

Disability-Led Organizations Continue Responding to People with Disabilities in Türkiye and Syria

In the two months since the 7.8 magnitude earthquake devastated parts of Türkiye and Syria, residents have experienced 22,000 additional earthquakes and aftershocks. In the midst of this overwhelming and ongoing crisis, disability led organizations (DLO) continue to work daily to try and meet the needs of adults and children who are displaced from their homes, separated from their disability equipment and supplies, in need of medical services and basic living essentials; even while they, themselves are working to find safe places to convene and continue operations.

They need partners, allies and supporters from around the globe to meet the urgent needs of their community, now more than ever. [GADRA's rapid response Emergency Operations Center](#) selected 6 outstanding disability-led organizations from many applications for assistance. These organizations are in need of resources immediately and in the difficult months ahead. GADRA is conducting a global search to connect them with the resources and support they desperately need to support their community. Please join our efforts to meet the most critical needs of:

People with disabilities being served by these DLOs:

- Durable medical equipment, disability and medical supplies,
- disability related daily living needs,
- accessible transportation, temporary shelters, and permanent housing.

The organizations themselves:

- Safe working and storage locations, replacing destroyed technology and office equipment,
- banking and organizational administration, staffing and case management,
- accessible transportation, shipping and distribution assistance.

Meet the organizations:

Syria:

Almostakbal Association for the Physically Disabled Persons is a disability-led organization located in Aleppo, Syria, with expertise in rehabilitation and development for people with disabilities, as most of the founders are disabled themselves.

Mission and Action: They have first-hand experience and educational background to support people with disabilities. They were providing on-going support, treatment and rehabilitation for people with existing or acquired disabilities as a result of the war, and treatment and prevention guidance for skin ulcers, urinary tract infections, and kidney failure.

Post Disaster: In response to the increased barriers to access the care and basic life necessities, they are assisting more than 1000 people with disabilities, opening two shelter centers and are hoping to provide long term solutions like accessible housing and vocational skills to generate incomes and careers for people with newly acquired disabilities. **They are looking for partners to help with:**

- prosthetics,
- wheelchairs,
- crutches, and

- other medical equipment.

Türkiye

The Association of Women with Disabilities (Engelli Kadın Derneği) is a nationally recognized non-governmental organization in Ankara Türkiye, run by women with disabilities for women with disabilities.

Mission and Action: to inform women with disabilities on the subjects of discrimination, disability rights, gender, violence against women and possible protection mechanisms. They conduct and present research to advance and advocate for women with disabilities.

Post Disaster: They are working on the ground in multiple cities throughout Türkiye to support inclusive emergency response and consulting with other organizations on accessible and inclusive planning. They are both providing direct support to disabled people, other organizations, and rescue teams on inclusive disaster response. They are not looking for charity. **They are looking for partners to help with:**

- organizational partner support,
- disability and medical supplies and services,
- personal hygiene and family care support.

Engelsiz Bileşenler Federasyonu (Federation of Associations for Barrier Free Living) is based in Diyarbakır, Türkiye.

Mission and Action: They are working to gather national and foreign associations under a single mantle of cooperation and coordination; to increase the participation and independence of disabled persons in their communities; to bring about social justice and empower all disabled people to live in rights-based welfare and peace.

Post Disaster: Since the earthquakes, they are continuing their work in disability rights and advocacy while providing tangible help to disabled survivors. They are attempting to set up a repair shop to audit for safety and functionality, and repair damaged equipment. **They are looking for partners to help with:**

- disability supplies,
- repair, replacement and provision of new disability equipment,
- dietary supplies.

Engelsiz Arsuz Gençlik Ve Spor Kulübü Derneği (Accessible World Federation) is an advocacy DLO in Hatay, Türkiye

Mission and Action: They collaborate with national and international NGOs, preparing and presenting reports on rights of persons with disabilities, elevating their voice and supporting all disabled people in the region.

Post Disaster: In Hatay, 80% of the buildings were heavily damaged or destroyed, including the DLO's headquarters. They are without office space from which to continue their work and respond to requests for assistance. **They are looking for partners to help with:**

- safe office and storage space, replacement equipment, and personnel
- medical supplies and medical care,
- psychological and legal support services.

Engelliler ve Gençlik Eğitim Kültür Sağlık Spor ve Yardımlaşma Derneği (Disabled and Youth Education, Culture, Health, Sports, and Solidarity Association) is a rights-based, cross-disability-led organization in Ankara, Türkiye.

Mission and Action: They strive to ensure that all the principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) are implemented in Türkiye. The Association conducts monitoring and reporting activities to ensure that places, information, goods, and services are accessible to everyone.

Post-Disaster: Their focus on access and equity continues as they serve displaced survivors in Ankara who were disabled prior to or because of the earthquake. Knowing the risks for disabled people in disasters, they work to defer institutionalization and support independent living and self-determination for disabled survivors.

They are looking for partners to help with:

- basic food and hygiene needs,
- equipment replacement,
- advocacy and legal counseling and psychological support services for survivors and internal personnel.

Türkish Beyazay Association was established by visually impaired students from Boğaziçi University who formed the basis for the Beyazay Working Group which became the Beyazay Association for the Visually Impaired in 1992.

Mission and Action: Their mission is to empower people with disabilities through education, protecting their rights, promoting their social and economic integration, eliminating discrimination, and fostering mutual respect within society. They opened the first computer laboratory for the visual disabilities in Türkiye and partnered with Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality to launch "***The Future of Blindness Project,***" empowering visually impaired people to live independently through sharing of new developments, ideas, and methods from experts in the United States and educators in Türkiye.

Post Disaster: Turkish Beyazay Association expanded their support to the larger disability community, working collaboratively with others to help people with previously existing and disaster-caused physical and mobility disabilities, both in the community and temporary shelter locations. **They are looking for partners to help with:**

- leg, foot, hand prosthesis, and orthoses for adults with physical disabilities,
- hearing aids,
- crutches, canes, and wheelchairs.

GADRA is reaching out on behalf of these DLOs. With your support, we can ensure that no one is left behind.

To provide assistance to one or all of these organizations actively responding to people with disabilities and their disaster impacted communities, please visit gadra.communityos.org. Once there, you may select the button to give as a Corporate or Foundation Funder. You can also email gadra@wid.org with questions. We look forward to partnering with you.

Sincerely,

[Global Alliance for Disaster Resource Acceleration Steering Team](#)

[World Institute on Disability, Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies, ONG Inclusiva](#)