

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

March 2023

In the weeks since the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria, government agencies have not made resources available to meet the needs of disabled survivors, and there are no policies that directly address their disability and accessibility related needs and support their inclusion throughout response, recovery, and reconstruction. The need is tremendous, but so is the expertise of the local disability-led organizations (DLO). They need partners and supporters to join them in their work to meet the urgent needs of their community. Disabled people in this region, and the DLOs who are assisting them need allies around the globe. [GADRA's rapid response Emergency Operations Center](#) has received many applications for assistance and has selected four outstanding disability-led organizations who need resources immediately and in the difficult months ahead. GADRA stands with these organizations and is conducting a global search to connect them with the resources and support they have requested.

The most critical needs of the people being served by these organizations are:

- durable medical equipment
- consumable medical supplies
- disability supplies
- accessible transportation
- accessible temporary shelters and permanent housing
- disability-related daily living needs

The organizations are also in need of support to sustain their operations including:

- safe structures for working and storage
- replacing damaged and destroyed technology and office equipment
- staffing
- case management
- accessible transportation

- shipping and distribution
- banking and organizational administration

Meet the organizations:

The Association of Women with Disabilities (Engelli Kadın Derneği),

headquartered in Ankara Türkiye, a nationally recognized non-governmental organization, is run by women with disabilities for women with disabilities. Their mission is to inform women with disabilities on the subjects of discrimination, disability rights, gender, violence against women and possible protection mechanisms. They are working on the ground in multiple cities throughout Türkiye to support inclusive emergency response and consulting with other organizations on accessible and inclusive planning. Active in the global community, they conduct and present research to advance and advocate for women with disabilities. Unfortunately, the earthquake response of many organizations in Türkiye is not disability inclusive, so they are both providing direct support to disabled people, other organizations, and rescue teams on inclusive methods. To meet a significant number of medical need requests, they exhausted their extremely limited financial capacity buying and delivering materials to people with disabilities and have reached out to GADRA, international friends and launched an open call for donations. They are not looking for charity, they are looking for partners.

Their immediate needs include:

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

Almostakbal Association for the Physically Disabled Persons

is a disability-led organization located in Aleppo, Syria. They have considerable expertise in the field of rehabilitation and development of people with disabilities because most of the founders are disabled themselves. While they have first-hand experience and educational background to support people with disabilities, they require

on-going financial support to help a growing community of survivors with disabilities post-earthquake. Before the earthquakes, they were providing on-going support for disabled members of the society and to persons who acquired a disability in the lower and paralyzed limbs as a result of the war. They were providing treatment and guidance to prevent skin ulcers (bedsores) and sudden development of urinary tract infections and kidney failure, and rehabilitation for people with disabilities. The impact of the earthquakes increased barriers to accessing care and basic life necessities and they have taken on more people with disabilities. They currently have two shelter centers and are hoping to provide long term solutions like accessible housing and vocational skills to generate incomes and careers for people with disaster acquired disabilities.

Their immediate needs to help more than 1000 people with disabilities include:

- **access prosthetics**
- **wheelchairs**
- **crutches**
- **other medical equipment**

Engelsiz Bileşenler Federasyonu (Federation of Associations for Barrier Free

Living) is headquartered in Diyarbakır, Türkiye. Before the earthquakes, their mission was to gather national and foreign associations under a single mantle and to raise the level of participation of disabled persons in their communities; to protect and improve their rights and interests; to advocate for their independence; to bring about social justice and empower all disabled people to live in rights-based welfare and peace; and to ensure cooperation and coordination among member associations. Since the earthquakes, they are continuing their work in disability rights and advocacy while providing tangible help to disabled survivors. They are looking to provide a repair shop to audit and repair damaged equipment as appropriate.

Their immediate needs include:

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



Engelsiz Arsuz Gençlik Ve Spor Kulübü Derneği (Accessible World Federation),

headquartered in Hatay, Türkiye is a disability advocacy agency working collaboratively with national and international NGOs, preparing and presenting reports on rights of persons with disabilities, elevating their voice and supporting all disabled people in the region. In Hatay, where there were 94,000 people with disabilities prior to the earthquakes, 30% of the buildings were heavily damaged and another 50% were destroyed, including their headquarters. At this time they are without office space to continue their work, they are without government assistance to non-governmental organizations in Hatay, and with significantly increased requests for assistance.

Their immediate needs include:

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

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

To provide assistance to one or all of these agencies actively responding to their impacted community, please email gadra@wid.org. We look forward to partnering with you.

Sincerely,

Global Alliance for Disaster Resource Acceleration Steering Team

