

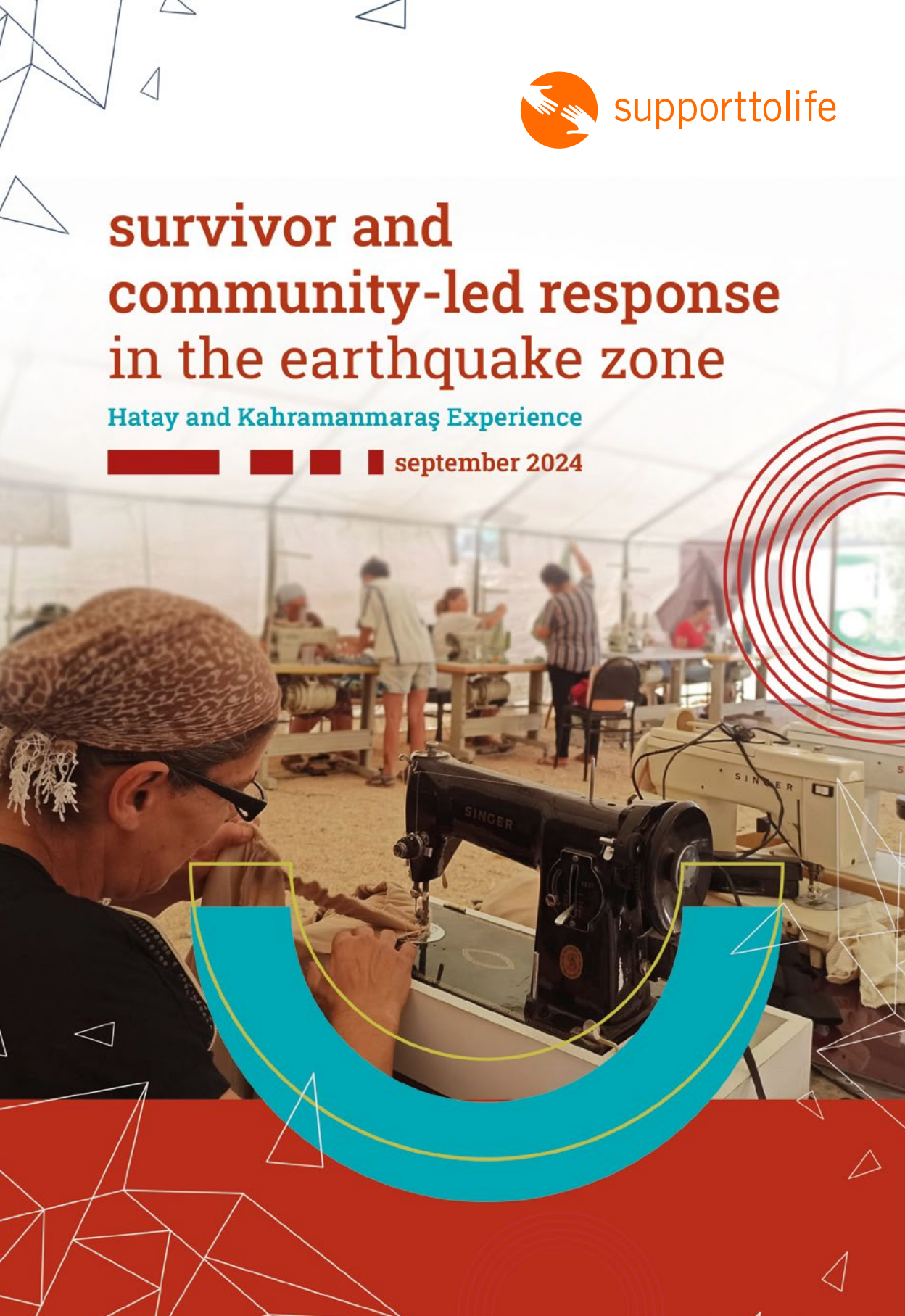


supporttolife

survivor and community-led response in the earthquake zone

Hatay and Kahramanmaraş Experience

■ ■ ■ ■ september 2024





'Survivor and Community-Led Response in the Earthquake Zone / Hatay and Kahramanmaraş Experience' Report was prepared in the scope of "Disaster Affected Community-Led Disaster Resilience Project with Emergency Response and Improvement Support" project. The report presents the outputs of Support to Life's SCLR (Survivor and community-led crisis response) implementation as part of the project in Hatay and Kahramanmaraş following the February 6 earthquakes.

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1 Support to Life and Local to Global Protection Approach

Support to Life is a humanitarian association that is active to ensure individuals and communities affected by natural or man-made disasters access core rights and needs. We support life of those in need through our offices in 10 provinces of and our Information Support Line. We have been shaping our operations in the framework of humanitarian principles since 2005 and currently we are executing them in Emergency Assistance, Refugee Support, Child Protection, Localization, and Capacity Development areas of work.

1.1. Disaster Response and Localization Activities Under Support to Life Community Leadership

As Support to Life, in the scope of our disaster response and emergency response activities, we are shaping our projects in the framework of disaster risk management and humanitarian processes in disasters. In the scope of our emergency response operations, we work to ensure communities affected by disasters can access core services such as temporary shelter, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH); in addition to providing in cash and in kind support, we carry out activities such as disaster preparation and increasing resilience against disasters. Our target in such activities is to meet food and non-food

core needs following earthquake, make cash assistance, improve shelter conditions, respond to clean water and hygiene needs. In early recovery and development periods we carry out psychosocial support, protection, livelihood support development and empowering local communities activities to develop a sustainable assistance and shareholding strategy for changing and developing needs of communities. In addition we are supporting community-based and community-led¹ responses towards increasing disaster resilience in disaster zones.

Our activities in coordination and advocacy continued by growing after February 6 Earthquakes in the framework of coordination networks and dialogue at local. In addition to Türkiye Local NGO Humanitarian Forum (TİF) that we are a member of and that continues its activities hosted by Support to Life, we carried out our activities with Localization Advocacy Group (YSG), Disaster Platform, Refugee Council of Türkiye (TMK), Checks and Balances Network, Seasonal Labor Migration Communication Network, and Partnership Network for Prevention of Violence Against Children. Under the roof of Disaster Platform, we supported

¹ According to Survivor and Community-Led Response / (SCLR) approach, community is the local people that live in disaster-affected area, that were a collective earlier or that came together for the first time or for a crisis-related need. SCLR can be composed of project groups, people that live together at neighborhoods, villages, temporary shelters or professional groups (teachers, instructors, bakers, etc.).

activities starting from awareness raising and training to lead creation of a disaster-ready community in addition to formation of first responder teams, development of preparation plans with local governments, and preparation of risk maps. Under to roof of Türkiye Local NGO Humanitarian Forum (TİF) established with our hosting following February 6 Earthquakes, we carried out activities to ensure coordination of institutions working on disaster fields, support access of local institutions to financing, support local capacity, and increase its visibility.

Right after February 6 Earthquakes that are among the biggest and most devastating natural disasters of the history of the Republic of Türkiye, we started our humanitarian emergency response operation. In our emergency aid and response operations, we continue our activities in line with humanitarian

standards and with a holistic relief strategy in Adiyaman, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, and Malatya that were affected the most by the earthquake. In addition, in the scope of our early recovery and disaster risk mitigation activities, we believe in the importance of strengthening the local moving from the fact that people that are the first responders to disasters and that live in the field can produce effective and fast solutions to their common needs.

We applied the 'Survivor and Community-Led Response Program' (SCLR) where communities affected by disaster develop projects towards their need and realize these projects with community leadership approach in 2021 for the first time. In the scope of this project we worked with communities affected by forest fires in Manavgat and Marmaris and by flood in Kastamonu in 2021².

² For more information on this program: [Locally Led Crisis Response Implementation Report, 2023, Support to Life.](#)



2 Introduction

Following the earthquakes on February 6, 2023 we carried out this project in Hatay and Kahramanmaraş with communities affected by disaster.

1.2. Local 2 Global Protection (L2GP)

Local 2 Global Protection (L2GP) is an initiative of humanitarian workers and activists with various backgrounds on humanitarian aid. It works to ensure local and national actors can respond with power and authority in crises. L2GP works with institutions at all levels of humanitarian system and individuals together with learning and policy development institutions to affect crisis response policy. L2GP is supported by DanChurchAid, Act Church of Sweden, Christian Aid, and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe while it operates as an independent and open-source collective.

L2GP was established in 2009 to research and document social reactions to crises. This research forms the basis of community-led crisis response approach. The L2GP initiative supports a number of local, national, and international institutions that apply this approach in crisis and humanitarian aid contexts all around the world.

The community-led activity researches conducted in Myanmar, Kenya,

Palestinian lands under invasion, Philippines, South Sudan, Sudan, and Zimbabwe investigate experiences of people that are faced with various threats and challenges during armed conflict, long-term socio-political crises, and natural disasters. Supporting Survivor and Community-Led Response (SCLR) emerged as an approach as a result of this research. The approach flourished with experiences of community-led responses in different contexts. This approach has been successfully used by Support to Life since 2021 in responses to various disasters in Türkiye such as forest fires, floods, and earthquakes.

Support to Life was supported by L2G Initiative in design of 'Survivor and Community-Led Response' (SCLR) Program developed for community-led response and early recovery following February 6 Earthquakes, training processes, and activities with communities. In addition, 3 Support to Life employees were included in 'SCLR Trainers and Mentors Forum Workshop' organized in Istanbul to improve SCLR capacity of Support to Life. Learning and the process of sharing challenges and experiences continue as a part of this global forum. During this project, Support to Life was supported by Local to Global for experiential learning, implementations and development of monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL) tools.



The February 6 Earthquakes directly affected 9 million people in 11 provinces in southeastern region of Türkiye, causing significant losses of life. Search and rescue and humanitarian response started in very challenging conditions due to the destructiveness of the earthquake, the width of the affected field, and unfavorable weather conditions. As a result of the earthquakes, at least 53 thousand 537 people lost their lives according to the official figures in Türkiye and over 100 thousand people got injured³. Turkish authorities declared a level 4 alarm that is the highest level of alarm and that covers international call in situations such as natural disasters and pandemics. The Presidency declared a state of emergency for 3 months; United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) appealed for emergency aid for 1 billion dollars.

3. [Support to Life Situation Report, February 5, 2024](#)

In order to support needs determined by disaster affected communities with micro-grants and increase disaster resilience capacities of these communities, Support to Life implemented 'Survivor and Community-Led Response Program' (SCLR) in Hatay and Kahramanmaraş in April 2023 – July 2024 period with funding granted by Center for Disaster Philanthropy (CDP). The project team included localization program coordinator, project coordinator, SCLR program specialist, 2 project managers, 2 project specialists, and 2 field workers⁴. During design and implementation of the project, Program Quality and Development, Operation, Communication, Finance, Monitoring and Assessment (MEAL), Procurement and Logistics Departments of Support to Life supported the project.

The project started in May 2023 with Local to Global (L2GP) and 'SCLR Joint Design Workshop' training organized by Support to Life. During the 3-day training, core components and methods including interview methods, micro-grant processes, responsibilities and reporting were described in the scope of SCLR approach. Joint design workshop was moderated by L2GP and realized with participation of SCLR community facilitators from various SCLR implementation regions in the

4. Project specialists and field workers are named community facilitators.

world. In addition to SCLR program and project team of Support to Life, employees and managers from various departments and projects also participated in the workshop and worked on a SCLR project design suitable to February 6 Earthquakes throughout the training.

Following the Joint Design Workshop, SCLR field workers at disaster field organized various meetings with communities at project region to introduce the project. Community facilitators started activities using appreciative inquiry method to ensure communities determine their own needs.

What is Appreciative Inquiry Method?

Appreciative inquiry method is an approach based on 'discovering the strong sides' that assist communities affected by a disaster or a crisis and support the NGO's to focus on community base. Strong sides, skills, existing coping mechanisms, and success stories of a community responding to disasters, local solutions, broader collective self-help potentials are discussed in meetings with community members. In appreciative inquiry aim is ensuring community facilitators focus on opportunities built on needs and encourage communities in this direction instead of directly assessing or analyzing needs.



© SCLR information meeting, Kahramanmaraş | Özgür Doğan

Communities are encouraged to make risk and vulnerability assessments highlighting their capacities and strong sides, ensuring they develop micro-grant projects towards needs determined with emerging results. The developed projects were assessed in selection committees formed of Support to Life employees, project that were found suitable to post-disaster recovery activities were given micro-grant supports. Support to Life community facilitators remained in constant contact with communities during implementation of project, providing support in required fields such as procurement, budget creation, and program specialties.

The completed projects were concluded by community members that develop the project upon preparation of finance and activity reports. **A total of 102 projects developed and implemented by local communities in affected by the earthquake in Hatay and Kahramanmaraş were supported with micro-grants.**

3 Survivor and Community-Led Response (SCLR) Approach

Survivor and Community-Led Response Program⁵ (SCLR) approach is implemented to support post-disaster recovery activities of communities affected by disasters and crises to improve their preparation and response capacities against future disasters. Purposes of this methodology are as follows:

- Increasing responsiveness, speed, and access of disaster response,
- Increasing prestige, self-worth, commitment, social harmony, and welfare feeling of disaster-affected communities that develop their post-disaster responses,
- Addressing the main causes of vulnerability against disaster; meeting post-disaster emergency needs and accelerating post-disaster recovery stage.
- Ensuring communities assess their deficiencies regarding disaster preparation, increase their capacity to design and implement disaster preparedness and risk mitigation plans.

5. While L2G and the NGO's it works with use 'SCLR' (Survivor And Community-Led Responses To Crises) abbreviation, they aim emphasizing autonomous, collective structures of disaster affected people and their self-help and reinforcement processes. Therefore, it is aimed to give a broad name to the approach that can be adopted by any institution. Support to Life named the SCLR approach it used during floods and forest fires followed by February 6 Earthquakes as Survivor and Community-Led Response Program.

Survivor and Community-Led Response (SCLR) approach reinforces actions towards assisting each other by considering disaster-affected communities are first and last responders after a crisis or disaster. It focuses on strong sides and opportunities as starting point rather than problems and vulnerabilities. It transfers implementation from NGO's to local community groups. It contributes to reinforcing social cohesion while also aiming to encourage disadvantaged groups by leading projects. It supports communities to consider reasons of vulnerability. Benefits from accountability and minimizing damage mechanisms at local level. It is rapid and facilitates implementation of communities.



© Hatay Surf Center, Hatay | Can Erok / Oksijen

4 Survivor and Community-Led Response Program (SCLR) Example from February 6 Earthquakes

4.1. Implementation Steps

• Financing Support to Life and Creation of SCLR Capacity

A partnership was established between Support to Life and Center for Disaster Philanthropy (CDP) for initial implementation of Survivor and Community-Led Response (SCLR) approach in Türkiye in December 2021 – March 2023 period and the project was financed by CDP. For the first Survivor and Community-Led Response implementation, Manavgat (Antalya) and Marmaris (Muğla) districts that were two of the districts that were affected the most from one of the largest forest fires in the history of the Republic of Türkiye, in addition to Bozkurt (Kastamonu) district that was one of the locations that was affected the most from Western Black Sea Flood Disaster on August 11, 2021 were selected. In the mentioned period 74 different micro-grant projects were supported towards developing disaster risk mitigation, livelihood development and disaster intervention capacities of disaster-affected communities in selected fields. With this project Survivor and Community-Led Response program was applied for the first time in Türkiye.

Survivor and Community-Led Response Program (SCLR) was initiated 2 months

after February 6 Earthquakes, in April 2023, in Hatay and Kahramanmaraş that were two of the most affected provinces from the earthquake. The project was implemented in early recovery activities after the earthquake, followed by supporting communities that developed their own responses. Similar to the previous successful application, this project started with 'SCLR Joint Design Workshop' in May 2023 and generalized in a short time with receipt for first project proposals.

• PALC Process Initiated with Appreciative Inquiry

Community facilitators that started activities with Joint Design Workshop conducted meetings to assess the level of crisis affect, needs and capacities of disaster-affected communities. Community facilitators that also act as PALC (Participatory Action Learning in Crises) facilitators visited places in project fields (village, neighborhood, temporary shelter fields, etc.) and met with communities, trying to determine local dynamics, degree of getting affected by disaster and groups that can implement. At the same time, they visited local governments in the region working on disaster crisis management, trying to describe capacity of implementation and its field of impact.

• Empowering Accountability, Inclusiveness, and Do No Harm

Community facilitators assessed project ideas regarding community-led responses, recommendations and suggestions from the local as they reinforced communication with community, continuing to ensure responses are inclusive of the community and implementation processes fulfil do no harm principle.

• Assessment and Processing of Grant Applications

Communities that shaped their post-disaster needs in dimensions such as activity plan, budget, purpose and method applied for micro-grants. Such applications were assessed in selection committees composed of Support to Life Survivor and Community-Led Response field team, program specialists and managers. Grant amounts of the selected projects were transferred to bank account of a members determined by the community.

• Request Focused Skills Training, Establishing Connections and Access to Network Creation

Some of the project implementer communities mentioned needing skills training regarding projects they design and implement. These skills trainings

were mostly complementary for projects (for instance, child safety, procurement and logistics, disaster response capacity, etc.). Space was created for different project groups to come together and community meetings were organized.

• Reporting and Recording Lessons Learned

Survivor and Community-Led Response Program (SCLR) communities prepared their final activity reports after completing their projects, recorded in the report the lessons learned in this process. In addition, experiential learning meetings and focus group discussions were organized with program and project team to make assessments regarding project outcomes, shared their experiences to ensure SCLR approach can become more applicable for communities and improved by Support to Life.

4.2. Implementation Regions

February 6 Earthquakes severely affected 11 provinces starting from Adiyaman, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, and Malatya. Hatay and Kahramanmaraş provinces that were the most affected from the earthquake, that experienced grave destruction and many losses of life were determined for Survivor and

Community-Led Response Program (SCLR) towards the needs that emerged in the post-disaster period and from June 2023 onwards communities affected by disaster started to create projects for the needs they determined such as temporary shelter, water and sanitation (WASH), repair, psychosocial support.

4.2.1. Hatay

In Hatay that is one of the provinces that had the most destruction and loss of life, a grave destruction took place in almost all of Antakya, Kırıkhan, Samandağ, Defne districts and in a significant part of Altınözü, İskenderun and Hassa provinces. Focusing on the epicenter Kahramanmaraş right after the earthquake lead to a delayed start in search and rescue and humanitarian efforts especially in Hatay. According to official data, 23 thousand 65 people lost their lives in Hatay. According to data from the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change, 89 thousand 25 buildings became unusable and 13 thousand 517 buildings were destroyed. Almost everyone that lived in Hatay was faced with a significant accommodation crisis after the destruction and this process was tried to be resolved with temporary accommodation centers (informal tent areas, tent cities, and container cities). In addition, because almost entire infrastructure of the province was damaged, floods that took

place after the earthquake as secondary crisis/disaster significantly affected people affected by earthquake. Support to Life personnel that were actively working in Hatay before the earthquake were directly affected by the earthquake, which negatively affected emergency response efforts of the association.

Emergency response teams arrived in Hatay right after the earthquake and started their humanitarian response. From the first day of the earthquake onwards, water and sanitation, food and hygiene, psychosocial support, protection, cash, and temporary shelter support were delivered to points with need. Activities were started for Survivor and Community-Led Response Program (SCLR) from April 2023 onwards to determine and relieve needs of people affected by the earthquake that arise during early improvement period in a community-based approach while emergency response activities were continuing. Project development processes started very rapidly and successfully in the scope of adaptation to community-based studies and program of Hatay people that had practical experience working with the non-governmental organizations before the earthquake in fields such as refugee studies, the cooperative system and many project ideas emerged in different fields towards needs following the beginning of determination process of community facilitators in the field.

Hatay still needs significant aid regarding building of permanent houses, repair works, reactivating education and other services. In addition to these needs, both NGO's and public institutions try to support in fields such as access of people affected by the earthquake to livelihood, needs towards children, and psychosocial support. It is noted that Hatay needs a long time for restructuring and development.

“ The biggest problem of children at the neighborhoods we were at was lacking study areas for themselves. We created an area where children can both study and make activities.”

Member of Defne Life Library, Samandağ, Hatay

4.2.2. Kahramanmaraş

Response of both the public sector and NGO's started right after the earthquake in Kahramanmaraş that is the epicenter of February 6 Earthquakes; however negative weather conditions and size of the province considerably challenged these efforts. In Kahramanmaraş which is based on an area of 14,525 square kilometers there were major losses of life and destruction in districts and rural areas in addition to the city center. According to official

6. Quotations of community members in this report were taken from the video describing outcomes of Survivor and Community-Led Response Program. [Click here to watch the video prepared by Support to Life.](#)

data, 12 thousand 713 people lost their lives in Kahramanmaraş, 7 thousand 300 buildings were destroyed and emergency destruction decision was taken for 4 thousand 200 buildings. According to data from Republic of Türkiye Presidency of Budgeting and Strategy report on Kahramanmaraş and Hatay Earthquakes dated March 6, 2023⁷ in Kahramanmaraş 99,326 residences had emergency, severe damage while 17,887 residences had moderate damage, and 161,137 residences had slight damage. 88,500 residences and 18,874 village houses are planned to be built in Kahramanmaraş. The province that has severe damages in many areas including education, health, culture, infrastructure, social services, energy, transportation, communication, industry, etc. still has many shortcomings in these areas although a year and a half passed from the earthquake. Entire Kahramanmaraş was severely affected by the earthquake starting from Türkoğlu, Pazarcık, Elbistan districts.

After the earthquake in addition to temporary shelter centers especially people that live in the rural areas sought shelter at common social areas such as mosques, djemevi, village mansions due to loss of livelihoods and anxiety about change of place. In Kahramanmaraş Support to Life started emergency response activities right after the earthquake at a close time as Hatay.

7. <https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2023-Kahramanmaras-ve-Hatay-Depremleleri-Raporu.pdf>



© Koyunoğlu Soup Kitchen, Hatay | Can Erok / Oksijen

In Kahramanmaraş where practical experience with cooperating with non-governmental organizations before the earthquake was almost non-existent, community facilitators started working in May 2023 to conduct community-based activities with the local people. Facilitators transferred Survivor and Community-Based Response (SCLR) program to communities and conducted needs analysis in neighborhoods and villages that were the most affected in rural areas where the rate of destruction was higher compared to central districts and organized meetings to describe the implementation. Although rural areas were severely affected by the earthquake, capacity insufficiency of public and non-governmental organizations active in

the city limited transportation to rough and distant rural areas, requiring a long time for introduction of activities towards community-based activities in the rural areas. Due to such disadvantages unlike other stakeholders Support to Life focused more on rural areas. The extend of surface area and distances between settlements challenged these activities. In initial activities conducted with communities towards observations and analysis of community facilitators and emergency response teams on the field, trust environment was formed for early recovery activities; applications were made for initial projects in a shorter time than expected for realizing projects designed by communities.

“ Our most urgent need was tent to cover containers to prevent leakage. We had 60 tents sewn. Our children were taking shuttle to school. We built a bus stop where they can wait.”

Member of Emiroğlu Bertiz Group,
Pazarcık Kahramanmaraş

4.3. Positive Outcomes

• Survivor and Community-Led Response Program (SCLR) Increasing Confidence in Activities of Non-Governmental Organizations

Capacity and coordination of humanitarian efforts were particularly difficult due to the size of the affected area at February 6 earthquakes. Due to these challenging conditions, insufficiencies and delays in transmission of needs in many areas affected by the earthquake affected Outlook of local people to non-governmental organizations. During SCLR implementation community facilitators tried to reach local communities in all implementation fields and zones affected by the earthquake with 'leave no one behind' principle. Communities declared that their confidence in non-governmental works increased with project design of needs determined by local communities and taking rapid action for realization

of these projects and that they started to cooperate with different non-governmental organizations towards their needs. This environment of trust increased cooperation in community-led projects while also reinforcing localization activities of Support to Life.

• Capacity Development of Survivor and Community-Led Response Implementations

Survivor and Community-Led Response (SCLR) that Support to Life started implementing in early recovery responses after the forest fires and flood disasters that took place in 2021 was designed for needs of earthquake affected communities for the first time after February 6 Earthquakes. With experience and expertises gained in the previous project, Support to Life had a successful project period in this implementation period regarding transfer of authority to communities, flexibility for needs-based projects, and capacity development of communities.

Working on localization and dissemination of community-led activities in Türkiye, Support to Life took significant steps for in-house extension of SCLR approach and conducted assessment meetings with its teams to update the program content based on changing needs and dynamics. Different than in previous implementation period, application of

Survivor and Community-Led Response approach on fields Support to Life conducts humanitarian operations was a significant support for both community facilitators and communities that implement projects. The fact that various program teams took part in field analysis activities of Support to Life increased outreach to communities in a short time while communities found the chance to work with different program teams⁸ of Support to Life with the projects they implement.

• Collective Cooperation of Community Members Implementing Micro-Grant Projects

In experiential learning meetings and focus group discussions communities implementing projects emphasized the importance of taking place in the entirety of a needs-based project process. With

8. For instance, Support to Life developed projects with communities on areas such as resource development, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH); supported communities in project follow-up and provided supervision support.

Survivor and Community-Led Response Program (SCLR) project design in important fields needed (such as education, social space, activities towards women and children) with a collective conscience positively affected well-being of communities while also ensuring a joint and inclusive work practice. In the project period increasing collective project development capacities of disaster-affected communities in crises, in addition including competencies of community members in craftsmanship, teaching and other professions in project activities were considered as important gains.

“ We took theater plays to container cities. We decided that there must be a drama workshop and a movie theater at where we were conducting activities.

Member of Sanathane Drama Training Group, Kahramanmaraş



© Open Warehouse Theater Troupe, Hatay | Özgür Doğan

• Participation and Inclusiveness in Micro-Grant Projects

In the period from initial introduction of Survivor and Community-Led Response Program (SCLR) on the fields to project development, community facilitators emphasized including all disaster-affected individuals in the area in the meetings and meeting needs of highly vulnerable and disadvantaged groups (women, elderly, disabled people, various ethnic groups, refugees, and children). Appreciative inquiry method was used while creating project ideas to prevent individuals or groups that hold power do not use community-led activities to their benefit; communities were encouraged to discover their strong and inclusive sides themselves. According to outcomes of focus group discussions, projects towards women's enforcement were developed for the first time with this project. In addition communities found the chance to create projects for activities such as education, social activities that can find no support in crisis period.

“ Our house was destroyed, our devices were broken. We thought about opening a sewing workshop which can be good for women's psychology and where they can meet their needs.

Member of Altın Bilezik Group, Türkoğlu, Kahramanmaraş

• Increase in Problem Solving and Needs Analysis Skills of Local Communities

In addition to communities developing intervention and solution methods towards their needs, developing capacities of communities developing their interventions is another important target in the scope of the program. In this scope, it was observed that some project-implementing groups developed community capacity in different ways in project idea development and implementation processes. Communities that develop problem-solving and needs analysis skills during project activities requested meetings with community facilitators to develop different micro-grant projects to increase resistance towards vulnerabilities in the region, develop field the project affects and its accessibility and project development for different needs. In this project period, projects of same groups were supported consecutively to ensure sustainability of ongoing projects of communities that continue to develop projects. Some communities that receive micro-grant support applied at different funds to find support for projects they develop and formed relationships with authorized offices. Different than the previous SCLR project period (2021), community members that design projects presented them to selecting committees.

• Different Examples in Micro-Grant Projects

The extent of destruction in both Hatay and Kahramanmaraş in February 6 Earthquakes, continuing access to core needs and especially needs in temporary shelter areas challenging both public and non-governmental capacities lead people affected by the disaster to meet their needs in limited conditions for a long time. Communities that developed crisis intervention projects in the scope of the Survivor and Community-Led Response (SCLR) approach developed projects on important subjects including temporary shelter, food security, psychosocial support, and disaster preparation in addition to other projects that touched upon important sectors that emerged after the disaster. Projects were prepared on needs such as mobile implementation⁹, physiotherapy, social projects for women, culture-arts activities and sports activities. Inclusiveness and participation come forward in these projects. In Kahramanmaraş a community that was composed entirely of women established a sewing workshop and gained project development experience for the first time. In Hatay a community group that developed micro-grant project for sports activities enables girls were included in a

⁹One of the most frequent problems after the earthquake is failure to find locations where public institutions were providing services. The mobile phone application titled 'Hataybul' presents current map locations of public institutions and organizations that continue to serve at districts of Hatay that affected the most by the earthquake.

sports (soccer) activity for the first time in the area. In 2 different projects supported in Hatay; free physiotherapy support was provided due to increasing amputations after the earthquake and problems disabled people had in accessing services.

“ *In the scope of this project we conducted activities in effects of asbestos and how we can take measures on food and drying.*

Member of Let Us Ventilate Group, Türkoğlu, Kahramanmaraş

• Different Communities Assisting Each Other

One of the targets of Survivor and Community-Led Response (SCLR) approach is having communities implementing projects communicate with different communities, develop cooperation and conduct joint projects. At disaster fields where the approach was implemented, some project groups receiving micro-grants shared information and experience they gained in the process with different communities conducting similar projects. Developing cooperation among communities is a significant step that must be dwelled upon and developed for more different SCLR projects that will be applied in the subsequent periods.

• Informing Communities on Complaint and Feedback Mechanisms

Support to Life developed different monitoring and assessment tools to assess opinions and feedback of communities towards the experiences it gained in Survivor and Community-Led Response program (SCLR). In addition, according to feedback discussions with communities and monitoring surveys following micro-grant support, community facilitators are encouraging on feedback and communication, developing quick solutions to problems. Also, all project implementers mentioned that they were aware of and informed about complaint and feedback mechanisms of Support to Life.

4.4. Lessons Learned and Next Steps

• Action Plan of Survivor and Community-Led Response Program (SCLR) Towards Changing Needs

Developing response capacity and supporting needs from communities with potential in fields affected by disaster are among the most important targets of this program. Project ideas from communities were observed to shape based on needs and constantly change

during implementation of Survivor and Community-Led Response Program in area affected by disaster. The flexible structure of SCLR program that is based on community requests enabled taking rapid action while developing projects for changing needs and provide facilitation.



Although in the initial period of project implementation Support to Life brought some limitations to project applications regarding supported areas and community definitions, based on community requests these limitations were subsequently lifted.

• Appreciative Inquiry and Active Learning in Crises


Appreciative inquiry and participatory active learning in crises (PALC) that are two most important methods of Survivor and Community-Led Response (SCLR) program that was used in Türkiye for the first time in the context of earthquake were methods towards discovering strong and open to development aspects of communities in responding to crises, therefore, application of these two methods by community facilitators during the project was carefully followed. In the program focused on intervention and response after the earthquake, appreciative inquiry and participatory active learning in

crises methods were implemented more effectively and correctly compared to the previous Survivor and Community-Led Response Program¹⁰.



© Sanathane Drama Training Group, Kahramanmaraş | Özgür Doğan

Among community groups that were involved there were groups that had previous practices with establishing communities, that were established based on needs that emerged after disaster, and that applied projects for the first time as a community. Through the development and proper implementation of appreciative inquiry and participatory active learning methods, it was easier to establish constructive dialogues with groups with different dynamics. Therefore, it was observed that communities could develop more participatory and inclusive projects.

 Proceeding with a more integrative and structured method for request-based trainings in the next SCLR projects in the future is very important for developing capacities of communities.

10. Survivor and Community-Led Response Program applied in Marmaris, Manavgat, and Kastamonu after 2021 Summer Forest Fires and Western Black Sea Flood Disaster


• Dynamics and Cultural Differences on the Field

Hatay and Kahramanmaraş that are two provinces that the project was implemented are provinces that had obvious differences in terms of social structure, cultural codes, and lifestyles. These differences enables development of different strategies for each field during the activity period and approach communities towards developed strategies. At most points trust environment was built with communities that had experience working with a non-governmental organization for the first time; analysis of differences in fields brought with itself a successful project process.

• Thorough Analysis of Limiting Factors Towards Projects

Severe devastation caused by February 6 Earthquakes and damages faced by public institutions lead to changes in spheres of authority of public institutions in earthquake response period. Therefore, communities were faced with challenges while receiving information and obtaining permits from public institutions. Another limiting factor towards the project was determined to be related to procurement processes in the disaster fields due to damages faced by various institutions and problems with documents such as invoices/vouchers/price offers were

limiting factors based on both provinces and capacities of project implementing communities. These limitations were handled by community facilitators and program team and communities could prepare projects accordingly.

 The fact that both provinces had local governments subject to metropolitan legislation created additional procedures related to projects conducted in the public areas, leading to challenges for some micro-grant projects. Advocacy by both Support to Life and communities to local governments and public institutions at the point of community-led activities on this issue could be supported.


• Micro-Grant Project Term and Unforeseen Expenses

Communities were given an average of 3-month working term for each micro-grant project. The 3-month working term were found to be short by communities especially because projects with construction-repair, psychosocial support and training content needed longer periods for completion and impact measurement. In addition, communities that implemented projects for the first time drew attention to additional expenses such as transportation and food expenses that could not be foreseen, therefore not included in the budget. Communities

monitored community facilitators when they informed communities regarding this issue in the beginning of project.



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 In project applications made to donor organizations regarding Survivor and Community-Led Response (SCLR) projects, updating activity content towards community feedback and preparing targets based on project making abilities of communities could lead to a more successful project period in qualitative context.

Determination of project terms of supported communities based on content could be perceived to be a better method than determining a standard term.

• Development of Monitoring and Assessment Tools

Survivor and Community-Led Response (SCLR) approach includes more different

applications and activities compared to traditional humanitarian activities. Based on feedback received by community facilitators in the project period, different forms are required to prepare more qualitative information and transmit more detailed quantitative data at project conclusions. Therefore, Support to Life Monitoring and Assessment Unit (MEAL) integrated data collection processes of Survivor and Community-Led Response program to its own system, Commcare. Mapping was developed in ArcGIS program for SCLR implementations to make geographical monitoring of projects. In addition, Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) survey and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) questions were prepared for assessment studies.

Development of monitoring and assessment processes are continuing for sharing more detailed quantitative and qualitative data in reports prepared for the donor organization and by Support to Life and for development of SCLR program with feedback from the fields and updates made in the sector.

• Support to Life SCLR Capacity and Strategy

Support to Life had been implementing Survivor and Community-Led Response Program (SCLR) in different disasters and

crises since 2021. Experience gained in this period, applications develop Support to Life's SCLR capacity. Support to Life started to approach its strategy plan more inclusively to implement the SCLR program in different responses in Türkiye and develop the program in the scope of Survivor and Community-Led Response (SCLR).

The developed strategy includes the following:

- > Activities towards capacity development of supported communities,
- > Financial facilitation towards micro-grant projects,
- > Transmitting SCLR approach in various programs of Support to Life,
- > Advocacy activities for extending Survivor and Community-Led Response Program to stakeholders in public and private sector, including community-led empowerment approaches in civil society activities,
- > Designing advocacy activities towards donor organizations to support community-led activities,
- > Development of SCLR field operations,
- > Exit strategy of project,
- > Plannings at project implementation fields towards increasing disaster resilience with community-based disaster risk management activities.

• Survivor and Community-Led Response Program (SCLR) and Localization Strategy

Support to Life leads many localization activities in Türkiye. Survivor and Community-Led Response Program targets implementing SCLR approach to access local people in disaster fields and develop local disaster response capacity to affect local disaster resilience and

integrate community leaders in disaster risk management activities.

Communities that would like to continue capacity development activities, looking for different sources and stakeholders for project sustainability could be referred to Türkiye Local NGO Humanitarian Forum (TIF).



© Mara Handicraft Workshop, Hatay | Can Erok / Oksijen

5 Conclusion and Recommendations

After the February 6 Earthquakes, as Support to Life we are working at Hatay and Kahramanmaraş¹¹ that are two of the most affected provinces from the earthquake to best meet needs of the local people with emergency response, early improvement, psychosocial support, livelihood development, and cash-based response programs in the scope of humanitarian response. Conscious of the fact that the first responders to crises in disasters are local people, we care about local empowerment and spend significant efforts to develop our localization and community-led response activities in humanitarian response.

In Hatay and Kahramanmaraş we implemented the Survivor and Community-Led Response Program (SCLR) that we have been implementing since 2021 to ensure disaster-affected local communities gain more qualifications to determine themselves, empower disaster-affected people and communities on this subject to create a response program compatible with human dignity. In this project period we worked in these two provinces

for approximately 1,5 years to ensure communities can realize their projects towards their own needs. At the end of the project we supported a total of 102 different micro-grant projects, 52 being in Hatay and 50 being in Kahramanmaraş. Among these projects, we supported those realized in temporary shelter, repair, psychosocial support, water and sanitation (WASH), food safety in addition to inclusive and participatory projects targeting directly supporting community needs such as digital application, health, women's empowerment projects towards children, sports activities, and culture-arts activities. 422 people became project implementers. Projects had an even bigger impact; today approximately 21,282 people benefit from these projects.

“ We established this project to spend time together and wipe out traces of the earthquake. I could not have even dreamt about doing this before knowing you. I am happy to have met you, I did what I could not have. At least I could go out on my own for the first time. I liked that very much.”

Member of Entrepreneurial Women Crafts, Pazarçık, Kahramanmaraş

11. Support to Life continues its humanitarian response in Hatay and Kahramanmaraş where Survivor and Community-Led Response Program is implemented, in addition to Adiyaman among the most severely affected provinces from the earthquake.

In this project period, in order to develop SCLR capacity of Support to Life we organized SCLR Joint Design Workshop and Assessment and Lessons Learned Workshop. We believe that we support communities more effectively with experiences gained from and results of these workshops and continue to develop our strategy to extend Survivor and Community-Led Response (SCLR) approach in Türkiye and bring it to a better level.

During the project period we conducted activities with various communities affected by the disaster. We believe that seeing impact of projects conducted by communities we support and contributing to capacity development of communities to empower the local are very important. Cooperation communities develop during project implementation, their activities with public institution and training requests have a valuable standing for capacities of communities and local empowerment. Also in this period when communities implemented their projects they learned service areas of public institutions and started to cooperate in some areas. They learned application and feedback mechanisms regarding access to services and conducted advocacy in areas limiting the local on this issue. Community groups that design, develop and implement their own projects and

local governments became stakeholders, some community members found new job opportunities with gains at this point. In experiential learning sessions when we came together with our communities and assessed an entire project period, we heard experiences of communities and their recommendations for development of Survivor and Community-Led Response (SCLR) approach. Observing that local communities are highly motivated to carry local empowerment to one step further is exciting for us as an institution active in this field.

We believe that Survivor and Community-Led Response (SCLR) approach must be supporter for a loner period to motivate communities in addition to continuing impact of their disaster preparation and collective response to vulnerabilities consciousness at the local level. Therefore, communities gain awareness regarding different needs and vulnerabilities following every project they design towards their own needs.

Extending Survivor and Community-Led Response (SCLR) approach in Türkiye that is a disaster country based on its geography, the fact that the understanding is faster, more flexible and directed towards local needs with a lower cost can ensure a significant step towards increasing disaster resilience at the local level.



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