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Occupation

Director

Please choose the theme

1 Eradication of Poverty

Please briefly describe your organisation

Support to Life (Hayata Destek) is a humanitarian agency founded with the principal objective of working with vulnerable communities to help them meet their basic needs and rights.

## Statement Title

Effective Humanitarian Aid in the Middle East

## Statement (600 words limit)

Oral Statement for Istanbul Summit 2015  
Support to Life / Hayata Destek Dernegi  
30 April 2015, Istanbul

In preparation to the World Humanitarian Summit, surveys and focus group discussions are conducted with disaster-affected individuals and communities all around the world. The report card for humanitarian aid actors is particularly striking for the Middle East region. Surveys reveal that individuals and communities affected by humanitarian crises in the Middle East have given a 3 out of 10 for aid agencies in meeting prioritized needs. In terms of listening to the affected population and considering their opinions in humanitarian programming, aid providers received a score of 2.5 out of 10 from beneficiaries. The same score was received for helping at-risk communities prepare for future crises. For being treated with respect and dignity, aid recipients gave a score of 3.5 over 10 to humanitarian actors. For making people feel safe and protected from violence, the same score of 3.5 was given. Finally, affected populations receiving aid did not feel the assistance was provided in a principled manner, as aid agencies scored a 4 out of 10 in terms of their neutral and impartial approach to humanitarian programming.

This heart-rending outcome for the Middle East shows how little we, as NGOs in this part of the world, consider the effectiveness and impact of the humanitarian assistance we deliver. Working on rendering our actions more accountable to those that we serve and mainstreaming women's participation in this effort will help make a significant difference. As new actors in the humanitarian landscape, NGOs based in the Middle East have responsibilities in urging their respective governments and civil society organizations to set up accountability frameworks for the way humanitarian assistance is delivered to affected populations in the region.

Many NGOs in the Middle East, including Muslim charities, are emerging players of the humanitarian system. Some of these major charities are now viewed as "global actors" in the literature on humanitarian assistance. In order to do justice to this description, as NGOs based in the Middle East, we need to consider our understanding and interpretation of the humanitarian principles on which we operate. We need to set up operational frameworks that will allow us to genuinely listen to and consider the opinions of disaster affected communities. Only then can we dedicate our humanitarian programming to covering the prioritized needs of disaster-affected individuals and communities as well as help at-risk communities to prepare for future disasters.

