VAN EARTHQUAKE EXPERIENCE

UNION OF PSYCHOSOCIAL SERVICES IN DISASTERS (UPSD)

EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT
TRC was established on 11 June 1868 and it implements and coordinates humanitarian relief operations for the victims of natural and technological disasters as well as wars.

Today, TRC provides humanitarian services worldwide with its more than 1 million volunteers, 3,500 professional staff and nearly 800 branches spread throughout the country along with its Head Quarters.
NATIONAL DISASTER RESPONSE AND RELIEF ACTIVITIES
Turkish Red Crescent initiated psychosocial support activities following 1999 Marmara Earthquakes and psychosocial support activities have been carried out in many national and international humanitarian aid operations.
In order to cooperate (collaborate) with other NGOs conducting PS activities in a post-disaster environment and to enhance the quality of PS services, under the leadership by TRC, Union of Psychosocial Services In Disaster (UPSD) was established by signing a protocol among NGO's working on the field of mental health in 2006.
UNION OF PSYCHOSOCIAL SERVICES IN DISASTERS (UPSD)

TURKISH RED CRESCENT SOCIETY (GENERAL SECRETARY OF UNION)

TURKISH PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

SOCIAL WORKERS ASSOCIATION

PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION OF TURKEY

TURKISH ASSOCIATION FOR CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY

TURKISH PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE ASSOCIATION

UNION OF PSYCHOSOCIAL SERVICES IN DISASTERS
UPSD aims to:

- To respond to the disasters more effectively
- To meet the needs of the individuals and communities in the most effective and collaborative way,
- To overcome the deficiencies in the field of PS services in disasters
PSYCHOSOCIAL OPERATIONS

- 1999 Marmara Earthquake
- 2002 Afyon Earthquake
- 2003 Irak/Silopi Humanitarian Relief Operation
- 2003 İstanbul Bombing
- 2003 Bingöl Earthquake
- 2004 Tsunami-Endonezya/ Sri Lanka
- 2005 Pakistan Earthquake
- UNION OF PSYCHOSOCIAL SERVICES IN DISASTERS (UPSD)
- 2006 Batman Flood
- 2007 İzmir Traffic Accident
- 2007 Ankara/Anafartalar Bombing
- 2007 Ankara Bala Earthquake
- 2008 İstanbul/Güngören Bombing
- 2008 Antalya Wild Fire
- 2009 Mardin Armed Attack
- 2009 Marmara Flood
- 2009 Bursa Dent Mine
- 2010 Elazığ Earthquake
- 2010 Zonguldak Dent Mine
- 2011 Van Earthquake
- Two earthquakes
- 23rd October 2011: 7.2 magnitude
- 9th November 2011: 5.6 magnitude
- more than 10,000 aftershocks
• 644 people lost their lives
• Nearly 650,000 people have been directly affected
• 17,000 buildings and infrastructure were heavily damaged
• Many of the public buildings were out of service.
Turkish Red Crescent responded immediately
dispatching food and non-food relief items including
• Sheltering units: 53,535
• Blankets: 213,390
• Sleeping bags and beds: 38,811
• Cooked meals: 3,410,195 portion distributed till March 2012
On the day of the earthquake, TRC contacts the NGOs that are member of UPDS in order to initiate psychosocial support activities.

Beside the need assessment, to provide coordination, meetings were conducted with civil and administrative authorities; they were informed about planned interventions.
PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

• Need and Resource Assessment
• Information Dissemination
• Individual Interviews
• Social Activities
• Structured Group Works
• Educational Activities
• Vocational Courses
• Worker Support
NEED AND RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

- To identify the physical, social and psychological needs
- To identify vulnerable groups
- Mapping needs and resources
INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

• Psychosocial effects of disaster
• Disasters and sexual (reproductive) health, family planning,
• Hygiene,
• The effects of the earthquake on children,
• Coping with trauma, grief, anger, stress..
INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

People who needs further psychological support were interviewed by psychologists and psychiatrists.

Treatment plans were made for those who needed to get long-term psychological support and they were referred to the health institutions, hospitals such as Van District Education and Research Hospital.
Structured group works enabled to people

- Share their emotions regarding the earthquake,
- Find out their own strength,
- Develop new coping skills,
- Be informed about trauma and coping,
- Enhance their feelings of confidence,
- Manage their anger.
Many social activities were conducted for adults, adolescents, children by taking age and the needs of the camps residents into consideration.

Painting, drama, music, handcraft, literature, sports, watching movie, and play-time activities for children and adolescents

The activities for adults like sports, tea-time activities were conducted.
STRUCTURED GROUP WORKS
SOCIAL ACTIVITIES
EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

• Since education system was paused for nearly two months, to compensate this break and support education system, educational activities were organized for students who had been prepared for exams and had missed out on education.
VOCATIONAL COURSES

With coordination and cooperation;

Van Public Education Center and Evening Art School Directorate vocational courses provided for women in camps.
WORKER SUPPORT

TRCS Staff
Disaster And Emergency Management Presidency Staff,
Police,
Other NGO’s Staff,
Ministry Of Health Staff

Conducted worker support groups
Social Activities
Football and Voleyball Tournement
Briefing meetings were organized and disaster experiences of UDPS were shared with other institutions and organizations in the coordination meetings.
• With support of WHO and Unicef
• Ministry of Health’s Staff
• Ministry of Family and Social Policy’s Staff
• Disaster and Emergency Management Residency’s staff

235 health workers trained by UPSD
• 183 Mental health professionals including child and adolescent psychiatrists, adult psychiatrists, social workers, psychologists and psychological counselors

• Total number of affected people participated in the PS interventions: 16,873

• Activities terminated in March, 2012.
Challenges

• Difficulty in following-up of affected people
• Accessibility problems for people living out of the tent cities
• Resistance of males to psychosocial support
• Language difficulties
• Political conflicts/power struggle among local authorities
• Poor coordination among agencies
CONCLUSION

By UPSD;

• Psychosocial support programme started right after earthquake
• Repeating and duplication was prevented
• Mental health and other medical staff were trained,
• Strengthen the local institutions and organizations and made the interventions sustainable.