



MaviKalem

Hatay Document

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MaviKalem
sosyal sorumluluk ve dayanışma derneği

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From MaviKalem ●

MaviKalem has been in Hatay for a year! ●

We support the fulfilment of basic needs ●

We support women's psychological well-being ●

We do fun activities with children ●

We support women to start their own businesses ●

We are building children's playgrounds and women's sports fields ●

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MaviKalem Hatay Representative Office opened! ●

MaviKalem Hatay Team talked about their experiences ●



From MaviKalem

6 February 2023... Two earthquakes centred in Kahramanmaraş, the first with a magnitude of 7.7 at 04.17 in the morning and the second with a magnitude of 7.6 at noon. The earthquake caused great destruction and many casualties in Kahramanmaraş, Hatay, Gaziantep, Adıyaman, Malatya, Kilis, Şanlıurfa, Adana, Osmaniye, Diyarbakır and Elazığ. Hatay was one of the provinces most affected by the earthquake. This earthquake, which is recognised as one of the biggest disasters of our century, hurt us all deeply.

The MaviKalem team, which also included employees from the earth-

quake zone, started emergency response activities in the field with the experience gained in disasters and emergencies until that day, while trying to reach their acquaintances in Hatay and other provinces. In the second week of February, the MaviKalem team travelled to the Hatay earthquake zone. In the first stage, we aimed to meet the unique needs of children and women in the field.

We received information from the MaviKalem team in the field that the destruction and damage in the earthquake zone was higher than estimated and that the city was almost destroyed.





In the first stage, we identified the urgent basic needs of the people of the region such as electricity, water, shelter, food, heating, hygiene, and clothing. In February, we immediately set up a container office and formed a working team from the people of the region. Our work in Hatay is still ongoing. In the projects we have implemented here, we have observed that earthquake survivors need moral and psychological support as well as meeting their needs.

On the one hand, we tried to support the tent groups set up by the disaster survivors with their own efforts in neighbourhoods, streets, villages, and garden areas, especially outside the

camps; on the other hand, we implemented psychological support projects for women and children. Since there was no place for children to play and socialise among the rubble, we established children's playgrounds in five districts of Hatay. We installed outdoor sports equipment for women to spare time for themselves. We supported the businesses of both the region and women so that they could have access to income. We are trying to heal the wounds of the earthquake region and meet their needs, and we are happy if we can do this to some extent. One year has passed since the earthquake, but the region still needs the support of many organisations like us.





MaviKalem has been in Hatay for a year!

Founded by volunteers who took part in relief/support activities during the Marmara earthquake (1999), MaviKalem has specialised in working in disasters and emergencies over the years. Following the earthquakes in Turkey on 6 February, MaviKalem travelled to Hatay, one of the provinces where major destruction occurred, and became part of the support efforts there. A working team was formed, and container offices were established. Our support work in the region, which started in February, continues at full speed.

A predominantly women work team

MaviKalem, which carries out women-focused activities based on a gen-

der equality approach, also acts with this perspective in the earthquake region. We interview women affected by the earthquake in Hatay and identify the needs of both women and children. We shape our activities according to these needs. In addition, as in all of MaviKalem's activities, the majority of the working team here is made up of women.

The Hatay work team expresses this situation as follows: "It is a team where the majority is made up of women and the field of work is also women. It is a team that we have not encountered much both in Turkey and in the world. In addition to being distinguished in this



respect, the fact that the working area is also women, that women express themselves more comfortably and share that they feel understood, shows us the delicacy and power of working with women.”

Employees are also from the earthquake zone.

While forming the working team in Hatay, we prioritised the disaster survivors affected by the earthquake who already live in this region and know

the culture. Thus, we aimed to support them both to strengthen themselves economically and to feel better psychologically. The working team continues with all their energies the support work that started after the destruction in the region where they were born, grew up and live. To support the economic recovery of the region, we procure all needs from suppliers in Hatay and neighboring provinces affected by the earthquake.



We support the fulfilment of basic needs



Since February, when the earthquakes took place, we have been conducting needs assessment and material supply activities in tent areas as well as in the tent areas established by the disaster survivors' own means in the neighbourhoods and streets where support has not yet reached or has reached less. In these areas, we conduct interviews with women disaster survivors and identify the specific needs of both women and children. We provide materials for these needs and distribute them.





Material support for 30 thousand people

During the distributions, we prioritised the urgent needs of women and children such as drinking water, food packages, underwear, baby food, baby diapers, diapers, sanitary napkins, sanitary pads, and hygiene materials. Starting from May, we

distributed stationery materials to support children's education. As the weather warmed up in June, we distributed summer clothes for women, men, children and the elderly. With the distribution of necessities, we reached approximately 30 thousand people in Hatay in 1 year. We continue to distribute winter clothes, blankets, and oil radiators.

We support women's psychological well-being

In addition to supporting the meeting of basic needs, we organise group activities accompanied by a psychologist in order to help women affected by the earthquake to get away from the psychology of the earthquake, to feel better and to support their transition to daily life. We organise these activities, which started in April, with women living in tents outside container cities and camps. More than 500 women have benefited from these activities in Antakya, Defne and Samandağ districts so far.

In these activities, which are organised to help women relax psychologically,

women chat over tea and coffee, share their worries, fears, happiness and other situations and feelings they want to tell each other. The emotions they experienced after the earthquake, their behaviours and reactions are discussed and how they can cope with them are discussed. In addition, women who need it can also participate in individual counselling sessions with a psychologist from September onwards.

After the activities where women chatted together and shared their feelings, they expressed the following: "I was very happy that such an activity was organised. I was able to express myself very well, I found peace", "It felt good to talk", "It felt very good, I would like to stay longer if I could. I was able to express myself with you for the first time", "I eliminated some of my anxieties in this process. I learnt how to manage my fears after the earthquake", "The conversation we had was very relaxing", "The activity was very good for us, always continue it. It helps to relieve our pain".





We do fun activities with children

While group activities are held with the women in the company of a psychologist, we also organise separate activities for children to socialise, have fun and release their energy. The children play active games, draw pictures and do colouring in the company of a child development specialist. Women who see their children laughing and having fun say that they are also happy to see their children happy. Some women say that they even miss hearing their children's laughter after the earthquake. More than 700 children have benefited from these activities so far.





We support women to start their own businesses.



We started the “Let Women Build Their Business” project in Hatay to support women who want to re-establish the businesses they lost after the earthquake or who want to develop the businesses they have established with their own efforts. Within the scope of the project supported by the Fondation de France, we support 50 selected women to earn income by providing them with the most basic tools and materials needed to establish or develop their businesses.

We conducted interviews with the women in November-December to identify the tools and materials that are indispensable for them to establish and sustain their businesses. We identified the most basic materials such as sewing machines for tailors and fertilisers for those engaged in agriculture. We continued our needs assessment and material supply activities simultaneously. As of November, we started to provide material support to the women whose needs were identified. In addition to the 50 women selected within the scope of the project, 12 more women were supported by ACTED. The materials needed by the women are also purchased from Hatay to support the economic recovery of the region after the earthquake.



“The front of my house became a small workplace”

The workplace of Mrs Şirin, who made a living by doing botanical and pesticide business before the earthquake, was destroyed in the earthquake. She was

selling the medicines, fertilisers and seedlings she could save from the rubble by keeping them in her house and outside. Due to the weather conditions, the pesticides and seedlings deteriorated outside, and keeping them inside the house was dangerous because they contained chemicals. For Mrs Şirin to protect her products and to prevent the presence of chemical substances inside the house, we have established an area in front of her house where she can store her products through facade cladding. Upon our support, Mrs Şirin expressed her feelings as follows: “Uncertainty is very bad... The uncertainty of what would happen, and my business situation was very tiring. Every customer who came to my house asked if I could open a business. It was also tiring to host customers at home. Now the exterior of my house has become a small workplace. Thus, I will have a more organised area. I will also remove the chemical medicines inside my house and they will not be affected by heat/cold and will not deteriorate. I am very happy, thank you very much to everyone who contributed.”

Established her dream boutique business.

Nesrin Hanım, who makes a living by selling clothes from home, dreamed of opening a boutique business. We supported Mrs Nesrin by making store shelves and trial cabinets, which are the most basic needs for her to establish and maintain her business.

Nesrin Hanım, whose dream came true, shared her happiness as follows: "I am very happy that you provided such a support. I was very happy when I learnt that I was included in the project, I am very happy that I was able to open and maintain my boutique business, which was my dream. Before my boutique business, I was doing gardening, and it was very tiring for me. My dream was to quit gardening and with your support, I started to do this work at home and now I started to do it by opening a business. Without your support, I would have applied for a loan and my loan payments would have been very difficult for me in the post-earthquake period."

Reunited with the materials he could not get out of the rubble

The workshop of Mrs Selma, who made a living by giving painting courses and hobby workshops, was destroyed in the earthquake. Thereupon, Selma Hanım started to give private lessons by going to the homes of her students. We supported Mrs Selma by providing her with basic tools and materials such as easels, coffee tables, stools, paints, brushes,



canvases, etc. that she could not remove from the rubble.

Mrs Selma expressed her happiness as follows: "Your support was very strange at first. I was hesitant to ask for something at first, it was a situation I was not used to. Before the earthquake, I was meeting my needs myself, I was used to buying everything myself. Your support was very good in this period. I would like to thank you very much for your interest and concern, and for guiding me. Thank you for your efforts, you are instrumental in very good works."

After providing material support to all women involved in the project, we will hold informative meetings with women in February-March on topics such as communication, social media, waste management, sales, and cooperatives to help them develop their businesses. In April, we will organise a women's products festival.

We are building children's playgrounds and women's sports fields.

Our support efforts, which started with the distribution of necessities in Hatay earthquake zone, continue with the installation of children's playgrounds and women's sports areas in the region. We established the sports fields

and playgrounds in Samandağ district in September for the first time for women to get away from housework and children to have fun. We created an outdoor sports equipment section where women can do sports. Right next



to it, we placed a children's play group where children can play. We continue to establish children's playgrounds and women's sports fields in Antakya, Defne, Kırıkhan and Arsuz districts in cooperation with municipalities.

"We have been asking for a park here for years."

MaviKalem Board Member - Emergency Operation and Communication Focal Person Meryem Tomak, who has been participating in the support activities in Hatay since February, stated the following: "After the earthquake, there is no space left for women and children to relax. In our interviews with women, they talk about things such as not being able to spare time for themselves

from housework, and having to cook for their relatives because the tents are together for security reasons instead of families. One woman said, 'Can't you build a park here? The children are very bored'. Based on this feedback and our observations, we decided to build these parks. When I saw the park installation in Samandağ, I really had tears in my eyes. How happy the children were... When we went to look for a place for the installation in Defne, a neighbourhood resident said, 'We have been wanting to build a park here for years. I'm glad you came here'."

"The children were very happy."

A woman living near the children's park in Defne district, the installation





of which has been completed and landscaping will be started, stated the following: “We are very happy that this park was built here. We have been asking for a park here for a long time. A lot of children gather here in the evening. They gather, run, play... They are so happy. It’s like an amusement park for them. They are so happy. Because we haven’t been able to leave the house for how many months, there are no places to visit. The children were always locked up at home. That’s why the children are very happy when they see this park. We would like to thank the association for preparing and establishing this park.”

“Our biggest dream was a slide.”

A girl playing with her friends in the park established in Samandağ district shared her happiness as follows: “We want-

ed slides here; we got new slides. We wanted seesaws that would not break down, we got them. We used to see these (swings) in the container city, we got them again. For example, we always wanted a roundabout where we could turn our feet, we got it. Our biggest dream was a slide here and we got one. We are very happy that these things have happened. I hope these will never deteriorate, everyone will use them in a good way, without any damage.”





We exhibit women's drawings against violence.

In order to keep violence against women on the agenda and to support women to express their reactions against violence through painting, we implemented the "Painting Against Violence against Women" project in Hatay, Adana and Istanbul throughout 2023. Within the scope of the project supported by the Embassy of Ireland, we organised painting workshops between March and August, where women showed their reactions against violence through art. The workshops implemented by Painter-Sculptor Meryem Tomak started in Istanbul and continued in Adana and Hatay earthquake zone. The workshops in Hatay took place in August in cooperation with Antakya Municipality and Defne Municipality. The paintings drawn by 129 women against violence were exhibited first in Istanbul and then in Adana in November and December. The exhibitions will be repeated in Hatay.

Some of the women who painted against violence shared their feelings as follows.

"Within the framework of this activity, we express our feelings to the outside world through drawing. When we draw

a picture or make a sentence, it is as if we have found a solution to the problems inside us. Of course, this is not an actual solution, but it is a declaration that we need to find a solution. Therefore, it is one of the ways to get rid of our inner troubles and troubles."

"Customs, traditions and customs cause women not to live their lives."





Women carry all the troubles of life inside them. For this reason, I depicted the woman's body in the picture as a bulging body. The hand figure in the picture means stop violence. The figure

of the child symbolises child abuse."

"At first I thought I couldn't express my feelings, then slowly something came out. Frankly speaking, you encouraged me. In my painting, I wanted to express that no matter how much a woman is prevented, she insists on extinguishing the fire inside her and continues to give hope both to herself and to those around her."



The web page of the project can be accessed here:

<https://art.mavikalem.org/>



MaviKalem Hatay Representative Office opened!

While our work in the Hatay earthquake zone has been in full swing since February last year, our container office in Antakya's Derince neighbourhood became a representative office in December. The Hatay working team

shared their feelings about this situation as follows: "It was something we have been waiting for a long time. We are very happy. Now we can carry out activities here more easily. Having a representative office gives us hope that our work here will continue, that there will be new projects and that very good work will be done here. Since February, we have been both distributing and carrying out many activities here. This is like a reward for us now. Our goal is to stay here longer and be more useful to people."



MaviKalem Hatay team talked about what they have experienced and felt since the earthquake.

We are on the first year of the 6th of February earthquakes.

MaviKalem continues to work in the earthquake zone. We talked to our friends who work in MaviKalem Hatay office and who also lived through the 6th of February in Hatay about what they have experienced and felt since the earthquake.

Merve: *"While we had even prepared our clothes to wear the next morning in our routine life, everything was turned upside down on the morning of the earthquake. The sound of sirens did not stop for days, it became engraved in our minds. For the first time in our lives, we felt helplessness and abandonment down to our bones. I started working at MaviKalem before I could get over the shock of the earthquake. As I helped and supported people while working, the friendliness of the people of my hometown helped me overcome the trauma I experienced. Seeing that people are recovering and developing in every sense warms our hearts to some extent.*

I hope that my chirpy, unique city will rise again..."

Tuna: *"I am from Hatay, I was here on the day of the earthquake. When I first started to shake slightly, I felt sad and wondered where the earthquake happened, and we felt it. Then, when the shaking intensified, I said 'what is this' because I didn't understand whether it was really an earthquake or an attack. The most intense emotion I experienced was fear. Later, my concern for my loved ones overcame my fear. Chills, shock, feeling of abandonment, questions in my head and screams in the neighbourhood mixed. Today, 1 year after the earthquake, I am at MaviKalem. At MaviKalem, I support my fellow citizens in line with their needs. It is very special for me to support the recovery of my hometown here and to continue my life by making a living from this job. MaviKalem is also very special."*

Melisa: *"I have been a part of MaviKalem for approximately 4 months, which started its activities here 1 week after the earthquake, and I am happy*



about it. As a person who experienced the earthquake, I have seen and know how painful, difficult, and helpless this situation is. At that moment when I felt the earthquake, I was surprised like most people. The strongest feeling I felt was fear. While the earthquake was happening, I thought that maybe my life would end seconds later, that those moments I lived were my last moments. I felt death closest to me. It was like a nightmare, we woke up, but nothing was the same anymore. In the process after the earthquake, I saw the desperation in people's eyes, and I was proud of my work every time. Because every woman, every child, every elderly person, in short, every human being we can touch is and will always be very

precious to us. We are doing our best to alleviate and heal people's wounds, even a little bit, and we will continue to do so. If we are alive, there is still hope."

Fatime: "I was in another city by coincidence on the 6th of February. I did not experience the earthquake in Hatay. I was not aware of the devastation in the first days. Later, I was able to understand the magnitude of the disaster we experienced. I was feeling very helpless and depressed in another city. It is impossible to express what I saw and felt when I came back. Afterwards, when I felt ready to do something, I reached out to non-governmental organisations and got a call from MaviKalem. It was my first work experience in this sector,



but I was ready as if I had prepared myself for this field for years. In the sixth month after the earthquake, I started working in the project where we support women to access income. I am very happy that we can be instrumental in helping women establish their businesses. I am aware that we touch a lot of people and I see that every woman I work with adds something to me. Although the living conditions of the city after the earthquake are very challenging, all my tiredness is erased when I see the results of our work. I hope that Hatay will not only be remembered on the 6th of February, but will not be forgotten."

Mehmet: "I have been a part of the MaviKalem team, which came to heal our wounds after the earthquake, for 10 months. Like everyone else, I was caught asleep by the earthquake. At first, I thought it would end because it started as a slight tremor, but on the contrary, it seemed like it would never stop. I didn't



know what to do. After it stopped, we calmly left the building with my family and got into the cars. I then went to my fiancé's house; everyone was on the roads. After we picked up my fiancé and his family, we went to a safe area. We were not aware of anything. We started to listen to the news on the radio because the network of the phones had gone out. Since we had not heard of Hatay, we were thinking that we would return to our work after a few hours when the day dawned. After a while, when we got out of the car to get water, we realised the magnitude of the earthquake when we noticed the collapsed buildings. It was as if the day did not dawn for us that day. It had been 3-4 days after the earthquake, and I was called by the Istanbul team of MaviKalem Association for needs assessment. They started their activities in Hatay on 13 February and I joined them 2 months later. During this period, we distributed various needs, and we continue to



distribute them. The destruction is so great that every month it is as if we are starting from scratch. We feel tired, but when we look back, we realise that it is worth it and this keeps us going. As MaviKalem team, we will continue to heal our wounds as much as we can. We strive for things to work out, and the more we strive, the more hope we have. Let's not dull our hope, we have more beautiful days to live."

Akın: "6th February 2023, 04.17... The date and time when some of us say goodbye to life, and some of us start life as if we were born again... There was a tremor, my husband and I immediately went to the room where my mother and the children were staying. While trying to wake the children, violent tremors started. We couldn't stand up, we hugged each other and crouched down and waited for the endless shaking to stop. Then we got out safely. There was a high greenhouse next to our house. About 25 of us, my uncle,



my brothers, my nephews, took shelter in it. We stayed in the greenhouse for a few days and in the bus and lorry trailer for a few days. We were hosted by our relatives in Mersin for a while. After we returned, we tried to set up a living space, tents etc... Then I started working at MaviKalem, where we reach out to families in need. A person has a need, and you support them in this regard, then you see the sparkle in their eyes... This is a very proud thing for me."



We would like to thank the following organizations
that have supported us in our work in the earthquake zone
since the first week, and we sincerely
thank the individual donors;

Acar Wholesale Market Ozan Acar,
Adventis Foundation (ADRA),
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Eugster Frismag Laborers,
Fondation de France,
Global Fund for Children (GFC),
Global Giving,
Kreuzberger Initiative gegen Antisemitismus (KIGA),
Operation USA (OPUSA),
Peace Winds Korea,
Stichting Vluchteling/Refugee Foundation

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** The names of the organizations are given in alphabetical order.*



Add your color to life!

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