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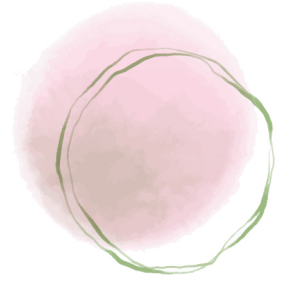


Gender-Sensitive Disaster Management Local Situation Analysis Report

The Absence of a Gender Perspective in Disaster Plans: A Critical Analysis of Institutional Policies, Civil Society and the Equality Axis in Istanbul and Surrounding Provinces



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FOREWORD

Within the scope of KADAV-Women's Solidarity Foundation's "Gender Equality in Disaster Risk Management" work programme, implemented with the support of UN Women Türkiye; This local situation analysis report, based on the six settlements where the project titled "NEIGHBOURHOOD – Women are Pioneers of a Disaster-Resilient Life" will be implemented, serves as a "starting point – roadmap" for establishing equality-focused local solidarity.

The aim of the project is to strengthen gender-sensitive disaster management in Türkiye by promoting inclusive policy advocacy and addressing gender-specific vulnerabilities in the context of disasters, particularly in relation to violence against women, care work, and sexual and reproductive health. The project's fundamental approach is to contribute to achieving gender equality in disaster management by providing capacity building and technical support to local women's civil society organisations, while also establishing localised, gender-sensitive disaster preparedness and response mechanisms.

The primary objective of the Local Situation Analysis Report prepared for this purpose is to strengthen local women's organisations ('neighbour organisations') in the provinces of Balıkesir, Çanakkale, Tekirdağ and Kütahya, as well as in two districts of Istanbul (Maltepe and Büyükçekmece), and to establish a local pressure group with them. This report, which emerged as a result of scanning and examining all kinds of documents related to disaster management in the relevant locality, such as legislation and action plans, through the lens of gender equality, aims to facilitate project objectives such as the advocacy action plan of the local organisation (organisations), the establishment of a local solidarity network, and the establishment of relations with local authorities on this basis. Furthermore, the report will enable the project team and the 'neighbour organisation' to address the specific needs of each locality in a more coherent framework when planning project activities to be carried out in each locality.

Moreover, this work will guide other women's organisations wishing to undertake planned work on disaster management and gender equality.

BACKGROUND

The climate crisis, disasters, wars and rent-seeking policies threaten all aspects of life; the heaviest burden falls on women, children, the elderly, the poor and all living beings. Minor adjustments are no longer enough; fundamental change is essential.

In contrast, disaster management policies in Türkiye have long been centralised, uniform, technocratic, and far removed from a risk reduction perspective. Essentially, a state of policy vacuum prevails. There is no inter-institutional sharing of tasks and responsibilities for disaster preparedness, nor is there any planning or risk reduction-focused budgeting in line with international standards. At the macro level, planned and public-oriented economies have been abandoned, and privatised public services are not being monitored. Gender equality norms have been largely abandoned, and policies that deepen inequality through public means are being implemented. Rights-based organisations are not included in disaster response processes, and the limited number of civil society organisations that are included are selected from among those that approach disasters through a culture of charity and aid. Widespread exploitation of nature and a rent-seeking system prevail, and the state encourages this situation. Far from mitigating the effects of the climate crisis, practices that exacerbate it and conventional industrial production continue.

On the other hand, the revenues and powers of municipalities, which play a critical role in disaster risk management and disaster response, are being restricted. More importantly, they are being paralysed in an environment of political chaos and their autonomy is being undermined. However, municipalities, as the most important public unit of local government mechanisms, should play a crucial role in disaster risk management.

- Reducing concrete and rent-focused construction, establishing nature-respecting, disaster-resilient ecological cities,
- In local equality action plans, acknowledging that women are not only the most affected but also the agents of rebuilding life in disaster preparedness and response processes; preparing all plans in consideration for gender equality and implementing them with the participation of women's civil society organisations,
- The increased burden of care, health and hygiene needs after a disaster should be planned in advance; creating safe spaces and special needs stocks for the safety of women and children,
- The protection of all citizens' property and right to healthy housing during disaster processes,

such critical roles can be fulfilled by municipalities, as the public institutions closest to the people.

Under these circumstances, it is crucial that women's organisations discuss disaster risk management in terms of dimensions such as gender inequalities, democratic participation and environmental rights, and develop action plans specifically aimed at influencing local authorities.

PURPOSE

This study critically analyses local disaster planning documents in two districts of Istanbul and surrounding provinces (Maltepe, Büyükçekmece, Tekirdağ, Balıkesir, Çanakkale, Kütahya) from the perspective of gender equality and civil society participation. Disaster Risk Reduction Plans (DRRP), Strategic Plans, and Local Equality Action Plans, examined using qualitative content analysis, reveal that institutional policies are largely gender-blind. Of the two districts and four provinces examined, only one (Maltepe) partially integrated gender into the disaster planning cycle. The findings show that civil society participation is limited to post-crisis intervention and is excluded from policy-making processes. The study conceptualises this approach, which deepens existing inequalities, as 'technocratic disaster governance' and aims to lay the groundwork for the development of a comprehensive policy and civil society strategy.

Keywords: Gender equality, Disaster management, Disaster risk management, Vulnerability, Intersectionality, Civil society, Local government, Istanbul, Türkiye, Balıkesir, Çanakkale, Tekirdağ, Kütahya

1. INTRODUCTION

Disasters are social events where social inequalities are sharply exposed and existing vulnerabilities are exacerbated. The destructive effects of a disaster are experienced unequally by different groups in society; this impact varies significantly depending on individuals' social status, access to economic resources, and level of participation in decision-making mechanisms. Socially marginalised groups such as women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, migrants/refugees and LGBTQ+ individuals face increased risks not only physically but also psychosocially, economically and structurally in the aftermath of disasters.

When a gender perspective is not systematically incorporated into disaster management processes, the needs of these vulnerable groups become invisible at the institutional level and are compounded during the post-disaster recovery process. In this context, gender equality is not only a matter of human rights but also an indispensable condition for effective, fair, and inclusive crisis management. International documents (United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women – CEDAW Recommendation 37, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, Sustainable Development Goals) explicitly emphasise the gender and social inclusion dimensions of disaster policies in this context. However, it has been observed that local practices in Türkiye are quite far from this normative framework.

This study aims to systematically analyse official documents related to disaster planning in two districts of Istanbul and four surrounding provinces (Maltepe, Büyükçekmece, Tekirdağ, Balıkesir, Çanakkale, Kütahya) from a gender perspective. Furthermore, by evaluating the role and level of participation of civil society in these processes, it aims to lay the groundwork for the development of a comprehensive, multi-actor, and multi-level policy strategy for gender-sensitive and rights-based disaster management.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Gender, Intersectionality and Disasters

Gender is a sociological concept that refers to the idea that individuals' roles, responsibilities, experiences, and opportunities within society are shaped by historical, cultural, social, and institutional factors rather than biological sex (Connell, 2009; Butler, 1990). Disasters are moments of crisis in which gender roles and power relations are reproduced, reshaped, and even deepened. The increase in women's unpaid care work, the reinforcement of men's traditional 'protective and rescuing' roles, and the complete invisibility of individuals who do not conform to gender norms (LGBTQ+) are the main elements that constitute the gender dimension of disasters.

To further deepen this analysis, the concept of intersectionality is of critical importance (Crenshaw, 1989). Intersectionality argues that the mechanisms of discrimination and oppression experienced by an individual or group are shaped not only by gender, but also by the intersection of multiple identities such as class, ethnicity, religion, disability status, migrant status, gender identity, and sexual orientation. Therefore, "woman" is not a homogeneous category; the experience of a disaster for a poor Roma woman, a Syrian refugee woman or a disabled woman differs fundamentally from that of a middle-class urban woman. An egalitarian and inclusive disaster policy must make these intersectional vulnerabilities visible and target them.

2.2. Theories of Vulnerability and Resilience in Disasters

Vulnerability is defined as the likelihood of suffering harm in the face of a hazard, and this likelihood is shaped not only by physical conditions but primarily by social, economic, and political inequalities. The 'Pressure and Release Model (PAR)' developed by Wisner et al. (2004) argues that disaster risk is the intersection of disaster hazard and social vulnerability. In this model, gender, root causes, dynamic pressures, and unsafe conditions are addressed in a systematic way to explain why women and other marginalised groups are more vulnerable. For example, when economic inequalities (root causes), limited access to resources (dynamic pressures) and inadequate housing conditions (unsafe conditions) come together, disaster risk increases exponentially.

2.3. Gender Mainstreaming in Disaster Management and Technocratic Criticism

The "Gender Mainstreaming" strategy adopted by the United Nations means integrating a gender equality perspective into the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation stages of all policies, programmes, and institutional structures (UN Women, 2016). In the context of disaster management, this approach requires not only projects targeting women, but also the reorganisation of the entire disaster cycle (mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery) from an equality perspective.

However, in practice, disaster management is often reduced to a **technocratic governance model**. This model abstracts risk from its social and political context, limiting it to engineering solutions, logistical models, and hierarc-

hical chains of command. The involvement of social sciences, gender, and local knowledge in this “technical” field is limited. Consequently, plans are prepared based on the assumption of a “one-size-fits-all citizen,” and all social inequality dynamics, including gender, become “blind spots.” This study examines the extent to which local disaster plans in Türkiye exhibit this technocratic tendency.

3. METHOD

This study examined disaster and planning documents from two districts in Istanbul and four surrounding provinces (Maltepe, Büyükçekmece, Tekirdağ, Balıkesir, Çanakkale, Kütahya) for the 2020-2024 period using qualitative content analysis. The data set consists of the following documents:

- Provincial Risk Reduction Plans (PRRP) of the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD)
- The 2020-2024 Strategic Plans of the relevant municipalities
- Local Equality Action Plans (LEAP – if available) of the municipalities
- Relevant sections from municipal activity reports and council minutes
- Reports, projects, and press releases related to disasters from civil society organisations (CSOs) operating in the region

The analysis was conducted based on four pre-determined key indicators:

- 1. Gender Focus in the PRRP:** Whether gender, women, vulnerable groups or equality are mentioned anywhere in the plan and, if so, whether they are supported by concrete actions.
- 2. Equality Target and Budget in the Strategic Plan:** Whether the strategic plan includes a measurable target and a separate budget for gender equality.
- 3. Visibility in Local Activities:** Whether women and vulnerable groups are identified as target audiences in the municipality's disaster preparedness or awareness-raising activities.
- 4. Civil Society Participation:** Whether there is a mechanism for formally consulting and involving civil society organisations, including women's organisations, in disaster planning processes.

Coding was performed as follows for each indicator:

- **0 (Absent):** No reference or concrete content is present.
 - **1 (Partially/Symbolic):** Gender, women or vulnerable groups are mentioned at a symbolic level, but no concrete action plan, budget, methodology or cooperation mechanism is proposed.
 - **2 (Existing and Explicit):** The gender perspective is explicitly adopted, the use of disaggregated data is committed to, and concrete action items, budget lines and NGO cooperation mechanisms are defined.
- The scores given for four indicators for each province were added up and a comparative scoring table was created out of a total of 8 points.

Limitations: This study analyses only written documents. How the rhetoric in these documents is or is not applied in the field is beyond the scope of this study and constitutes an important area for future research.

4.FINDINGS and COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The findings for the six provinces/districts examined are summarised and presented comparatively in the table below.

Table 1: Gender Perspective Scoring by Province/District

Province/District	DRRP (0-2)	Strategic Plan (0-2)	Local Activities (0-2)	NGO Participation (0-2)	Total Score (0-8)	Evaluation
Maltepe	1	2	2	2	7	Advanced
Büyükçekmece	0	2	1	1	4	Intermediate
Çanakkale	0	1	2	2	5	Intermediate
Tekirdağ	0	1	1	1	3	Weak
Kütayha	0	0	1	1	2	Weak
Balıkesir	0	1	0	0	1	Very Weak



4.1. Advanced Example: Maltepe

Maltepe has achieved the highest score with a total of 7 points. While gender equality is 'partially' included in the PRRP, equality targets and budgets are clearly defined in the Strategic Plan. The Local Equality Action Plan includes disaster provisions and regular cooperation mechanisms with women's organisations are in place. Special modules for women and persons with disabilities in disaster training are noteworthy.



4.2. Intermediate Level Examples: Büyükçekmece and Çanakkale

Büyüçekmece (4 points) mentions equality, albeit symbolically, in its Strategic Plan, but does not reflect these commitments in the PRRP. Çanakkale (5 points), despite its weak official plans, has been able to ensure the visibility of women in disaster response activities relatively better through local NGOs (e.g., women's organisations). However, it cannot be said that these activities have become an institutionalised and sustainable policy.

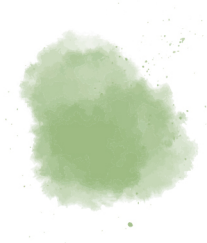
4.3. Weak and Very Weak Examples: Tekirdağ, Kütahya, Balıkesir

In these provinces (1-3 points), the gender perspective is either completely absent or extremely symbolic. IRAPs are written entirely in technical language, treating "society" as a homogeneous structure. Even if the words "women" and "family" appear in the Strategic Plans, this does not translate into concrete policy proposals. Civil society participation is either absent or limited to operational issues such as post-disaster aid distribution. Balıkesir, which scored zero in all categories, represents the most problematic example of the current situation.

4.4. Table of Findings by Province

The table below summarises whether the perspective of gender equality and the needs of vulnerable groups is included in the disaster preparedness and risk reduction plans for the 2020-2024 period for the provinces (and districts) of Istanbul-Büyüçekmece, Istanbul-Maltepe, Tekirdağ, Balıkesir, Çanakkale and Kütahya. The findings have been compiled based on AFAD Provincial Risk Reduction Plans (PRRP), municipal strategic plans, local government activities, and civil society and academic studies.

Province/District	AFAD Provincial Risk Reduction Plan (PRRP)	Municipal Strategic Plan (2020-2024)	Local Activities & NGO Work	Gender Perspective
Istanbul/Büyükcemece	In Istanbul's general PRRP, there is no particular emphasis on women or gender ; disadvantaged groups are mentioned in general terms, but there are no district-specific details.	Yes, (as stated in the document): The strategic plan includes the objective of " <i>making Büyükcemece a women-friendly city based on gender equality</i> ". This objective also encompasses strategies that take into account women's needs in areas such as education, green space management, and disasters .	The municipality's search and rescue team (BAKUT) provides disaster training in schools; however, there is no data indicating that the training includes specific content focused on gender equality. Although structures such as the Women's Council exist in the district, their participation in disaster planning appears to be limited.	Partially: Although the strategic plan strongly emphasises equality, the concrete reflection of this perspective in disaster training and planning is unclear. The perspective exists in documents but has not been fully mainstreamed in practice.



Province/District	AFAD Provincial Risk Reduction Plan (PRRP)	Municipal Strategic Plan (2020-2024)	Local Activities & NGO Work	Gender Perspective
Istanbul/Maltepe	Although Istanbul's PRRP makes some references to vulnerable groups across the province (e.g. persons with disabilities, the elderly), there is no record of gender-sensitive special measures .	Yes, (strong emphasis in the document): Maltepe Municipality's strategic plan and policy documents have placed social equality at the centre. The 2020-2024 Strategic Plan envisages regular gender equality training for staff; the municipal council adopted a Local Equality Action Plan in 2021.	Intensive activity: Maltepe prepared and launched its 2025-2029 Local Equality Action Plan in 2025. The Mayor stated that the plan aims to create ' <i>a more just, inclusive and equal life locally for women and disadvantaged groups</i> '. Women's NGOs and the city council were involved in these processes. Additionally, the Neighbourhood Disaster Volunteers Project provides disaster awareness training with broad participation, encouraging women's involvement in these sessions.	Yes (Example Application): The gender perspective has begun to be institutionalised in both strategic plans and activities. Maltepe is ahead of other examples in integrating this perspective into municipal work, including disaster preparedness.



Province/District	AFAD Provincial Risk Reduction Plan (PRRP)	Municipal Strategic Plan (2020-2024)	Local Activities & NGO Work	Gender Perspective
TEKİRDAĞ	When examining the Tekirdağ PRRP (2021), there is no distinct section on gender . The plan focuses on technical risk analysis and general public awareness actions, but does not include specific measures for vulnerable groups such as women, children, and persons with disabilities (there are only general statements such as 'post-disaster implementation of social services').	Partially: Tekirdağ Metropolitan Municipality's 2020-2024 strategic plan does not directly emphasise gender equality in its mission or vision . Although the principle of "social and equitable service" is included in the core values, it has been observed that this statement is not detailed in terms of gender equality. The municipality has a Department of Family and Community Services ; however, no separate women's or equality commission has been established.	Namık Kemal University's Women and Family Research Centre organised a panel discussion on 8 March 2023 on the topic of ' Disasters and Women '. At the panel, academics discussed the health and psychosocial problems of women affected by earthquakes. In Tekirdağ, civil society organisations such as KADEM carry out general awareness-raising activities for women. However, the integration of these actors into provincial disaster planning is weak.	Weak: The gender perspective is not explicitly included in official plans and programmes. Awareness of the issue remains largely confined to academic and civil society circles. The structures addressing the specific needs of women and vulnerable groups in disaster management are not institutionalised.



Province/District	AFAD Provincial Risk Reduction Plan (PRRP)	Municipal Strategic Plan (2020-2024)	Local Activities & NGO Work	Gender Perspective
BALIKESİR	Although disadvantaged groups are mentioned in general terms in the Balıkesir PRRP (2022), the plan does not clearly specify risk reduction actions specifically for women. Actions for which institutions such as AFAD and the Provincial Directorate of Family and Social Services are responsible have been defined; for example, there is no action such as <i>“preparing women’s shelters for disasters”</i>, but there are general duties stating that they will intervene if there is a need for social services.	Partially: The concept of gender equality is only mentioned in a couple of places in Balıkesir Metropolitan Municipality's 2020-2024 strategic plan, and there is no comprehensive equality policy. Indeed, the term “gender equality” does not appear in the strategic plans of 23 out of 30 metropolitan municipalities, and although Balıkesir is an exception in this regard, its vision and mission do not clearly reflect an egalitarian perspective. Although the plan includes items such as “meetings will be held on women’s issues in Balıkesir province”, this is not specific to disasters. The Municipality has a Department of	Women’s cooperatives and similar initiatives exist in Balıkesir (e.g. activities to increase female employment in rural areas). However, women-focused civil initiatives on disasters appear to be limited. In 2022, women’s organisations in the city were more concerned with issues such as November 25th; no significant work was identified on the role of women in disaster education or planning.	Very Limited: In Balıkesir, the perspective of gender equality is weakly reflected in the municipality’s strategy documents and is almost absent in disaster planning. As women and vulnerable groups are not specifically targeted in the plans, this perspective has not been institutionalised.

Province/District	AFAD Provincial Risk Reduction Plan (PRRP)	Municipal Strategic Plan (2020-2024)	Local Activities & NGO Work	Gender Perspective
ÇANAKKALE	Like other provinces, Çanakkale PRRP (2021) focuses on general risk reduction targets and does not incorporate a gender perspective. When addressing issues such as post-disaster shelter, logistics, and infrastructure, no separate planning has been done for women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.	Partially: While the emphasis on gender equality in Çanakkale Municipality's strategic plans reflects the values embraced by the administration (in line with the CHP municipal tradition), concrete implementation targets are limited. The municipality signed the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life in 2018 and has organised in-house training. However, there is no clear action plan in the strategy document regarding the needs of women in the context of disasters and emergencies.	Civil society and academia are active: Women's organisations and volunteer teams in Çanakkale played an important role in earthquake and disaster response processes. Indeed, a study conducted in Çanakkale in 2022 examined " <i>inequalities faced by women in disaster response processes</i> " through the experiences of civil society organisations. Women search and rescue volunteers who participated in the interviews stated that " <i>the first emotions that come to mind when thinking of a disaster are fear, pain, and hopelessness</i> ". This study drew attention to the unique problems women experience in disasters (psychological trauma, hygiene, safety, etc.) and developed some local solutions. For example, organisations such as the Women's Solidarity Foundation (KADAV) and Mavi Kalem Association have organised workshops on women's health, hygiene, and protection from violence in disasters.	Partially: Although the gender perspective has been adopted in the municipality's discourse and some policies in Çanakkale, its reflection in disaster planning is not yet sufficient. Women in the province are making efforts to prepare for disasters, particularly at the civil society level, but these efforts have not been formally integrated into the planning processes.

Province/District	AFAD Provincial Risk Reduction Plan (PRRP)	Municipal Strategic Plan (2020-2024)	Local Activities & NGO Work	Gender Perspective
KÜTAHYA	When examining the Kütahya PRRP (2022), although the term “ vulnerable groups ” is used, the plan’s actions do not include specific preparations for women, children, or persons with disabilities . Disaster risk reduction targets are primarily technical in nature (e.g., building inventory in the event of an earthquake, training, etc.). The dimension of social equality has been overlooked.	No (not clearly stated in the document): Gender equality is not explicitly mentioned as a target in Kütahya Municipality’s 2020-2024 strategic plan. The new 2025-2029 strategic plan includes a single objective, namely the “ <i>completion of women’s shelter project</i> ”. This is primarily in the context of combating violence against women. An equality-based approach to disasters is not present in the strategic documents.	In 2023, the project titled “ Overcoming My Disability Through Disaster Awareness and Education ” was carried out in Kütahya in partnership with the Governor’s Office, the Municipality, the Red Crescent, and disability associations. The project provided disaster training to individuals with disabilities and their families, and established workshops where they could produce items for disasters. For example, a workshop was established where disabled individuals could sew disaster kits, blankets , etc. This activity raised awareness and provided employment. However, this project is an EU project with a strong civil initiative component. There are no NGOs specialising in disasters in Kütahya.	It is virtually non-existent: In Kütahya province, the perspective of gender and vulnerable groups is not visible in either plans or routine activities. An awareness project for persons with disabilities is a positive step, but it is understood that this perspective is not embedded in institutional plans and is therefore not systematically taken into account in disaster management.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings of the research reveal that disaster management in Istanbul and surrounding provinces has taken on a distinctly **technocratic character**. This technocratic approach abstracts risks from their social and political context, limiting them to engineering solutions and hierarchical management models (Barbera et al., 2001), thereby rendering social inequality dynamics such as gender a “**blind spot**”. While the Maltepe example offers hope that civil society and local government will can break this general trend, all other provinces examined show that the gender equality perspective is either not reflected at all in policy texts or remains at a highly **symbolic and performative** level. This situation points to a serious **compliance gap** between Türkiye’s international commitments (Sendai Framework Article 36), to which it is a party, and local practices.

Another striking finding of the research concerns the nature of civil society participation. CSOs are generally reduced to the roles of “service providers” or “aid distributors” in the disaster management cycle, and are excluded from the key decision-making processes such as policy-making, planning, monitoring and evaluation. This situation prevents the utilisation of the local knowledge and experience of women’s organisations in particular, and weakens the potential for democratising disaster governance.

6. STRATEGIC ROADMAP FOR CIVIL SOCIETY AND POLICYMAKERS

Civil society organisations (CSOs) play a critical role in integrating a gender equality perspective into disaster management. As seen in the provinces examined, CSOs often raise and attempt to address the gaps left by official plans. Therefore, a multi-level strategy should be proposed to transform the existing technocratic and exclusionary structure.

1. Policy and Institutional Intervention:

- **Integration of Local Equality Action Plans (LEAPs) with Disaster Plans:** LEAPs should be made mandatory in all municipalities, and these plans must include provisions specifically addressing disaster risk reduction.
- **Establishment of Provincial-Level Disaster Equality Policy Commissions:** A “Disaster and Social Equality Commission” should be established in each province (and at district level in metropolitan areas). This commission should include representatives from the governor’s office/municipality, women’s NGOs, disabled persons’ organisations, and advocates for the rights of the elderly and children. The commission should review existing disaster plans, identify gaps and shortcomings, and develop concrete recommendations for updating them.
- **Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB):** Disaster risk reduction, preparedness, and response budgets should be transparently monitored and audited in terms of the extent to which they serve different gender groups.



2. Data and Information Management:

Oral History and Experience Documentation: Interviews should be conducted with women, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups who have previously experienced disasters, and any unmet needs and proposed solutions that are lacking in official plans should be recorded.

Intersectional Vulnerability Mapping: Vulnerability maps should be created at the neighbourhood level using disaggregated data that includes variables such as age, gender, disability, and migrant status. Based on this data, it is possible to determine prior to a disaster **who may require special training and which neighbourhood residents may need special support**. For example, planning disabled ramps in earthquake assembly areas and **well-lit safe zones for women** becomes possible with these analyses.

3. Capacity Building and Awareness:

- **Women's Leadership in Disaster Volunteering:** Women should be encouraged to become disaster volunteers, training programmes tailored to their needs should be developed, and women should be empowered to participate in decision-making processes.
- **Inclusive Training Modules:** AFAD and municipal disaster training programmes should be revised to include modules on gender, disability and cultural sensitivity.

4. Rights-Based Approach in Crisis Response:

- **Allocation of Safe Spaces:** Separate, safe and private areas should be created for women, children and LGBTQ+ individuals in temporary shelters after a disaster.
- **Access to Hygiene and Health Services:** Women's hygiene kits, maternal health services and sexual health support should become standard components of disaster response plans.
- **Pilot Projects and Dissemination of Good Practices:** Successful pilot projects led by civil society should be supported and adapted to other provinces.

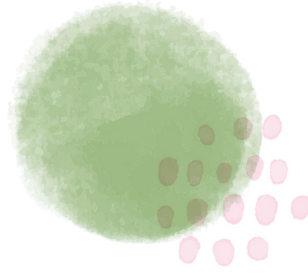


7. CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the gender perspective is systematically ignored or remains symbolic in disaster plans in Istanbul and surrounding provinces. The current approach is limited to a **technocratic governance** understanding, viewing disasters solely as an area for technical intervention and rendering invisible the socio-economic dimensions of disasters that intersect with gender.

Gender equality is an ethical and strategic imperative at the heart of building disaster-resilient societies. Civil society is not merely a “stakeholder” in this process, but the main driving force for egalitarian transformation. Women’s organisations, ecological organisations and other rights-based organisations should be effectively involved in every stage of disaster management – from planning to implementation – due to their local knowledge and experience. Only in this way can an inclusive, preventive, and rights-based disaster management model be built that does not deepen existing inequalities but rather aims to repair them. This report aims to provide a concrete “roadmap starting point” for this transformation.

In conclusion, **the perspective of gender equality is not a luxury but a necessity in disaster management.** Civil society plays a vital role as both advocate and implementer of this perspective. Partnership-based steps taken in the initial stages, however small, will make a significant difference in the long term. When each province and district succeeds in amplifying the voices of women and vulnerable groups in a manner appropriate to its demographic structure, it will achieve a more resilient and inclusive societal structure in the face of disasters. This will be one of the most critical success factors in reducing disaster risks.



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For detailed mapping across Türkiye, see:

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