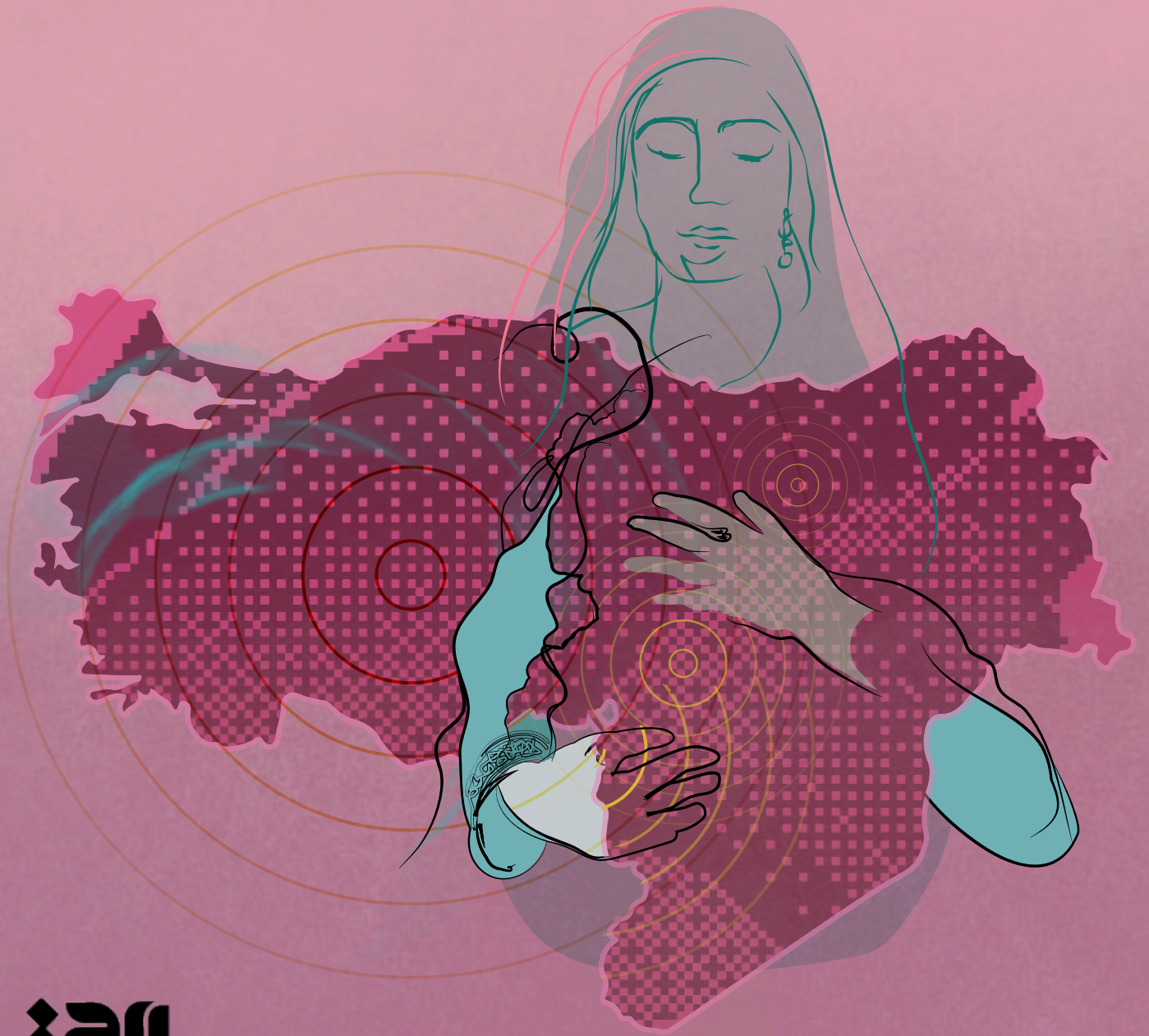


Doria Feminist Fund's Emergency Response Programme in Turkey and Syria



About DFF:

The Doria Feminist Fund (DFF) is a feminist fund founded, led by, and serving feminists and activists from the Middle East and North Africa region. It strengthens the ecosystem of feminist leaders, initiatives, and movements by leveraging financial and other resources, providing opportunities for capacity sharing, addressing root causes of gender injustice, responding to crises, and engaging in funder influencing and philanthropic advocacy. The Doria Feminist Fund believes in centering trust, care safety, and security in its relationships, institutional policies, and practices.

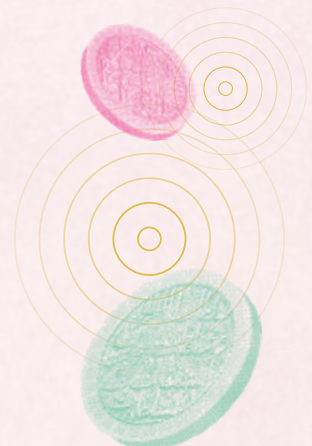
Introduction to DFF Emergency Response in Turkey & Syria:

Although natural disasters are inevitable consequences of our relationship as humans to the natural environment, their social, political, and humanitarian implications must be identified and accompanied by readily-applicable frameworks of both pre-disaster impact prevention, and post-disaster safeguarding. In both Turkey and Syria, there exist state- and state-adjacent entities that are obligated to coordinate emergency response for their populations, usually bolstered by the support of inter- and/or non-governmental organisations. That withstanding, the efficacies of such entities in mitigating the severity of the earthquakes' impacts particularly on marginalised groups such as women and LGBTQIA+ individuals have been heavily criticised, and it is commonly accepted that the most affected regions of both countries have relied disproportionately on the activities of civil-society organisations (or CSOs) to safeguard against devastation and humanitarian crisis in lieu of an effective state- and INGO-led response.

In response to this and as part of its ethos to create and maintain ecosystems whereby feminist movements in the MENA region equitably access funding to implement their work, Doria Feminist Fund (DFF) initiated a pilot project in 2023 under the category of Emergency Response. The genesis of this project was to support activists and organisations (CSOs) responding directly to the short-term, nuanced needs of women and/or LGBTQIA+ survivors within sudden (and/or jointly compounded) crises, utilising a feminist and intersectional framework with which to do so.

This report tasks itself with evaluating the efficacy of DFF within its 2023 emergency response pilot project in Turkey and Syria, particularly by considering:

- Feminist methodologies of humanitarian aid and emergency response,
- Pertinent limitations of INGOs and governmental frameworks within their methodologies of emergency response in Turkey and Syria,
- Feminist methodologies adopted by DFF within its emergency response programme to mitigate these limitations,
- Case-studies from DFF's grantee pool that demonstrate exactly how the needs of women and/or LGBTQIA+ have been supported in their activities,
- Reflections and recommendations,
- What would a 'Phase II' plan for DFF look like.



What are feminist methodologies in emergency response?

Feminist methodologies of emergency response are those that adopt non-hierarchical, intersectional, collaborative, and radical approaches into their practice. Feminist methodologies should aim to include the following principles:

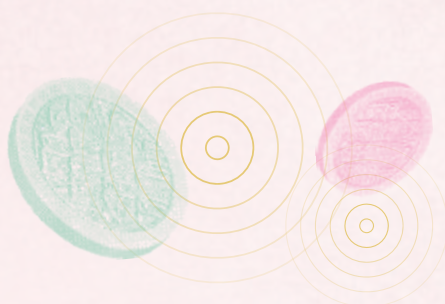
a) De-centring cis-hetero-patriarchal embodiments of identity as the fundamental norm, focusing on identifying and supporting the groups that are regularly omitted as a result of such assumptions within emergency response – particularly women and LGBTQIA+ communities, and particularly as decision-makers for the development of locally-informed, needs-based approaches.

b) Decolonial approaches that dismantle practices of Western dominance or practices that hegemonically exclude the nuances of embodied experiences in favour of pre-established frameworks of action – rather, creating locally informed and targeted support that shifts the power of decision-making onto those who are directly affected.

c) Centring movement-building strategies that respond to crisis as an interconnected experience, understanding that natural disasters can impact populations across national borders and thus require humanitarian approaches to emergency response that are not guided by the restrictions of inter-governmental diplomacy. Rather, by the collective need to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of all.

d) Developing trust-based relationships and ecosystem-building approaches that centre collective accountability, guiding humanitarian response through collective engagement and feedback to sustain constant communication with- and between collaborators, thereby acknowledging the heterogeneity of experiences and sharing responsibilities.

Feminist frameworks provide opportunities to question all systematic mechanisms of marginalisation that exist within humanitarian aid and emergency response, fundamentally informed by but not characteristically limited to the experiences of women and LGBTQIA+ communities. As elucidated in the above principles, feminist approaches within humanitarian aid can also involve navigating static national borders and affiliated bureaucratic obstacles, using community-led diplomacy and local collaboration to ensure that emergency response is accessible to everyone and not simply to those located in favourable geographic and/or political locations.



What are the limitations of INGOs and governmental frameworks of emergency response in Syria and Turkey from a feminist perspective?

a) Women and LGBTQIA+ survivors:

According to UN Women's consultations with civil society organisations working in the affected regions of both countries, there has been a demonstrative lack of "equal participation, decision-making, and cooperation for women" within the frameworks of emergency response (UN Women 2023). Various interventions fail to take into account the gendered dimensions of disaster, and instead implement gender-blind responses that do not acknowledge the nuances of needs that arise among earthquake survivors of marginalised backgrounds. DFF's fieldwork investigations in response to UN Women's 2023 report found that women and girls face a significant risk of gender-based violence due to the limited number of intact women's shelters across the affected regions in both countries. Additionally, unmet basic needs and complicated economic conditions continually lead to social tensions within domestic contexts, resulting in increased household responsibilities and increased threats of domestic violence. Such concerns are buttressed by ongoing uncertainties pertaining to the consistent provision of resources for menstruating and pregnant women, and feminist volunteers have stated since the onset that women's basic needs – including sanitary pads and feminine hygiene – have been treated as secondary issues.

DFF's Syrian community assessment report specifically presents the narratives of Syrian women survivors located both in the north-western regions of the country, as well as in Turkey. For instance, an individual named Naglaa shares that "what happened to me after the earthquakes cannot be compared with the war. I was used to fear, I stood in front of the Assad regime and their forces, but the earthquakes are different" (Doria Feminist Fund 2024).

The struggle for Syrian women to reach a point of safety has thus collapsed with the earthquakes on all levels, amplified by the continuous ignorance of the ecosystem of women's needs during times of crisis. Pink Life, the first and only transgender and sex workers' rights association in Turkey, highlighted the challenges faced by LGBTQIA+ people in the aftermath of the earthquake, as they experienced physical and psychological violence and discrimination vis-a-vis access of services, including transportation and shelter.

For those remaining in the affected regions in Turkey, the state's ongoing policies of violence against LGBTQIA+ have thus meant that survivors experience difficulties in accessing the services that they require. Trans people affected by the earthquakes have been unable to access hormones that are vital to the ongoing self-determination of their bodies in line with their process of gender affirmation, causing a series of psychological and physical issues. The amplified economic insecurity of the earthquake regions, in addition to the lack of housing, have also meant that LGBTQIA+ across the spectrum whom already navigated marginalisation and oppression due to structural issues are now in even less secure circumstances than they were beforehand.

b) Bureaucratic limitations, and state-led shortcomings:

The politicisation of aid within Syria has been an omnipresent practice since the onset of the conflict, amplified yet again by last year's earthquakes. Syrian regime president al-Assad only allowed UN aid deliveries to pass numerous crossings from Turkey on February 13, meaning that millions of people affected by the earthquakes in north-western Syria were left without aid for a week.

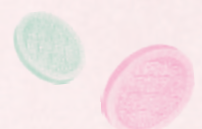
Even when Turkey had authorised additional crossings, the UN was reluctant to use them without the Syrian regime's authorisation. As a result, UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Martin Griffiths, stated on the 12th of February that "[they] have so far failed the people in north-west Syria". Additionally, it is reported that support sent from states around the world to the Syrian government was only used in government-held areas, and specifically not in north-western Syria (Amnesty International 2023).

Reports by organisations and on-the-ground testimonials indicate that local political forces were similarly unable to respond effectively to the disaster, and in fact exploited it in order to achieve narrow political interests. For instance, the Syrian Interim Government (SIG) and the Syrian Salvation Government (SSG) failed as governing authorities to respond at all to the earthquakes. They did not adopt clear strategies to address the disaster and demonstrated weak abilities to coordinate and mobilise resources. Furthermore, due to the sanctions employed against the country, it continues to remain difficult for humanitarian organisations to receive and transfer funds for emergency response – in turn hindering the procurement of essential supplies including food, medicine, and shelter material. The reduced access of humanitarian organisations into Syria due to bureaucratic hurdles and legal complexities further undermines the efficacy of co-ordinated international emergency response in the country, and certain regions and populations are thus highly limited in their access to aid distribution and assistance.

In Turkey, the government and its auxiliaries have similarly come under intense criticism for what has been perceived as numerous shortcomings since the onset of the humanitarian crisis last year. Among them are the shortcomings of two organisations that are tasked particularly with mitigating against the effects of disaster and providing emergency response in the country; AFAD (the Ministry of Internal Affairs' Disaster and Emergency Management Authority), and Kızılay (the Turkish Red Crescent).

According to the Hatay Province Field Report on the February 6 Earthquakes, conducted by the Public Health Experts Association (or HASUDER), the state's official disaster response unit AFAD (the Ministry of Internal Affairs' Disaster and Emergency Management Authority) was delayed in responding quickly after the earthquakes in Hatay and insufficient in providing coordination especially in the early period. Residents believe that they were discriminated against after being left alone for the first forty-eight hours after the earthquakes, and it is commonly acknowledged that thousands of lives would have been saved if help had arrived sooner. Furthermore, Turkey's Court of Accounts' report from 2021 states that the distribution of aid materials by AFAD vary according to the discretion of the warehouse manager, meaning that AFAD did not know how many tents and aid materials were in its warehouses at the time of the earthquakes last year, and since the warehouse managers distributed them as they wished, it was not known whether they actually went to those in need, or whether there was corruption and theft.

Regarding Kızılay, it was uncovered by investigative journalists in the months following the earthquakes that the charity had sold tents and aid to AHBAP, an organisation commonly acknowledged as the first domestic emergency response team on the ground particularly in disproportionately affected areas such as Hatay province. According to Murat Ağirel's investigation, Kızılay allegedly sold tents for a sum of 46 million Turkish Lira to AHBAP on the third day of the earthquake. It was also claimed that Kızılay directed its stocks and aid to religious congregations, sect foundations, and other such associations. Such findings were confirmed by AHBAP's founder, Haluk Levent, thereafter on Twitter on February 26. On the last day of February, Ağirel yet again exposed another scandal pertaining to Kızılay's capitalisation on aid distribution, this time including the vending of second-hand clothing donated by members of the public for earthquake survivors.



c) Civil society organisations and their response:

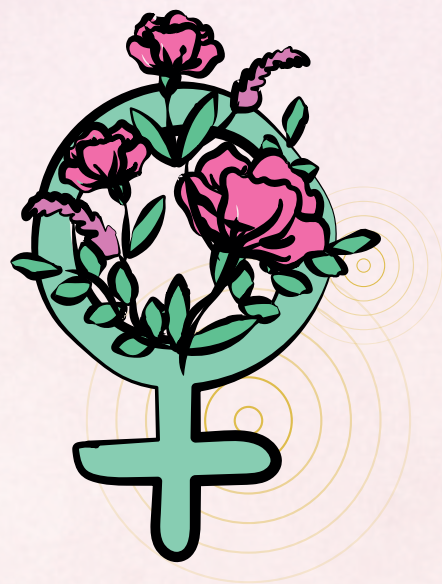
As a result of the above deliberations, feminist-led Civil Society Organisations (or CSOs) have played a leading role in mitigating the limitations of INGO- and state-led emergency response in Turkey and Syria, both in providing aid to women and LGBTQIA+ communities continuously omitted from frameworks of protection, and in reaching locations and areas that have received insubstantial support due to bureaucratic hinderances and state-led malpractice. Nonetheless, such organisations continually face challenges pertaining to access and work within formalised contexts, as well as to create and sustain relationships with funders that can support their provision of consistent support to marginalised survivors. Additionally, many civil society organisations who have engaged in feminist-led emergency response are themselves also victims of the earthquakes, and are thus working under highly traumatic circumstances and undertaking socially, physically, and psychologically demanding work. Correspondingly, the following question arises – how can feminist methodologies be adopted to address these circumstances and support such CSOs?

How did Doria Feminist Fund's Emergency Response programme envision a feminist-led framework for support to Turkey and Syria?

a) Flexible funding:

It is commonly understood that there are two fundamental frameworks of funding that are available to recipients: restricted funding, and flexible funding. Whilst restricted funding is concerned more-so with a specific project or set of activities and is considered the norm, flexible funding is provided to recipients as part of their overall budget and can be used to cover whatever is necessary in order to support their mission. As the Fund for Global Human Rights' vice-president of programmes David Mattingly writes, flexible funding can be used for “anything from covering a project not supported by other donors, to responding to an unforeseen crisis or opportunity, to even covering basic costs like office rent and staff salaries. Ultimately, flexible funding is about trust and power: trust that those directly involved in the struggle for human rights know best how to deploy resources to win, and power to make those decisions in real time based on community needs instead of negotiating details with donors”.

Doria Feminist Fund's programme in Turkey and Syria utilised a flexible funding approach to provide its grantees with the freedom to determine how they would use the grants they receive to cater effectively to the needs of the communities they are serving. To achieve this, an application form was sent by Doria Feminist Fund to prospective grantees, consisting of a request for one or two references and a number of questions requiring short but detailed answers based on their planned activities. The option was provided to answer in either English, Arabic, or Turkish, depending on the needs of the applicant and group in question.



c) Civil society organisations and their response:

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These questions were as follows:

- Which region/sub-region/country will your project focus on?
- Which communities will your project focus on?
- Please share information about why you are applying for the emergency response grant, and how your community will benefit from the grant?
- Who will be leading the implementation of the emergency response grant? Please share more information about the coordination of the grant?
- How will you use the grant budget? Please share a few bullet points about the allocation of your budget?
- What amount are you requesting from Doria? Please complete the following budget template:

| Budget Category | Cost | Quantity | Total |
|-----------------|------|----------|-------|
| | | | |
| | | | |

Prospective grantees were encouraged to utilise Doria’s emergency response programme to not only develop their projects, but also to consider how the financial support would be used to mitigate against the limitations of more conventional, restrictive forms of funding employed by adjacent organisations operative in the region.

b) Review committee:

Doria Feminist Fund established a decision-making committee to identify and deliberate on the suitability of applicants to receive in order to continue their work in the affected regions. This committee consisted of permanent members of Doria Feminist Fund’s team, in addition to two external activists and researchers with direct links to the affected regions: Erkan Gürsel (Turkey), and Rawan Kahwaji (Syria). Both Gürsel and Kahwaji engaged in fieldwork- and desk-based research to identify feminist-led organisations, particularly focusing on the needs of women- and LGBTQIA+ communities and those active in areas that have been notoriously underserved by formalised state- and state-adjacent structures of emergency response. The reviewing committee thereafter met three separate times in secure digital spaces and collectively deliberated on the applications received as a result of Gürsel and Kahwaji’s outreach, as well as Doria Feminist Fund’s own channels of dissemination.

The decision-making was informed by a collaborative, feminist-informed approach that considered the following:

- Are the goals and objectives of the application clear and feasible?
- Does the applicant clearly demonstrate how this grant will support women, girls, and/or the LGBTQIA+ community within their context?
- Does the application clearly outline the challenges they are facing, and why their group or project was created to respond to those challenges?
- Does the applicant clearly express how they will use the Doria grant?

Doria Feminist Fund has thus adopted a framework combining feminist-informed methodologies with flexible funding, enabling hyper-marginalised communities within the affected regions to determine their own nuanced needs within emergency response. By establishing a review committee with a practice of joint decision-making, providing channels of communication with prospective applicants in three languages, and acknowledging that the needs of the regions affected by the earthquakes should be informed via a humanitarian lens and not a diplomatic one, Doria's operations align greatly with the feminist methodologies outlined in the first section of this report;

- a. the de-centring of cis-hetero-patriarchal identity as the intrinsic point of focus, instead paying nuanced attention to the needs of organisations that are led by and (not only) support women and LGBTQIA+ communities;
- b. the adoption of decolonial approaches through the use of three languages to centre local elucidations of identities;
- c. the prioritisation of movement-building strategies and interconnectedness through an indiscriminate approach to offering needs-based support to organisations operative in both Turkey and Syria;
- d. and finally, the development of a relationship built on agency and collaboration, whereby recipients of emergency response are able to determine their needs and priorities directly.

3.2. How did Doria Feminist Fund's Emergency Response programme provide feminist-led support to Turkey and Syria?

- a) Identifying areas for emergency response:

Whilst the earthquakes affected eleven provinces in Turkey, and ten of Syria's governorates, the devastation and subsequent need for emergency response in both countries in the direct aftermath depended heavily on the geographic, political and economic landscapes of the various regions affected (it is commonly acknowledged that the disparities of aid and emergency response are as pertinent today as they were at the beginning of last year, with a number of nuanced- and needs-based circumstances that require continued intervention).

In Turkey, the effects of basin amplification, peak-ground acceleration (PGA) and peak-ground velocity meant that Hatay province – located on the eastern Mediterranean coast on the border with Syria's Idlib and Latakia governorates – experienced a disproportionate level of damage, more-so than anywhere else in the country. %46.1 of buildings in the region were constructed prior to the earthquake-resistant design codes implemented across the country in the wake of the 1999 Marmara earthquakes, but many buildings constructed thereafter were reported to not have followed these amendments.

Furthermore, as Doria finds, state- and state-adjacent authorities such as AFAD were heavily criticised in the days following the earthquakes for their lacklustre emergency response, particularly in Hatay province. As a result of Doria review-committee member Gürsel's own fieldwork in Hatay province in the direct aftermath of the earthquakes, Doria's team were able to receive first-hand information on the current realities facing survivors in the region most-affected in Turkey. A number of organisations particularly in the densely populated areas of Antakya and Samandağ were thus identified and encouraged to apply for the Emergency Response grant, especially those working to respond directly to the nuanced needs of women and/or LGBTQIA+ communities in the absence of an effective state- and state-adjacent response.



In Syria, Doria's research finds that international humanitarian assistance did not enter the north-western territories via the Bab al-Hawa and Bab al-Salama border crossings with Turkey until February 9th. Between February 9th and February 17th, approximately 143 convoys passed through to provide aid to the north-western regions, solely containing shelter and non-food items for camps rather than fuel and search-and-rescue equipment. Reports attribute such slowness to the inadequacy of the United Nations Security Council-mandated cross-border aid mechanism (HRW 2023), demonstrating the geopolitical limitations of state- and intergovernmental organisations in providing indiscriminate humanitarian aid and emergency response to north-western Syria. Whilst the Syrian government received UN aid for the first four days, northwest Syria received none, and alongside local political forces' failure to respond effectively to the disaster, the Syrian regime's response was thus characterised by "discrimination, politicization, evasion of responsibility and lack of effectiveness" (Syrian Centre for Policy Research: 2023). Therefore, the research conducted by review-committee member Kahwaji as well as Doria Feminist Fund's utilisation of its pre-existing commitment to supporting civil society organisations located in Syria allowed for the identification of a number applicants that could be supported in the areas most-affected and least-served as a result of diplomatic and political hinderances in the north-west of the country – bypassing the limitations of emergency response offered by more restrictive frameworks of funding that continue to rely heavily on bureaucratic and governmental approval to operate.



b) Brief summary of grantees of the Emergency Response programme:

Of the seven organisations funded by Doria Feminist Fund as part of the Emergency Response, three are operative in Syria, three are operative in Turkey, and one is operative in Lebanon. For Syria, these organisations are Changemakers, DemoS, and Haneen Choir. For Turkey, these are Karaçay Co-ordination, Kareemat, and Youth Approaches to Health Association (YAHA, or SGYD in Turkish). For Lebanon, this is She Can. All funded organisations are feminist and/or LGBTQIA+ led, and the activities conducted as part of the funds encapsulate one or more of the following:

- Psychosocial support to women,
- Infrastructural and education-led support for youth communities,
- Psychosocial and educational support for internally displaced women and children.
- Psychosocial support to LGBTQIA+ Syrian refugees in Lebanon,
- Psychosocial support to displaced Syrians in Turkey.

Alongside each organisation's application, Doria Feminist Fund requested a final narrative report (in English, Turkish or Arabic) to determine exactly how the funds provided were used to cater to the needs of hyper-marginalised communities listed via the activities above. For the sake of a concise report, this evaluation provides a case study from each of the worst-affected regions to assess the significance of the fund's flexible and feminist-led approach towards emergency response.

c) Case study for Syria – Changemakers:

Change Makers, a civil society organisation based in Syria, utilised the flexible funding from Doria Feminist Fund to provide emergency response and support to survivors affected by the earthquakes particularly in the north-western regions of country. When elaborating on the impact of Doria's funding in their provision of services to survivors, they shared that they were able to make significant progress during the implementation of the grant; "we were not previously accustomed to working in this manner due to the restrictions imposed by donors.

Therefore, the Doria Feminist Fund's grant provided serious and fruitful opportunities in providing services for women, including psychosocial support and supporting of volunteer teams, to contribute effectively to disaster-mitigation. We contributed by helping 100 affected women, in addition to supporting 5 volunteer teams led by women".

Given the aforementioned bureaucratic limitations facing INGOs attempting to provide emergency response to north-western Syria, in addition to the Syrian regime's state-sanctioned withholding of aid due to politically motivated policies, Doria Feminist Fund's collaboration with Change Makers is of great significance. Particularly as a women-led organisation providing needs-based support to women survivors of the earthquakes, Doria was able to contribute in mitigating the nuanced needs of a marginalised group within the realm of emergency response, whilst similarly navigating around the diplomatic and political limitations of humanitarian aid to collaboratively provide support to one of the most underserved areas in the affected provinces of Syria. Particularly, the flexible funding element of Doria Feminist Fund's grant enabled for Change Makers to budget according to their needs elucidated below, allowing them the freedom to determine their most urgent costs based off of realities in the field;

- The wages of an executive director
- The wages of a financial and logistical officer
- The wages of feminist-informed trainers
- The wages of a psychological support officer
- In-kind assistance to women survivors of the earthquakes
- Logistical costs (including hospitality and office equipment)
- Transportation costs for participants in their emergency response programme.

According to Change Makers, the flexible funding had a great impact on the team within its performance development. The organisation was able to gain a human resources officer, and the number of the team was able to increase to "seven young women and volunteers who participated in the work, giving us the ability to reach and provide the best services in terms of specialisation and quality". Nonetheless, there were a number of limitations beyond the capacities of Change Makers as an organisation to mitigate against. According to the team, one of the biggest limitations in their activities was "the delay in receiving the financial payment [due to administrative and bureaucratic sanctions in place on Syria], which led to the delay in implementation. Additionally, we struggled with the interference of the de-facto authorities in the work of the volunteer teams, making us work with extreme caution so as to not interfere directly and impose certain conditions for the implementation of the project".

That withstanding, the impact of Doria Feminist Fund's grant was instrumental in supporting the organisation in their emergency response for survivors; "this grant served as technical support for the team, because we had never previously worked with an emergency response such as this disaster. It contributed to building trust between the work team and the surrounding community, and we proved that we, as a women's team, are capable of adapting to all difficult circumstances and facing challenges". After having established a new programme of emergency response as a result of the earthquakes and subsequent hurdles, the Changer Makers team have expressed that they are committed to developing a strategic plan based on the lessons-learned in 2023 in order to continue providing support. They have stated that "we need programmatic and financial support for a period of not-less-than a year to achieve a greater impact, in addition to planning meetings with donors to provide support to women survivors that will help them grow, develop, and become self-sufficient".

Ultimately, the collaborative partnership between Doria Feminist Fund and Changemakers can best be summarised through such ambitions to continue working with a needs-based, feminist-informed approach, and they have similarly expressed that they “look forward to a second opportunity for support to have an effective and fruitful role at local and international levels in communicating women’s voices to decision-makers”.



d) Case study for Turkey – Karaçay Coordination:

Unlike most other entities funded by the Emergency Response programme, Karaçay Coordination was not a formally registered civil society organisation at the onset of its collaboration with Doria Feminist Fund. Rather, Karaçay Coordination began its operations in the aftermath of the earthquakes as a coordinated network of locals, activists and specialists providing emergency response in Hatay province based on the changing needs of the communities requiring support. According to the co-founders, Karaçay “has transitioned since the start of its operations from being a search and rescue team for survivors from the rubble in the first few weeks, to supporting in distribution of aid that was sent from other parts of the country, to becoming a coordination providing workshops for self-sustainability, education, and psychosocial support until today”. When asked what their motivation is, they responded with “we live here, and we want to remain independent and provide for our communities”.

Karaçay Coordination thus used Doria’s flexible funding to implement their projects on a needs-based approach, adapting their operations when necessary to match the requirements of their communities. Most importantly, Karaçay have developed a large, semi-permanent centre in the neighbourhood of Tomruksuyu (Samandağ, Hatay province), and continue to provide support to any and all who attend the site.

The organisation has worked fundamentally on a voluntary- and community-led basis in order to keep its activities running in the last year, utilising funds received from Doria Feminist Fund to:

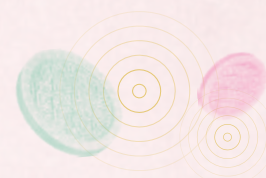
- Coordinate exam groups and classes with volunteer teachers in the absence of functioning schools, the former particularly focusing on students waiting to sit university entrance exams, and the latter concerned more-so with reception and primary school classes. Approximately 12,000 students have been supported with these educational and exam-preparation programmes in the last year.
- Provide psychosocial services to children and young people, utilising creative fields like photography, sculpture, music, and chess programmes to encourage dynamic participation and engagement.
- Organise games workshops and keep an actively running nursery on a weekly basis for children in the neighbourhood, supervised by two volunteer teachers from local backgrounds using culturally-informed practices.
- Weekly, women-only drawing and knitting workshops, usually operative at the same time as nurseries and children-focused games workshops to encourage engagement.
- Industry professionals and creatives within film have been invited to provide workshops on documentary-making, with two film screenings a week.
- Two libraries have been established in containers, one for adolescents and one for children, operative -24hours a day and providing a safe space to study and/or read.

Karaçay believe that their most important project is the construction and building workshops that they have been providing for locals since the summer of last year – approaching the issues of ecologically and sustainably constructing permanent accommodation in the absence of state support for permanent shelter. This has included:

- carpentry workshops,
- administrative and planning sessions,
- and the development of a workers solidarity union that includes various different specialists providing their expertise on building permanent shelter.

Given the region's disproportionate residential destruction, the intention of this project is to allow survivors to reclaim their agency and advocate and provide for their own needs vis-à-vis housing. 118 families currently live on Karaçay's semi-permanent site, and the construction workshop is located nearby and is 40msq2.

That withstanding, Karaçay Coordination mention a number of limitations that currently obstruct the effective continuation of their work. Fundamentally, their provision of educational programmes is operationally limited to the title of 'workshops', as local governmental authorities refuse to provide the permits necessary to identify the coordination's educational programmes formally. Given the inconsistencies of access to state-endorsed educational facilities since the earthquakes, this creates an unfair environment for students from underserved areas who are unable to access state-led programmes due to location or financial resources. Furthermore, Karaçay coordination believe that they are facing a "systematic attack at the hands of the local authorities for the wellbeing and continuity of their programmes, as well as the general safeguarding of survivors in the region".





The recent announcement of a state reservation in Antakya and its surrounding provincial boroughs have meant that many communities in Antakya and Samandağ feel subjugated to the potential unilateral usurpation of their rights and physical spaces by the Turkish state. Karaçay therefore feel that they have to defend their activities and very existence from any potential state surveillance and intimidation, aware that their operations may be halted without reason at any time – potentially leaving the many who rely on their emergency response programmes without the support that they require.

The impact of these difficulties is particularly amplified in the goals that Karaçay Coordination share for the near future. After engaging in a process of registering formally as a civil society organisation, Karaçay believe that they must move their physical site as soon as possible. The current land on which their activities are conducted is state-owned, and they face continued harassment to vacate the premises. This has resulted in AFAD's local representatives and governmental officials regularly cutting electricity to the establishment, in addition to harassment from members of the authorities – supported by the gendarme – who regularly show up and conduct ID checks on activists, volunteers, and survivors, to impede the emergency response programmes conducted on site; “if we had more funds, we would leave here and find our own space. We would like to freely determine who we work with and not be limited to the state and its ongoing tactics of oppression that stop us from providing the services our communities need”.

Regardless, Karaçay still continue to function actively as a framework providing material, psycho-social, ecological and educational support, creating targeted programmes that ensure the engagement of women and children as hyper-marginalised groups, and creating a space for equity, transparency and collaboration that resists against the oppressive practices of state- and state-adjacent entities in its surroundings. With their consent, Karaçay's team allowed for a recorded tour of their site to demonstrate some of the activities that they are conducting, and the spaces that they have created in order to do so. The full video of the tour is available upon request from the Doria Feminist Fund's team.

e) Supplementary knowledge-production grants for Turkey & Syria:

As part of Doria Feminist Fund's ongoing knowledge-production grant cycle, two individuals were provided with knowledge production grants in order to conduct research and present projects that creatively draw attention to the implications of the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria, informed by a feminist perspective.

For Turkey, review-committee member Erkan Gürsel was provided with a knowledge-production grant to create a documentary film exploring the impacts of the February 6 and 20th earthquakes on the historic quarter of Affan in Antakya, through the lens of his paternal family members. Over a period of six months, Gürsel utilised the funds provided by Doria Feminist Fund to engage in a multi-phase project that consisted of:

- a research & development period,
- a fieldwork and production period (consisting of filming and interviews with his participating family members in Antakya),
- a post-production period, in which Gürsel worked with a team of ten specialists from Turkey within the realms of human rights and documentary filmmaking.

The result of Gürsel's receipt of this grant was the completion of 'No.910', a 48-minute documentary that was released in early 2024. Until now, the film has been screened with research centres and cinemas located internationally, with the intention of drawing attention to the contemporary realities of post-disaster calls for accountability constituting much of the region of Hatay province until today.



For Syria, review-committee member Rawan Kahwaji adapted the knowledge-production grant that she received prior to the earthquakes to support the repurchasing of hardware that was lost as a result of the earthquakes – such as a laptop and zoom recorder – whilst also covering therapy sessions and activities with fellow feminist activists from her community. Working on creating a podcast with the grant before the onset of the disaster, she thereafter utilised the flexible-funding aspect of the funds received to:

- re-evaluate the podcast and change the context to cater to the emergency needs of her community,
- work with multiple activists and partners on collecting financial resources for donations and emergency needs in the region,
- conduct data collections on newly emergent needs,
- mobilise with civil society actors and donors,
- facilitating sessions with the community as collective care spaces

Doria's flexible funding ensured that, whilst she was working and producing a feminist podcast that looks at the feminist spaces that young activists are creating in Syrian contexts, Kahwaji could adopt this framework of knowledge-production into emergency response. By doing so, she was able to support a series of collective care sessions, where feminist activists and first responders came together to grieve, support, and strengthen each other after the losses each one endured in the earthquakes. Initiating such conversations with multiple feminist and political spaces in Syria thus enabled the engagement of young feminist activists to recognise the needs of their communities, resulting in "two feminist NGOs starting training programmes for young feminists on political engagement and mediation". These activities allowed for the inclusion of more young feminist activists into meetings and consultation processes of emergency response and community-led care.

3.3. How was Doria's Feminist Emergency Response programme evaluated?

a) Reports:

Utilising the experiences in fieldwork- and desk-based research methodologies of feminist academics active within the region and field of emergency response, Doria Feminist Fund commissioned a number of reports to explore the implications of the earthquakes for women and LGBTQIA+ communities; focusing particularly on providing a combination of testimonials, qualitative- and quantitative data-analysis, and participant observation to do so.

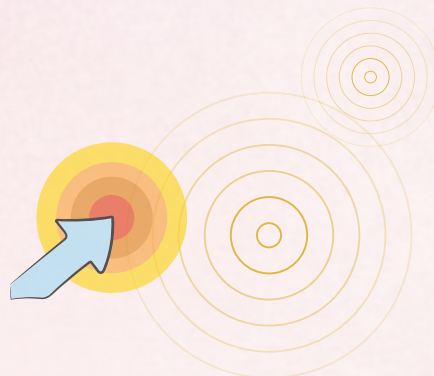
Said reports include:

- "Desk Review of The Responses to the Türkiye-Syria Earthquakes",
- "Antakya – Report & Need for Funding",
- "Reading Syrian Women from the feminist ecological Social Model",
- "Impact of Doria Feminist Fund's Emergency Response programme on Turkey & Syria".

b) Digital space curation and feedback workshop:

In April 2024, Doria Feminist Fund facilitated a simultaneous, multi-lingual feedback session with all collaborators working in mitigating effects of the earthquakes in both countries. For almost all participants in said session, Doria's workshop was the first time they had engaged in a non-hegemonic environment, centring feminist methodologies to simultaneously build trust between Turkey-based and Syria-based civil society organisations and activist networks. Conducted over two days and facilitated by two feminist and human rights activists (Pelın Alnılan from Turkey and review committee member Rawan Kahwaji from Syria), the workshop centred holistic methodologies of data validation and information exchange with simultaneous translation available in both Turkish and Arabic.

Topics and questions explored by facilitators and all participants (representing organisations funded by Doria Feminist Fund's programme) were as follows:





Day 1: Introductions and Critical Evaluations from the Field (Turkish/Arabic):

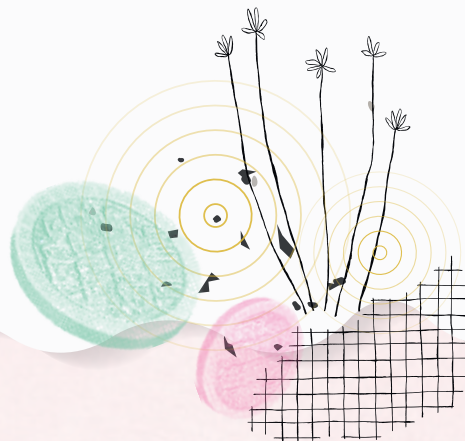
- What are nuanced needs identified by stakeholders in emergency response?
- What are practices of safeguarding for both practitioners and recipients of emergency response?
- How do organisations identify and provide support to hyper-marginalised communities, and what methodologies are used to ensure holistic and non-hegemonic support?
- What are some methods of efficiency and time-sensitivity in project implementations?

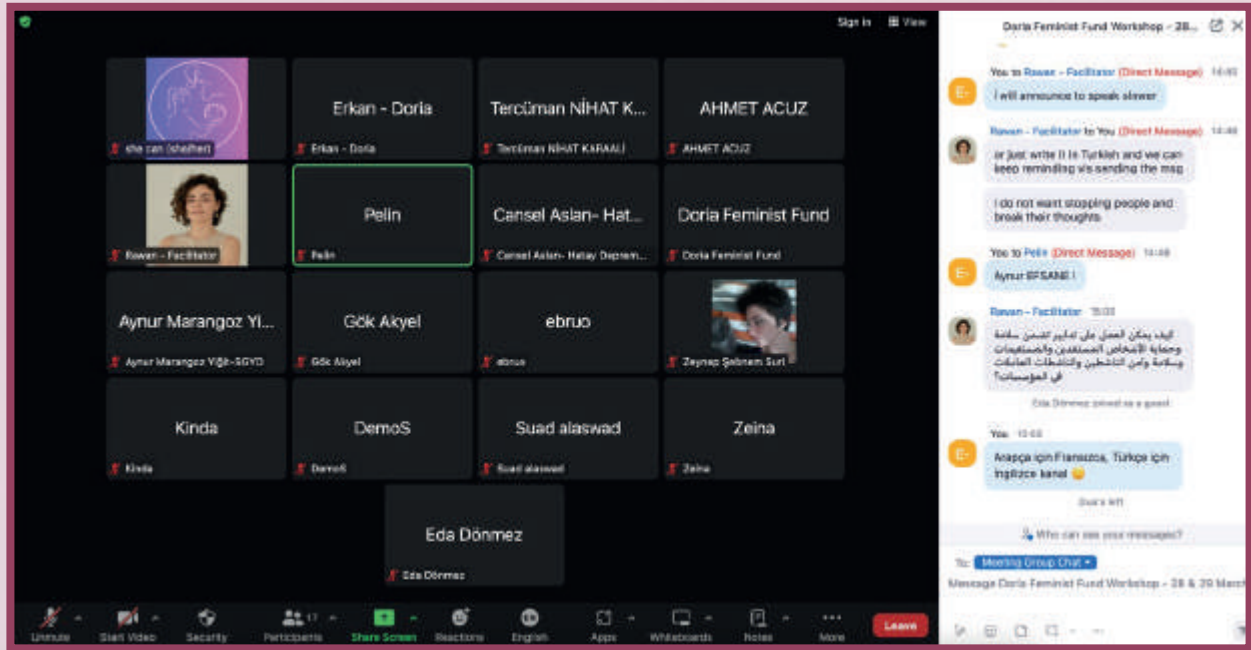
Day 2: Reintroductions & Organisational Feedback (Turkish/Arabic):

- What are some mental health needs and frameworks for wellbeing for practitioners in emergency response?
- What is aid work 'fatigue', and how can we develop dynamic relationships between funders and practitioners to combat it?
- What are some effective evaluation methodologies that centre regular check-ins, feedback sessions, and consistent communication between funders and practitioners?
- How can organisations lay the foundations to offer long-term support – what happens when the funds start to disappear due to attention economy?

Day 2 (Part 2): Sustainable Activism (Turkish/Arabic):

- Guest workshop by pre-existing Turkey- and Syria-based feminist/LGBT organisations on sustainable activism within and beyond the region.





In addition to the simultaneously translated discussion, the second day's session saw the participation of, Seçin Tuncel of KAOS GL from Turkey who led a discussion in Turkish (with Arabic translation) on the various intersections of LGBTQIA+ activism in the country, and how such methodologies can provide lessons-learned that can be applied to ongoing campaigns of emergency response and advocacy for hyper-marginalised communities within the disaster regions. Seçin's organisation, KAOS GL, is a human rights network based in Ankara that works in the fields of sexual and gendered advocacy, academic and cultural studies, media and communication, and refugee rights. It is one of the longest-standing and most notable non-governmental organisations in Turkey working within the field of sexual and gendered liberty. Feedback from both Syria- and Turkey-based participants in the workshop demonstrate the significance of organising such cross-language and cross-contextual discussions; "it was very illuminating hearing about feminist and LGBTQIA+ activism in Turkey, as it was familiar with the work that we have been doing for years in Syria as well.

From Syria, SFJN-founding member Dua Muhammad thereafter led a discussion in Arabic (with Turkish translation) about the role of feminist methodologies of journalism and activism in drawing attention to the experiences of women in conflict and disaster contexts. SFJN, or Syrian Female Journalists Network, is the only organisation specialised on feminist media that works with Syrian journalists and media institutions on gender-sensitive reporting. Advocating for the rights of women media workers and human rights defenders, it fosters a media discourse that is feminist and critical to achieving gender justice and social change. Dua's own experiences as a journalist and activist who survived the earthquakes whilst living in Turkey's Hatay province further demonstrates the intersections of experiences between both Turkey- and Syria-based networks of civil society activists. The experiences may have certain nuances to them, as identified by various social, political and economic factors, but the campaigns for justice and support within the realm of humanitarian aid and emergency response remain the same.



c) Site visits:

In April 2024, Doria Feminist Fund team-member Nadia Elboubkri and collaborator Erkan Gürsel conducted a site visit to two organisations funded by the Doria Emergency Response fund, located in Hatay province's Samandağ area – specifically, Karaçay and Youth Approaches to Health Association (YAHA). This provided the opportunity for both Doria Feminist Fund and its grantees to meet in physical contexts and exchange feedback and lessons-learned from the last year. In both cases, representatives of the organisations provided Elboubkri and Gürsel with a tour of their facilities, demonstrating how the funding received was used to cater to their communities. Particularly, Karaçay gave their consent to film their facilities, with some examples attached below as a reference point.



4. Recommendations:

It is clear to see the necessity of needs-based responses vis-à-vis feminist-led civil society organisations operating in a post-emergency context, and said responses have a multiplicity of cross-contextual relevance in both Turkey and Syria. Whilst sharing the recommendations below it is important to remember that funding should not be conceptualised in the short-term, but rather be an ongoing opportunity to continue developing collaborative frameworks that deepen pre-existing relationships, as well as form new one. In a general sense, DFF and its researchers recommend that funders and local actors focus on the following topics as priorities within ongoing feminist-led programmes of emergency response:

- Women and LGBTQIA+ led projects that continue to provide tailored support to mitigate against the ambivalences of hetero-patriarchal services that do not centre the needs of groups regularly omitted from mainstream pathologies of aid. Particularly, focusing on providing psycho-social services and activities that inform and protect against sexual- and gender-based violence, establish safe spaces for women and LGBTQIA+ communities & take into consideration the nuances of health- and body-based needs such as menstrual hygiene and equitable access to hormones.
- Educational programmes that collaborate with grantees to support programmes combating the disenfranchisement of students affected by a lack of sustainable and accessible educational facilities. Particularly, supporting programmes that identify the needs of young people using creative methodologies, and (re-)engage them into education through vocational projects and workshops; in nursery, primary, secondary, and higher and further education levels.
- Creative forms of psychosocial services and community engagement, ensuring a process of healing and trust-building to process intense trauma. Particularly in the forms of screenings, performances and artistic programmes, using music, film, dance and other such expressive mediums in order to do so.
- Legal support and representation are prerequisites of mid- to long-term emergency response plans in areas with layers of structural violence in progress such as north-western Syria and Hatay in Turkey. Identifying organisations working in protecting and lobbying for the rights of groups operative in these environments is of significance to the sustainability of feminist-informed humanitarian assistance.
- Ecologically informed and environmentally durable programmes of infrastructural redevelopment, particularly focusing on transitioning communities from temporary spaces to more permanent sites through shared ownership and/or co-operatives.

<https://www.dunya.com/kose-yazisi/-10ildeki-deprem-ulke-ekonomisini-de-vurdu/685263>

<https://www.nytimes.com/06/02/2023/world/middleeast/syrian-humanitarian-crisis-earthquake.html>