to the ages and development levels of children and adolescents. A program of 8 sessions, encompassing play and art therapy techniques for 6-9 year olds improves their expression skills, attention and concentration competences and assists them in expressing difficult emotions through their creativity.

Children and adolescents aged 10-13 deal with the challenges of adolescence and the traumas they have been experiencing, and they encounter issues such as anger, concentration and adaptation problems. A program consisting of 8 sessions and including topics such as peer relations, anger management and problem solving, aiming to develop their skills and acquire a hopeful perspective about future and self-respect has been designed for them.

Adolescents aged 14-18 try to cope with the



challenges of the passage to adulthood, as well as the stress and mourning caused by the earthquake, can sometimes seek refuge in harmful habits.

The "Life Skills Education Program" designed for this group improves their self-expression skills, increases their awareness about addiction and endows them with healthy living competences.

The Foundation plans periodical sessions with the same specialists and in the same venues to form a routine that will help children and adolescents gain back their sense of control and trust. This consistency approach aims to support their development and social adaptation.

Earthquakes do not cause only physical damage, they also have profound effects on the society's mental health. Youngsters constitute a most vulnerable group in this respect. The Young Lives Foundation has been analyzing the traumas and risks encountered by them during the year after the earthquake, with an academic perspective. Earthquakes may cause young adults various psychological traumas, emerging as acute stress disorder, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety and depression. The feelings of uncertainty and loss can make a serious impact on the youngsters' mental health.



Why are Youngsters Under More Risk?

Earthquakes and similar natural disasters can impact the youngsters' psychology seriously, for many reasons:

- **Developmental Sensitivity:** Youngsters are at the peak of their physical and psychological development, working on important missions such as identity formation and social connections. Traumatic events can distort this process and damage their self-confidence.
- **Emotional and Cognitive Development:** Their emotional and cognitive development is not complete, and they may not be well-equipped to deal with stress and trauma.
- **Interruptions in Social Life and Education:** Social relations and education play a critical role in the development of youngsters, and disasters may cause crucial interruptions in both.
- **Anxiety about the Future:** Plans about future are important for youngsters, and disasters can harm such plans and cause uncertainty about future.
- **Long-term Effects of Trauma:** Traumas at a young age may have effects up to adulthood and impact the quality of life.

Therefore, the Young Lives Foundation takes the youngsters' post traumatic psychologies seriously. Proper assistance and guidance is of critical importance in ensuring their healthy development and confidence in future.

The Young Lives Foundation continues to work to understand the post-trauma needs of the youngsters better and

to provide them with the best possible support. We are determined to take the necessary measures to support their psychological wellbeing and prepare them for the future. At the end of this first year after the earthquake, it is very important for us to understand the youngsters' traumas and their long-term effects and to raise awareness about this. Our Foundation provides various programs and resources to support the young adults and help them get through this difficult period with the least possible damage. It is our mission and responsibility to contribute to the society's post-disaster psychological healing with our trauma oriented perspective.

The Young Lives Foundation's trauma-oriented therapy approach has had a significant influence on the practices of our psychologists providing psychological support in Adiyaman and Hatay. Our Foundation provides them with regular supervision and trainings to increase their effectiveness regarding trauma-related cases and to help with capacity building. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is currently at the center of these efforts and is playing a major role in improving our therapists' skills of understanding and intervening in trauma.

Trauma oriented therapy aims to understand trauma's impact on the individual and to deal with it properly. Different methods are needed to effectively deal with anxiety and stress of disaster victims. Such methods are highly beneficial in cases of earthquake trauma and are known to be effective in dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety and depression.

Our Foundation cooperates with the related institutions in cases of emergency and for psychiatric support, and ensures fast and effective intervention. Such cooperation is very important in satisfying the mental health needs of the individuals in the earthquake region. The psychological support requests made to our Foundation indicate quite a high incidence of somatization symptoms. This is accompanied by a rise in the use of painkillers, which in turn increases the risk of addiction to painkillers.

The Young Lives Foundation attaches great importance to the wellbeing of its staff too. Providing psychological support is fundamental in especially helping them cope with tough situations and maintaining a healthy mental atmosphere in the work environment. We regularly provide psychological support services to all our staff. These services have been designed to ensure that they can cope with their personal and professional challenges, and lead healthy and well-balanced lives between the public and private spheres. Supporting our staff's wellbeing contributes to the general productivity and effectiveness of our Foundation and thus improves the quality of the services it provides.

To sum up, the Young Lives Foundation's approach aimed at the continuous development of our psychologists improves the quality of the psychological support provided to the individuals impacted by traumatic events such as earthquakes and contributes significantly to the Foundation's MHPSS system.

6.1.3 Protection in the Disaster Region

Disasters are defined as events which impact the psychological, physical and social wellbeing of the individuals in a society and which have negative consequences causing death, sickness and disabilities. Major natural disasters such as earthquakes impact individuals of all ages and create psychological and social damages in addition to physical ones. Children and adolescents are particularly affected by the earthquake. Earthquakes disrupt the order in the individuals' private world, social relations and institutional environment, causing social problems. Adolescents feel this social impact more strongly, since they are going through a period of rapid psychological and physical change, discovering their identity, gaining their independence and restructuring their social relations, a period when feelings of independence and control are developing and social environment and academic success are important. This social impact can lead to the restriction of the adolescents' interaction with their social environment, to depriving them of their friends and social networks when schools are closed, to interruption of their education when schools are damaged. Additionally, families' economic conditions can deteriorate due to post-disaster loss of jobs and financial difficulties. This may create an additional pressure on adolescents' living standards and expectations about future. Adolescents may have difficulty adapting to the post-disaster social conditions, and this may be more pronounced in cases where social support mechanisms are insufficient. Expectations and responsibilities can change in the post-disaster period. For example, if family members are deceased or injured, adolescents may

The Earthquake's Social Impact on Children and Adolescents

1- Psychological Impacts

- Post traumatic stress disorder
- Depression
- Anxiety disorders

2- Disruption of Education

- Damaged or destroyed school buildings
- Transportation problems
- Academic regression
- Inequality of opportunity in education

3- Social Isolation

- Loss of social networks
- Dispersal of communities
- Negative coping methods (addiction)

4- Family Issues

- Tension and conflict in family relations
- Neglect, abuse
- Early marriage

5- Economic Problems

- Deteriorating household economy
- Child labor

What the Young Lives Foundation Does

- Strives to understand the problems and needs of children, adolescents and parents within the context of their families, communities and social and economic systems.
- Works in accordance with the principles of UN Children's Rights Convention and with the best interests of children.
- While working with children and adolescents, refrains from being judgemental, upholds empathy and respect and focuses on their wellbeing.

have to be more involved in housework or caregiving. Thus, the adolescents' social development, daily routine and expectations about the future can be significantly influenced. Thus, it is extremely important to take into account adolescents' special social needs and provide suitable support services in the disaster intervention and relief work.

Immediately after the earthquake, the Young Lives Foundation embarked on its activities particularly in the Hatay, Adiyaman and Diyarbakır provinces, distributing basic necessities such as tents, heaters, blankets and food, as emergency intervention activities. All activities have been designed with protection perspective and a service model oriented towards the individuals' special needs in fields such as health, economy, law and education has been designed. Within the framework of the protection ethical principle of not causing harm, needs analyses are done for children, adolescents and parents. Specialized protection teams who constantly improve themselves focus on alleviating the risks and threats faced by the individuals, and work to overcome obstacles to accessing services as well as help capacity building efforts of the individuals. Primary risks in the post-disaster period appear to be issues regarding access to education, child labor, addiction (technology, tobacco, drugs, etc), increased stress levels due to inability to access means of livelihood, weakening of family ties, increased responsibilities of mothers and daughters regarding housework and decrease in the socialization opportunities. The Young Lives Foundation carries on advocacy activities to ensure individuals' access to services, meanwhile supporting all its work through agreements and protocols signed with the Ministries of Family and Social Services, Education, Labor and Social

Security, provincial education directorates and governors' offices.

The Young Lives Foundation has increased its effectiveness and capacity by working in close cooperation with regional government offices and civil society organizations in all regions where it is active. Cooperating and coordinating with governmental institutions and offices constitutes one of its major strengths. In the activities external to the protection sector, the mainstreaming of protection approach has been adopted and every sensitivity observed has been handled with a holistic perspective, relayed to Young Lives Foundation's protection teams and solutions have been searched. All children, adolescents and families observed to be facing protection risks have been included in the case management process.

The Young Lives Foundation's protection work in the earthquake region reflects the basic principles of empowerment approach emerging in education, social services and psychology. This approach aims to help individuals, families, groups and communities to discover and use their inner resources as well as the resources around them. The Foundation's programs oriented towards individuals struggling with post-disaster pressures, poverty and other difficulties of life assist the beneficiaries in using the powers they have to change their lives. These programs focus particularly on changing the earthquake victims' negative emotions and self-restricting perceptions, and providing them with opportunities to make their own decisions and to have more power and control over their lives. These endeavors of the Young Lives Foundation aim to empower individuals and families, to stress and develop their already existing capabilities and positive characteristics, and to support them in acquiring active roles in society.

With this approach, the Young Lives Foundation aims to understand the individuals' problems and needs within the framework of the families, communities, and social and economic systems surrounding them. The activities encompass a wide range of services regarding the physical, emotional and psychosocial needs of children, adolescents and parents. Coordination between those responsible for protection, psychologists, education coordinators and other specialists ensures that every individual is provided with integrated services tailored to his/her needs.

The Young Lives Foundation takes into consideration social dynamics and relations while striving to understand the challenges encountered by individuals and communities. Education programs and awareness raising activities support the individual within a social context and contribute to the society's general welfare. Post-disaster changes in the physical and social environment shape the application of protection strategies. The aim is to improve the capacity of individuals and communities to adapt to and be active in their environment.

The Young Lives Foundation carries on its protection activities in the earthquake region under the guidance of UN Children's Rights Convention and always upholding the children's best interests. We work diligently to understand the specific needs of each and every child and family and to respond sensitively. We evaluate the challenges encountered by children and youngsters not only on an individual level, but within social, cultural and peripheral contexts.

At every step we listen to the child and the family, and adopt supporting their decision-making processes as a basic principle. We aim to provide effective and sensitive services by continuously improving ourselves professionally. We work by supporting the individuals' independent decision-making competences. In our relations we refrain from being judgemental, we uphold empathy and respect and focus on the individuals' wellbeing. We support cultural sensitivity and take into consideration the unique situation and needs of every single individual. This human-oriented ethical approach forms the basis of Young Lives Foundation's protection work regarding children and families in the earthquake region.

The Young Lives Foundation's protection teams carry on their activities in villages of Central and Kahta districts of Adiyaman, the areas most effected by the earthquake. Like everywhere else, here too the Foundation has formed close collaborative relations with public institutions and civil society organizations, regarding the protection activities it undertakes in the earthquake region. In Adiyaman, difficulties encountered in accessing services, children unable to go to school, and individuals requesting individual psychological assistance and needing medical materials have been determined. As part of the case management process, those unable to access services have been given financial aid and guidance was provided for other needs, to be followed by effective followup processes.

In Hatay, the Young Lives Foundation undertook comprehensive needs analyses, starting with its focus group.

The challenges encountered by children and youngsters have been evaluated not only on an individual level, but within social, cultural and peripheral contexts. In all its protection work in Hatay, the Young Lives Foundation has designed its interventions to satisfy the different needs of the refugee and local children and families, and has adopted an integrated and inclusive approach. All activities have been designed to encourage permanent positive change. Needs analyses conducted by protection teams have revealed protection risks such as neglect, abuse, exploitation, difficulty in accessing basic rights and services and cases of child labor, and the relevant supportive work is continued.

6.2 Trainings

During our work in the earthquake region we saw that activities for children and adolescents were limited to playing, psychosocial support and academic support. The Young Lives Foundation aims to support the physical, cognitive, emotional and social development of children and adolescents with a holistic perspective to their wellbeing. Thus, it organizes soft skills and coding and twin trainings, sports activities and cultural activities in child-friendly and adolescent-friendly safe spaces, to support children and adolescents in understanding their post-disaster trauma, approaching the problems they encounter with a more positive and constructive outlook, increasing their emotional resilience, improving their social skills and becoming strong and capable individuals in this era of information.

The Young Lives Foundation has noted the children's and adolescents' need to be together with their peers and to socialize in their own safe spaces, and has expanded the areas of the Adiyaman and Hatay community centers to set up child-friendly and adolescent-friendly safe spaces. These spaces help them socialize, acquire new skills and experiences, creating their routines and returning to normal, thus assisting their participation in the community and in life.



6.2.1 Soft-Skill Trainings

Soft-skill trainings aim to endow children and adolescents with social skills such as self-expression, empathy, critical and solution-oriented thinking and creativity. Children and adolescents aged 10-14 and 15-18 participate in "Effective Communications", "Aesthetical Thinking" and "Design Oriented Thinking" trainings, gaining experience in areas such as peer-to-peer learning, enhancing their creativity with artificial intelligence and finding solution to a current problem with a participatory approach.



6.2.2 Technology Trainings

The earthquake caused the children and adolescents to be away from school for a long period for the second time, the first being due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Coupled with the destruction, loss and post-disaster difficulties in accessing quality education, this has led to anxieties and uncertainties regarding future especially among adolescents. It has been noted that adolescents needed supportive trainings and activities helping them gain access to quality education again, become competitive amongst their peers and actively participate in public life. Thus, the Young Lives Foundation organizes Coding and Twin trainings for them in the technology classrooms in child-friendly and adolescent-friendly safe spaces, while simultaneously supporting their development through various activities. The children and adolescents participating in these trainings are assisted in developing 21st century skills, acquiring the information and skills required by the digital transformation and setting new career objectives for themselves.



6.2.3 Sports Activities

Physical exercise plays a major role in coping with stress and anxiety and maintaining emotional balance. Due to reasons such as damage and destruction caused by the earthquake, lack of physical space in mass accommodation areas and allocating parks and public gardens to other uses related to post-disaster work, the mobility of children and adolescents has been restricted. Sports activities organized in our child-friendly and adolescent-friendly areas allow them to have freedom of movement, contribute to their physical wellbeing, and help them gain useful habits, develop positive peer relations, socialize and experience positive emotions such as solidarity and unity through team sports.

6.2.4 Cultural Activities and Support

The Young Lives Foundation organizes quiz programs, concerts, poetry reading sessions, cultural symposiums, movie screenings, trips, international children's day celebrations and many other similar activities widening the scope of its child-oriented and adolescent-oriented activities. The objective of organizing such activities is to contribute to their information pool, to enable them to meet and interact with their peers and to play a more active role in their community.

Trip to Budapest, Hungary

In September 2023, responding to an invitation from Hungary, and with the support of Türkiye's Ambassador to Hungary Ms Gülşen Karanis Ekşiöğlü, earthquake victim youngsters went on a cultural trip of 6 nights and 7 days to Budapest.

This motivational trip uplifted the youngsters' spirits immensely. They went sightseeing, had fun and enjoyed unforgettable moments. Our communication with them continues, the WhatsApp group we set up for the trip has allowed us to stay connected to the students from different provinces and regions, and some of them have received scholarships or



participated in other youth programs.

During the trip the students said that both moving away from the disaster environment and getting to learn about a new culture made them feel well. Below are some of their messages:

“I felt valued; I saw the effort of everyone and I am grateful for everything.”

It was an excellent trip. It was a very lovely experience for me. I am very happy, those days when we almost choked laughing, when we had so much fun let me have very beautiful and unique moments. I am grateful to everyone. They were so warm and good to us, I never felt like a stranger. Thank you for all the values they awarded to my life, I am grateful for your existence”

“The trip was much more beautiful than I had imagined. It was brief, but every day was so full of new experiences. I believe we spent time efficiently. I was not bored at all, everywhere we went was mesmerizing and fun. I am grateful to Hungary and the Young Lives Foundation.”

“Hello, I made my first trip abroad thanks to you. It was an unforgettable trip. I have so many memories. We laughed a lot, we had a lot of fun. You took very good care of us, thank you very much for everything.”

“It was my first experience abroad. The first and the most special. Your team was very kind and well-organized. They did not ignore our requests. They were very considerate. Thank you very much. I was happy”

“It was an unforgettable experience for me. The smiles and sincerity of the whole team warmed my heart. We enjoyed everything we did and everything we saw.”



Education Material Support for Children and Adolescents:

In addition to organizing educational programs such as soft skills, coding and twin trainings, sports activities and cultural activities, the Young Lives Foundation also strives to assist the children’s and adolescents’ access to education materials. The earthquake damaged hundreds of thousands of buildings, the homes and belongings of the majority of the earthquake victims were completely destroyed, and children and adolescents lost their toys, books and other study materials. The loss of these toys, books and education materials causes children and adolescents to experience a sense of loss, causing emotional stress and grief.

To help children and adolescents cope with challenging experiences and to support their wellbeing, we prepared and distributed kits consisting of stationery, toys, textbooks and reading materials. Separate kits were prepared for 4-6, 7-11, 12-14 and 15-18 age groups with books and toys suitable for each group. The books were picked with great care, ensuring that they did not contain anything to trigger the effects of the traumatic events of the disaster.

Going back to old routines plays a significant role in the post-disaster wellbeing of children and adolescents. For them school is an important and indispensable element of going back to routine, to the normal. Stationery, textbooks and reading materials have alleviated the dropout risk caused by failure to access education materials and supported children’s and adolescents’ school attendance. Thus, normalization and continuity of education has been contributed to.

6.2.5 Ebeveyn Eğitimleri



The Young Lives Foundation focuses on the special challenges of adolescence and organizes parent trainings in order to support parents and be by their side during this tough period. The information and vision acquired through psychosocial support and individual psychotherapy sessions with adolescents, family interviews and field observations, specific challenges have been determined and the trainings have been designed accordingly. Thus, “Post-disaster Communication of Parents with Children”, “Positive Parenting and Sensitivity” and “Approach to and Prevention of Addiction in Children and Adolescents” trainings have been organized. These trainings contribute to facilitating the post-disaster communication of adolescents with their parents, developing positive parenting skills, awareness raising regarding the conditions and needs of individuals with special needs, and early recognition and prevention of tobacco, alcohol, substance and technology addiction.

6.2.6 Teacher Trainings

After the earthquakes, hundreds of thousands of children and adolescents had to leave their hometowns and were settled in different provinces. They are now trying to cope with the effects of being parted from their loved ones and adapting to a new town on top of the impact of the damage, emotional challenges, loss and mourning caused by the earthquake. This process is especially hard for adolescents, since friendships play a crucial role in their emotional development. Being torn away from friends, being deprived of peer support, inability to be part of a group and exclusion by peers cause adolescents to feel lonely and deepen the trauma caused by the earthquake. Moreover, adolescence is a period of identity formation and a change of location during this period constitutes an extra stress element. Trying to adapt to a new town, getting used to a new culture and forming new friendships create emotional stress for adolescents.

The Young Lives Foundation has organized psychological support activities for children and adolescents aged 6-9, 10-13 and 14-18 who had to move to Izmir after the earthquake, aiming to support their psychological wellbeing and school adaptation processes. It has also organized "Social Adaptation Training for Teachers" to help teachers improve their skills of communicating with children affected by the earthquake and supporting their adaptation to school. The training covers topics such as potential post-disaster trauma and stress reactions children and adolescents can exhibit, post-disaster communication with children, supporting harmony in the classroom, co-existence with diversity, peer bullying and non-violent communications. Teachers are expected to put into practice what they learn in the trainings in the classrooms and in schools, thus the said trainings are expected to contribute to the psychological wellbeing and social adaptation processes of the children affected by the disaster.

6.2.7 Capacity Development Trainings for Our Field Teams

Most of the approaches adopted and materials used in post-disaster work in the earthquake region are derived from the experiences gained in the aftermath of the 1999 Gölcük Earthquake. The Young Lives Foundation believes that, in addition to past experiences and relevant literature, knowledge in conformity with current conditions and needs should be acquired. It acts with the awareness that being able to speak the same language with them, knowing about the trends they like and follow and continuously updating oneself are crucial in working with adolescents. It strives to improve the capacity of its field teams during post-disaster work.

A series of trainings has been designed based on the experiences and observations in the earthquake regions, opinions of the specialists in the field and requests of field teams. Titles of the capacity development trainings organized for our field teams are given below:

1. Points of Caution for Post-disaster Psychological First Aid & Psychological Support
2. How to Work with Loss and Grief
3. Communicating with Trauma Victims & Communications with the Child and the Family
4. Effective Communications & Communications Amongst the Team
5. Supporting the Field Team's Self-care & Wellbeing
6. Post-disaster Protection Processes
7. How to Approach Addicts
8. Mind-Body Approach to Working with Post-Earthquake Trauma
9. Working with Adolescents – Points of Caution

7. CURRENT ACTIVITIES

7.1 Our Child-friendly and Adolescent-friendly Safe Spaces



In the aftermath of the disasters experienced in the earthquake regions, child-friendly safe spaces have constituted a major support mechanism for the rehabilitation of children and adolescents. These act like refuges for the youngsters, places where they can feel safe in the process of coming to terms with the trauma they experienced and healing, where they can increase their emotional resilience and re-establish their social connections.

For children who are earthquake victims, child-friendly spaces constitute a source of stability in the midst of the post-disaster chaos. These are places where they can fight their stress by playing and having fun, where they can have social interaction with their peers and thus avoid feeling lonely. Playing is a natural way of self-expression for children, and such spaces provide them with this opportunity, thereby alleviating the impact of their traumatic experiences.

Similarly, adolescent-friendly safe spaces are places where adolescents can feel safe and supported, and where they can deal with their traumatic experiences together with their peers and adult guides. These spaces allow them to work on the challenges they are encountering and develop coping strategies. Here, they can develop their social skills and self-confidence, raise their awareness about subjects such as substance addiction and technology use, and are encouraged to adopt healthy living habits.

Creative and physical activities such as arts and sports support youngsters' emotional self-expression and help them protect their physical wellbeing, while also allowing them to discover their potential and acquire new skills.



Trainings organized in these spaces, such as informatics and coding provide adolescents with opportunities for learning 21st century skills and setting themselves new objectives.

Child-friendly spaces contribute significantly to post-disaster normalization of children and adolescents. They help them to understand and overcome the post-trauma challenges they are encountering, and to be reintegrated with their community. These safe spaces designed to respond to the emotional needs of children and adolescents and develop their soft skills constitute a basic element of the post-disaster healing of the community, and play a crucial role for the healthy development of the earthquake-stricken young generation. Based on this approach and these observations, the Young Lives Foundation set up child-friendly safe spaces for children and adolescents both in Adiyaman and in Hatay.

Post-disaster psychosocial support activities in the earthquake region focus primarily on pre-school and primary school age groups.

Adolescent-oriented activities consist mainly of academic support while psychosocial support activities are all carried on in the same space, with no distinction between or separation of adolescents and children. It was noted that adolescents needed their space where they could share the difficult experiences they had, develop an understanding of the complex processes inherent to adolescence, socialize with their peers, discover their potential and acquire new skills. The Young Lives Foundation aims to respond to the specific needs of children and adolescents by creating child-friendly and adolescent-friendly spaces in conformity with their ages and developmental stages, where they can be together with their peers.

Psychosocial support programs, soft skills trainings, sports activities, coding and informatics trainings and psychotherapy support are provided in the child-friendly and adolescent-friendly safe spaces at our Adiyaman and Hatay community centers. Our child-friendly and adolescent-friendly safe spaces are safe and supportive spaces designed specifically for children and adolescents, supporting their psychosocial wellbeing, and play a major role in our post-disaster psychosocial support work in the earthquake regions. In child-friendly safe spaces, psychosocial support programs are implemented, providing children with opportunities for playing, participating in arts activities such as drawing, music and drama, and finding in sports activities a positive outlet for the discharge of their energy. Thus, children are supported to express their emotions, to maintain their physical wellbeing, to acquire new skills and to form positive peer relations.

Adolescents who meet with their peers in the safe space share their feelings, thoughts and experiences, support each other, acquire healthy living habits through sports activities, raise their awareness regarding harmful habits such as substance and technology addiction, acquire 21st century skills and develop new objectives and plans about future. Adolescents who participate in cultural and artistic activities as well as activities in a wide range extending from sports to informatics and soft skills trainings can be expected to adopt a more positive outlook to future, and we hope to support their normalization by providing them with a perspective not related to the problems caused by the earthquake and helping them to fulfill their potential and to set their routine.

7.2. Woman-friendly Safe Space and Hairdresser

“Some women, our friends could not go out at all, due to their hormone disorders. Thanks to this hairdresser, they participate in life a bit better.”

Safe spaces for women and hairdressing services not only respond to the physical needs of women and young girls who are trying to rebuild their lives after the earthquake, but also contributes to their self-respect and social solidarity. Such services play a major role in their coping with the psychological impact of the disaster and returning to their self-care routines, which in turn is vital for their general wellbeing.

Woman-friendly spaces ensure safety and privacy, and thus provide women and young girls with a space where they can benefit from self-care and self-expression, while hairdressing services give them the opportunity of benefitting from the personal care services generally neglected after the earthquake, thus helping them take another step towards normalization. For many women and young girls, hairdressing or any similar beauty-related act means a lot more than an improvement of their appearance. Such services improve their self-confidence and spirits, and alleviate the stress and loss of control feeling caused by their traumatic experiences.



Access to hairdressing services increases the young girls' self-confidence and encourages them to engage in social interaction with their peers, as well as giving them the opportunity to pull themselves together and improve their personal image in the midst of the chaos created by earthquake, also endowing them with an emotional and aesthetical sense of control in dealing with the losses and changes they have been experiencing.

Woman-friendly spaces and hairdressing services strengthen social connections and support networks in addition to helping women and young girls in their post-trauma rehabilitation. Such services encourage them to play an active role in their community and makes them confident in discovering their personal strength and coping with challenges. The safe and supportive environment supports their physical and psychological wellbeing and enables them to play a major role in the community's post-disaster recovery process. To sum up, woman-friendly spaces and hairdressing services create a positive change in the lives of women and young girls and contribute to their post-disaster social and psychological rehabilitation. The Young Lives Foundation created these spaces with this perspective.

Natural disasters such as earthquakes impact everyone, but create additional difficulties for women. Women rendered homeless or who had to leave their neighborhood due to the damage and destruction caused by the earthquake face many risks such as safety, sickness and violence. Difficulties in accessing clean water and sanitary products make a negative impact on their self-care. During our post-disaster work in the earthquake regions we observed that women's psychological, emotional and physical wellbeing was affected, that they were devoid of their usual routines, that they could not socialize, they didn't feel safe and that their privacy was restricted in the mass accommodation areas. So in Hatay we set up a woman-friendly safe space where their basic personal care needs could be met and where they could socialize. Our aim is to enable women coming to our Hatay Community Center and benefitting from the services at the woman-friendly safe space to revert to their daily routines, thus contributing to their normalization process and supporting their wellbeing through self-care.

In our adolescent-oriented work, we are aware of the role played by the communications and relations of children and adolescents with their caregivers in alleviating the disaster's destructive effects. Thus, knowing that supporting the wellbeing of mothers who are the caregivers who spend more time with their children will contribute directly to the adolescents' wellbeing, we support them both with trainings and with our woman-friendly safe space.



This space has also enabled beneficiaries to be informed about individual psychotherapy sessions for children and adults, parent trainings and trainings and psychosocial support activities for children.

Women coming to our community center also benefit from psychotherapy services to support their wellbeing, and participate in various trainings aimed at improving their parenting skills, as their children participate in trainings and psychosocial support activities or attend individual psychotherapy sessions at our Center. Thus, the wellbeing of children and adolescents continues to be supported with an integrative approach

8. YOUNG ADULTS SPEAK: "How can youngsters be supported"

Finally, some of the answers to the question, "Many institutions are organizing activities to support youngsters in the post-disaster period. Considering your needs and the needs of your peers, what can be done to satisfy youngsters' needs, how can youngsters be supported?" are given below:

1. "Youngsters should not be subjected to pressure and their decisions should be respected."
2. "Concerts, sports and arts activities, musical activities to help them forget the psychological nasty experiences they may have had."
3. "The young generation's negative, judgemental thoughts are criticized constantly. We were trying to be the best with the chances we had, and the perfectionists around us compelled us to be the worst."
4. "We suffered setbacks in education after the earthquake, so we need to repeat those subjects. For example I could not attend school during the second semester of the 8th grade, and now in the 9th grade I am suffering from that setback."
5. "What can be done to make youngsters like education, to prepare well for our future? I think these should be discussed. Currently, the youngsters, me included, are anxious about future. It matters to me to be able to have my family by my side if another earthquake or something like that happens in future. I need to have a good profession and income so that I can bring them to live with me."
6. "You can't support youngsters. This is not something to be solved by talking. Not everything can be rectified with two pieces of paper. Thanks."
7. "I don't think that any institution is organizing any youngster-oriented activities or is engaged in any such work particularly in the district and province where I live. There should be many activities, because it is an earthquake-stricken city, but the opposite occurs. I don't know why either. But psychological work for youngsters will be very useful."
8. "First a picture of youngsters and their needs must be drawn. Youngsters must be heard and made to feel safe. Then, work in accordance with their needs must be undertaken. Everyone suffered from the earthquake, whatever their age, but we were affected more, because the psychology of children and youngsters is more fragile."
9. "We lost most of our belongings with the earthquake and have to buy them anew, and these are rather expensive, so the needs of us, youngsters are always being postponed."
10. "Activities for after school hours, coping with pressure, correct use of social media, coping with attention disorder, improving concentration skills, overcoming difficulties in peer communications, dealing with emotions"
11. "You can give out source books. Study spaces can be set up or expanded for those who can't attend private tutorials."
12. "I see that tobacco addiction is widespread among my peers. I don't smoke but I am sorry for them. Something can be done about this. Cigarette addiction especially, it is very widespread, and smokers are young, aged 14-18."
13. "For example, taking youngsters away from their depressive surroundings and let them be distracted. Excursions out of town etc."
14. "Youngsters are not supported, they are criticized all the time. All parents determine a path and want us to follow"

it, not care about our ideas. First, something must be done about this attitude of parents, of applying pressure and not understanding. Then activities for the wellbeing and freedom of youngsters must be organized."

15. "Better psychological support, activities. There was at first, but now everyone has forgotten about the earthquake, but there are still people experiencing psychological problems. Programs must be developed for those having trouble studying."
16. "Libraries are a must, it is very difficult to study at home under these conditions. Fun places for youngsters. Staying at home has a worse effect on them."
17. "Informative activities about setting up our own business, controlling our life, normal life, sports activities, trainings about how to behave in difficult situations."
18. "Cafés where we can socialize, career planning activities."
19. "It is difficult to reach school, there must be schoolbuses for children everywhere, not only in certain regions. There must be stationery aid. School canteens are very expensive. There are no activities for stress relief for youngsters."
20. "Let the youngsters meet somewhere, express their problems and needs, let this be videotaped and shared in the social media so that everyone becomes a little aware, perhaps then some may change somethings. We also feel bad because we are in the earthquake region. Please let there be movies, theatres, concerts here. We can do almost nothing outside of school and home. I am also young and my main demand is for an increase in social facilities. I would like to get away from everything and be distracted at least for a while. I think this is the need of all of us. Please consider it."
21. "There is a widespread lack of technological equipment. There are those having internet problems. There are children who lost their books in the earthquake or in fires. Many have financial difficulties, they can be given scholarships."
22. "You know that some schools were destroyed and many students had to go to other schools. Transportation problems increased. Even the traffic lights are not functioning. There is no order in our city. Please don't forget Hatay, we also had everything before the earthquake."
23. "For a very long time now, I have had trouble accessing internet. This creates problems regarding my studies and also obstructs my communications with family members in other provinces. We are financially stressed, and so can't get additional internet packages. At least for me currently this is a very huge problem."
24. "We should definitely be supported for transportation. I am in the 12th grade and also attend private tutorials. A bus comes once every two hours. All roads are damaged. I think we need psychological support. There have to be social activities to contribute to our motivation. Students in the earthquake region must be supported more."
25. "Actually we can achieve a lot if we want to. But people in general are living with no purpose whatsoever, with no hope and few expectations regarding future. They don't want anything, noone looks forward to future. I have no idea how this can be changed, but it won't be easy. I don't think we have an enthusiastic joy of living."
26. "Youngsters with entrepreneurial orientation must be supported. And sadly we suffered a lot psychologically. I don't think youngsters can enjoy their youth here, so there must be fun activities and so on and so forth."
27. "Young and energetic persons who can understand youngsters must come. Doing something just once is wrong, if something is going to be done, it should be continued, not left after one day. Psychological support must be provided."

28. "As time passes, what we have lived through is gradually forgotten. We had a very difficult experience. This should not be forgotten. For example we pay for the schoolbus. I think we should not. Many students may be lacking income. Many buildings are being taken down, I would expect this to be done at more convenient times without disturbing the students. For example, there should be social activities at school. Our lunches should be sponsored. Guidance classes should be increased."

Based on these answers, we can categorize the youngsters' post-disaster needs and support methods:

1. Psychological and Social Support:

Organizing concerts, sports, arts and music activities to support the youngsters psychologically and help them overcome the disaster's effects.

Providing psychological support, especially to the youngsters living in the earthquake region.

Improving their skills for coping with emotional and psychological challenges.

Guidance regarding social media use, attention disorder and peer communications.

2. Education Support:

Extra classes and learning materials to compensate for the loss due to earthquake.

Setting up or expanding study spaces.

Setting up libraries and reading spaces.

Source book aid and support for students who can't afford private tutorials.

3. Economic and Financial Support:

Replacing the belongings lost due to the earthquake.

Financial support for the youngsters' needs, scholarships.

Sponsorship of transportation, stationery and school canteen purchases.

4. Career Planning:

Informative activities regarding career planning and setting up business.

Activities and information to alleviate youngsters' anxiety regarding future.

5. Parents and Public Awareness:

Trainings and awareness raising to reduce parents' oppressive attitudes and their lack of understanding.

Ensuring that youngsters are heard and raising public awareness about them.

6. Excursions and Fun Activities:

Social activities such as excursions out of town, movies, theatres and concerts.

Creating spaces where youngsters can socialize and have fun.

7. Health and Combating Addiction:

Awareness and intervention programs regarding health related issues such as tobacco addiction.

8. Infrastructure and Technology Support:

Improving access to internet and technological devices.

Earthquake and disaster trainings and drills.

These categorized answers may provide guidance in developing a comprehensive approach to satisfying the youngsters' post-disaster needs. Each category should suggest specific solutions for improving the youngsters' quality of life and alleviating the effects of the disaster.

A review of various approaches to supporting the youngsters in the post disaster period and responding to their needs reveals certain categorical solution suggestions. Firstly, psychological and social support appear to have prominence. Within this context, concerts, sports and arts activities supporting the youngsters' wellbeing may help alleviate the effects of their traumatic experiences. For example, activities organized "to help them forget the psychological nasty experiences they may have had" to quote one of the answers, may have a relaxing effect.

Education support is also critical. Extra classes to compensate for the losses caused by the disaster, learning materials and setting up study spaces are needed. In the words of a student, "We suffered setbacks in education after the earthquake, so we need to repeat those subjects".

Economic and financial support is a must, especially so that the belongings lost in the disaster can be replaced and the youngsters' financial needs related to education can be met. A youngster's words, "We lost most of our belongings with the earthquake and have to buy them anew" testify to this need.

Activities regarding career planning and anxiety about future are also important for youngsters. Uncertainties about future and professional expectations are causes of widespread concern. The question, "What can be done to make youngsters like education, to prepare well for our future?" is a reflection of these concerns.

Parenting and public awareness is also significant. To be sensitive to the opinions and needs of youngsters can stop them feel under pressure and can help them more meaningfully. A youngster's comment, "They must support youngsters more, rather than putting pressure on them" underlines this need.

Excursions and fun activities play a vital role in the social and psychological wellbeing of youngsters. Activities freeing them from daily stress and keeping their spirits up in the post-disaster period are especially suggested.

Health and combating addiction requires programs for the prevention of use of addictive substances such as tobacco. The extent to which such habits are widespread among youngsters draws attention to the significance of such programs.

Finally, infrastructure and technology support plays a critical role in meeting the youngsters' education and communication needs in the post-disaster period. Access to internet and technological devices will facilitate the youngsters' access to information and assist their education.

All of these suggestions together may lead to forming a structure which can help youngsters overcome the problems they encounter in the post-disaster period and improve their social, educational and psychological wellbeing.



9. CONCLUSION

The Young Lives Foundation aims to develop a comprehensive post-disaster support model designed for adolescents and youngsters. This model is composed of three main elements, namely access to basic necessities of life, access to education facilities and access to social integration:

1. Access to basic necessities of life: The first priority in all activities related to children and adolescents is to make sure that they have access to basic necessities, namely vital elements such as safe accommodation, sufficient and healthy nutrition, access to clean water and basic medical services. Trainings and other similar activities with children and adolescents who can't access basic necessities can cause harm, rather than help them. For example a "Hygiene and self-care" training may cause a child who has no access to clean water and lavatories feel guilty for this deprivation. This is in contradiction with the principle of "causing no harm". Thus, the Young Lives Foundation started its activities in the earthquake region with activities aimed at meeting basic necessities. Our suggestion regarding this issue is that efforts aimed at full access of all children in the earthquake region to basic necessities and services as soon as possible to be continued with the cooperation of public, private and third sectors. It is widely acknowledged in academic literature that when basic necessities of life are not met, satisfaction of other needs such as education may have negative effects on youngsters and adolescents.¹
2. Access to education: Extraordinary situations such as pandemics and earthquakes have a massive impact on everyone, and cause some risks concerning children and youngsters to become more visible. Among these risks are child labor forced early marriages, gender-based violence and addiction in various forms. The Young Lives Foundation believes that education is our main instrument in protecting children and adolescents from these risks. Thus our objective is to ensure that everyone in our target group of children and adolescents attends school and that the quality of the education they access is improved. In the post-disaster period, flexible and innovative solutions are needed to ensure that education is not interrupted and that students can continue their education uninterruptedly. Providing models ensuring the access to quality education of children and adolescents in the disaster region whose education has been interrupted for the second time after the pandemic, and supporting them with specially designed models so that they can compete with their peers is extremely vital for the minimization of such risks. Access to education is a major factor in supporting the youngsters' cognitive and social development and in minimizing the long-term effects of the interruptions caused by the disaster.²
3. Social integration: Our fundamental observation regarding children and adolescents who have participated in the activities we have organized in earthquake regions up to now is that the damage caused by the earthquake has also completely destroyed all social spaces of these age groups. Risks such as child labor, addiction, forced early marriages and gender-based violence are further aggravated for adolescents who are deprived of their physical spaces and public participation mechanisms. The Young Lives Foundation has aimed to set up spaces supporting youngsters' development and active participation where they can mingle with their peers at its community centers in Hatay and Adiyaman. Creation of safe spaces where adolescents can benefit from in various fields such as sports, arts and technology and where they can have access to healthy nutrition, supports their psychological wellbeing and helps them develop coping mechanisms through public participation. Social activities, group therapies, peer support programs and activities encouraging interactions within the community are significant in this respect. Strengthening social solidarity and the connections within the community helps adolescents and youngsters to deal with their traumas and integrate with their community. Social interaction and integration are critical for the emotional and social development of youngsters and

¹ The important role of meeting the basic necessities in post-disaster psychological recovery is supported by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory as well. According to Maslow, it is hard for individuals to concentrate on high-level needs such as social and cognitive needs, unless their safety and physiological needs are met (Maslow, 1943).

² The importance of access to and continuity of education is underlined in Bruner's education theory. Bruner notes that education plays a critical role in developing the individual's thinking structure and in social adaptation (Bruner, 1960). The importance of flexible approaches in post-disaster education is stressed also by institutions such as UNICEF and WHO.

adolescents. Maintaining and strengthening social relations in the post-disaster period contributes positively to the youngsters' social adaptation processes.³

This support model based on these three main elements aims at providing comprehensive post-disaster support to youngsters and adolescents and ensuring that they continue to develop on a sounder social basis. It takes into account their short-term and long-term needs and aims to help their individual and social recovery.

This three-pronged model encourages youngsters' participation in post-disaster society as healthy and active individuals, while also ensuring them to be more resilient in the face of future challenges. This holistic approach deals with their needs comprehensively and supports their post-disaster rehabilitation process.

The Young Lives Foundation takes an important step in shaping the society's future by focusing primarily on adolescents in its activities in the regions affected by the earthquake. Adolescents occupy the center of the post-disaster intervention work, because the period of adolescence plays a critical role in the development and resilience of a society.

Future leaders: Adolescents are the future leaders, entrepreneurs and social influencers, so preparing them well for these roles is a basic factor for the sustainable development of the society.

Skill development: Adolescence is a period when youngsters discover their areas of interest, improve their skills and fulfill their potential. This provides an opportunity for the society to support their skills and help them build their future.

Public participation: Adolescents grow up to become aware of their social responsibilities and to participate actively in public life. This can contribute to the society's preservation of its democratic values and increasing civilian participation.

Creative solutions: Youngsters are open for new and creative ideas. Therefore, encouraging them to solve post-disaster problems may help the community to recover better.

Resilience and adaptation: Adolescents may prove to be flexible in coping with challenges and adapting to change. This can help the community to deal with post-disaster challenges more effectively.

The Young Lives Foundation attaches particular importance to the post-disaster challenges encountered by youngsters, and designs its interventions targeting them with this awareness. The Foundation is engaged in strategic work in order to alleviate the earthquake's impact on youngsters and to ensure them to integrate with the society in a strong and resilient manner. This approach aims to encourage youngsters to regard themselves as the future of the society and to fulfill their potential fully. The objective is to allow the post-disaster society to have a more resilient and sustainable structure.

³ Bowlby's Attachment Theory supports the significance attached to social integration and support systems. Bowlby stresses the importance of secure attachment and social support in the individuals' healthy psychological development (Bowlby, 1969). Strengthening post-disaster social support systems is also noted as an effective method in helping with post-traumatic stress disorder in academic literature (Hobfoll et al., 2007).

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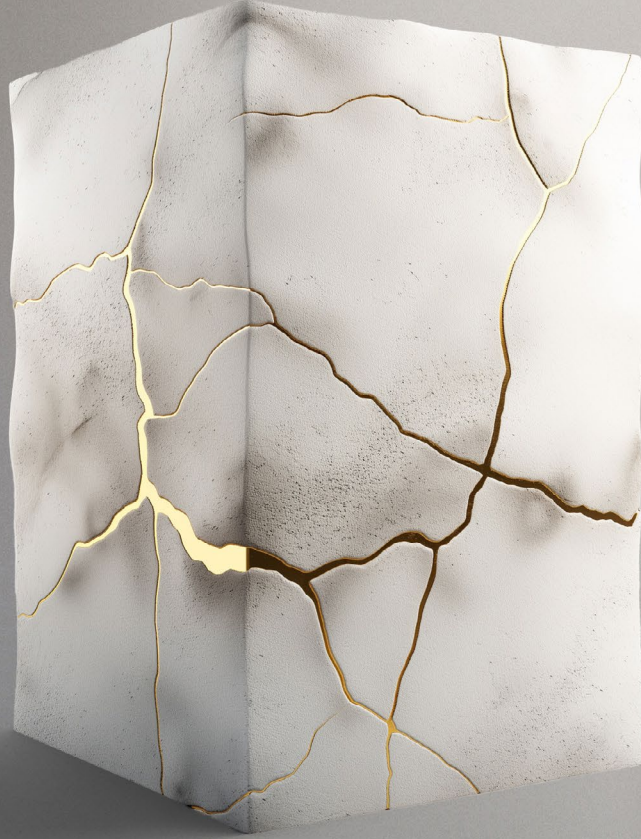
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