



**WOMEN'S
PAID AND
UNPAID LABOR
IN EARTHQUAKE-
AFFECTED
CITIES**



WOMEN WORKERS SOLIDARITY ASSOCIATION

Report Summary

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Earthquakes on February 6 affected over 13 million people in 11 provinces of Turkey. Tens of thousands of people lost their lives, while most survivors' livelihoods and living spaces were ruined.

Currently, it is women who carry the burden of various tasks such as organizing day-to-day life in an inhabitable manner. Tackling the needs of the entire household (be it permanent housing or a temporary tent/container or a hut) and re-establishing decent physical conditions are also women's tasks. With this in mind, any crisis and lack of means add to the burden and work of women. Chores and care work women perform to re-establish a devastated household and a torn-down house under temporary housing conditions turns into a never-ending shift. In the face of such a disaster coupled with a broader crisis, growing household work and a greater need for a subsistence wage define women's areas for wage work and ways of participation in employment. This also pushes women to consent to more precarious forms of work under less favorable conditions.

The process that the Government named "Rehabilitation and Reconstruction" for earthquake-impacted areas is not solely a construction project. Rather, it will reshape and redefine social relations and the ways of exploitation when it comes to labor.

The shape this process of reconstruction will take and the various layers it will involve will be more pronounced in the future. As one talks about re-construction in the zone, it should be noted that this includes the physical reconstruction of housing, public buildings, and workspaces as well as an all-out transformation of social life and relations, labor, and social spaces.

In crises, pre-planned construction programs characterized by free market solutions are predicated upon more extensive exploitation of existing inequalities. They also further deepen the existing relations of exploitation and inequalities. It should be underscored, however, that re-construction practices orchestrated by the state and placed at the disposal of capital accumulation will inevitably

exacerbate the exploitation women face during care work, social reproduction, and wage work. We examined the post-disaster period marked by acute needs and the current, heavier living conditions shaped by the earthquake. We also looked into women's access to wage work, the violation of labor women in the workforce witnessed, and all other issues around changing labor conditions.

Including women in cleaning work, agricultural workers, factory workers, and unemployed women, our interviewees worked in and changed between different business lines and forms of employment.

Public servants and/or those who had the financial means to travel to another city left their dwellings immediately after the earthquake.

Overview of Women's Work in Earthquake-Impacted Provinces

According to the figures calculated based on the 2021 data of the Turkish Statistics Institute (TÜİK), women represent only 25.6% of the total employment in the region. More than 50% of women employed are in the informal economy and lack social protection. In light of this data, the unemployment rate of women living in the zone is much higher than women's unemployment rates across the country. Unemployed women in the zone represent some 10% of total women's unemployment in Turkey.

Where women's employment is limited and mostly precarious, they are unable to enjoy the benefits of non-precarious work. Most women perform short-term contracted work and thus are ineligible for short-term working allowances. Data also shows us that women also lack access to social assistance as they have mostly worked without social insurance.

Mostly working in precarious, insecure, and flexible forms, women are unfortunately unable to exercise the rights enshrined in secure forms of employment. Already facing obstacles in accessing formal work, women will face more difficulty in finding non-precarious forms of employment since the earthquake sharpened the already existing methods of exploitation.

Women's Work Experiences Before the Earthquake

Sectors where women work vary depending on the region and province. In Hatay and Maraş, women's workforce participation in industrial production is limited, whereas many factories in Malatya's organized industrial zone (OIZ) employ women. Factories in Malatya produce textiles, dried fruits, food, confectionery, chocolate, shoes, plastics, and metal. Some 35 thousand formal workers are employed in organized industrial zones of Malatya, and 60% of these workers are women. The majority of the employment in agricultural industrial production, for example, apricot packaging factories and food production factories, is represented by women. Female employment is also intensive in certain functions of the textiles industry, such as quality control departments. As an extension of the plants in OIZs, small textile workshops are operating with informal workers for contract manufacturing activities in the city center. For these shops, women work from home and get paid per the piece they produce. However, no matter the place and the form of work, their wage, social protection, job protection, and status of employment are shaped by the specificities of women's work and how it is exploited. As we understand from women's remarks, social reproduction roles that take their roots from unpaid work also define their working conditions in paid work. This way, paid work also facilitates the oppression of women.

We talked with a woman worker employed by a factory producing for textile giants in Malatya. Only considering the burden of work she carries at home is enough for us to fathom the difference and sharp inequality that constitutes the basis of the paid work for men and women. When a man gets back home, he finds all the services to prepare him for the next day ready and made available to him, while the woman is responsible for delivering these services to him when she gets back home from work. Meanwhile, when overtime work is required (although it is paid) and if women fail to deliver on this expectation, they face the risk of being laid off. In this case, they either have to carry out the unpaid work that the household requires from them at the cost of having no moment for rest, or they refuse to take on overtime work, "getting into trouble" and facing the risk of being laid off.

Even when dismissals were prohibited as part of the State of Emergency declared during the COVID-19 pandemic, employers and foremen alike collaborated against women who failed to take on overtime work. Employers and foremen invented a phenomenon called “inappropriate conduct”. This way, they exercised Code 29, which according to the Code of Labor, allowed employers to terminate employment since the Code stipulates an exception to the prohibition of arbitrary dismissals in the case of “conduct against moral rules and goodwill”. Even when arbitrary termination of employment was prohibited, they were easily able to lay off women thanks to Code 29.

Code-29¹ has become a common practice by employers for dismissals, especially during states of emergency where termination of employment is restricted. According to the data retrieved from the Social Security Institution, 176,662 workers were laid off under Code-29.² According to workers and trade unions, Code-29 has become an employer’s weapon against workers as a practice very much prone to exploitation. Practices under Code-29, which governs “inappropriate conduct”, result in stigmatization not only in the workplace but also in the social circles of women, who feel forced to prove that they maintained their chastity or, fearing stigmatization, decide to not raise their voice against harassment at work.³ Code-29 will continue as part of the State of Emergency declared after the earthquake to govern the state of work in the zone. Therefore, women in the zone will face the same consequences.

¹ According to the Social Security Institution’s circular dated April 1, 2021 with no. 2021-9, the Code-29 was lifted from the table of “reasons for leaving work”, and replaced with nine additional codes from 41 to 50. This way, each violation as described in article 25/II in the Code of Labor was matched with a code. However, the fact that the reasons for dismissal have been differentiated with a new regulation does not constitute a deterring factor to prevent employers from arbitrary conduct.

² DİSK-AR, Bulletin on the Injustices under Code-29, 2021, <https://arastirma.disk.org.tr/?p=5458>

³ Ekmek ve Gül, 5 Bullet Points to Describe Code 29 , How Does it Affect Women? <https://ekmekvegul.net/gundem/5-maddede-kod-29-nedir-isci-kadinlari-nasil-etkiler>

Seasonal women workers in the agricultural industry work for very low wages, whereas men performing equal work get higher wages. For the work performed by women in this field, “woman’s wage” has been the term coined for the pay given to women. Higher wages paid to men are justified by how heavier their work is, i.e., carrying the crates, loading the vehicle, pulling the load, etc. However, women report that while they carry out tasks considered to be “lighter”, they are forced to take on such “heavy work” alongside men.

Regardless of the sectors, women are working for mostly minimum wage, a few hundred liras above minimum wage or below minimum wage. Some of the women we interviewed worked below the minimum wage and without insurance throughout their entire working lives. One of the interviewees, who is a food engineer by profession and has worked in various companies in line with her profession, stated that the highest salary she has ever received was only 200 TL above the minimum wage. Although this study is not sufficient to reach a generalization, we can say that this was the highest wage we heard from the women we interviewed. For those women who were able to work with minimum wage plus social securities and eventually reach the retirement, the low pensions they received as their premiums were paid at the minimum wage correspond to a low amount that doesn’t meet the monthly expenses of even a single person in the current economic conditions.

In the region, the minimum wage for women is seen as a target wage, almost the highest wage they can reach anyway. As the region is seen as a cheap labor reserve, where the labor market is increasingly precarious, based on low wages and long working hours, which are deliberately created by capital, employers impose minimum wages on women as a blessing and see them as a reserve labor force. Women, on the other hand, say that they often accept most of these conditions due to the increasing costs of daily life and the difficulty of making ends meet.

Similarly, working without social security coverage has also become a determinant of women’s working conditions. Although most of the women

we interviewed had worked in a waged job they had never been insured or their insurance premiums were paid only for very short periods. The fact that women's work is mostly irregular and episodic and that they have to withdraw from work from time to time deprives them of social security and pension rights. The number of women in the region who are engaged in domestic work and care work outside of the home is quite high. These women may work for years without ever having social security coverage.

Working in jobs without social rights means that women are also deprived of pensions and social health guarantees in later years. While men can somehow access these social rights and have the chance to find a job even in old age, these possibilities are diminishing for women.

In addition, women who have worked in this way for years cannot benefit from opportunities such as short-time working allowance and unemployment insurance fund cash wage support in extraordinary situations such as earthquakes and disasters. Women who cannot benefit from these opportunities have to survive such processes under more severe conditions. This situation results in women not being able to access opportunities that would provide some financial relief during disasters.

Women's Post-Earthquake Employment Experiences in the Grip of Paid and Unpaid Work:

The majority of the women we interviewed after the earthquake emphasized the problems they faced in the grip of paid and unpaid work and their efforts to tackle and balance the two under their inherent circumstances. The burden of re-establishing the household while in the tent, the growing need for cleaning, difficulties in accessing clean water and food, the lack of toilet and bathing facilities, and the much heavier nature of caring for children and the elderly

in the tent prevent women from joining the workforce in a period when their need for paid work is much more urgent. Women who are currently employed or who have recently participated in the workforce report heavier, more precarious working conditions, making their daily lives much more difficult coupled with the growing burden of care and household work.

Rebuilding the “Home”: Women’s Work in Tents and Containers

In Hatay, we interviewed a woman in front of the tent in her garden. As an agricultural worker, she wakes up at five o’clock in the morning to pick plums and parsley from the field. She can get back to the tent only at four in the afternoon. All her work after she gets back from the field is about turning this place into a home again. The precarious and temporary nature of the tent, its irregularity, and the difficulties she faces in meeting her needs show that the burden only women take on is now heavier. It is because women’s work and labor that “produces life” includes the production and protection of the “*home*” in its full order. The physical *home* is described by women as a source of orderliness amidst the burden of their day-to-day lives.

Men, in the meantime, perceive this change to be a “freedom from housework for women as they move to the tents”. The physical destruction of the home, let alone freeing the woman from the exploitation around her unpaid household work, brings about much more severe results as it is now coupled with the burden of re-organizing this work in a post-earthquake setting.

In the first months after the earthquake and before the container cities became widespread, families began to live as extended families due to the necessity of circumstances. Although this situation seemed to have decreased in our subsequent visits with the construction of container cities and the settling of families there, there are still large families living together in the same container cities. For women, living with a large family means taking on the care burden of many

men and children, being deprived of private space, constantly trying to keep the shelter area clean, and meeting the food needs of the crowded household.

In addition, with the withdrawal of aid, responsibilities such as struggling to make ends meet, calculating household needs and meeting them at affordable costs, and applying for social aid are added to women's workload. Women need to make all calculations and implement them to meet the needs of the household by collecting various aid. The people we interviewed stated that everything became gradually more expensive after the earthquake, and therefore people had to be very careful about their spending.

In Turkey, as in many parts of the world, the state has left its social responsibilities to the unpaid labor of women in the household. In times of disaster and crisis, where the existing services are interrupted and women have to tackle the interruption under heavier circumstances in the household explicitly demonstrates the state has handed over its duty of service to women in the sphere of social reproduction. After the earthquake in the region, workloads such as caring for the elderly and injured, keeping children entertained and educational problems, and coping with the fear and mourning processes experienced by the household have also been handed over to women.

The majority of the women we interviewed point out that violence has generally increased in the cities they live in, and that they have witnessed domestic violence against women more often. One reason for this may be that current cases of violence have become more visible as living spaces and shelters are next to each other. However, according to the women we interviewed, reasons such as difficult living conditions, financial difficulties, and the trauma caused by the earthquake cause men to commit violence against those closest to them, their wives. They state that the main source of the increase in violence is "men taking out their stress on their wives". However, mechanisms to protect women from violence do not yet work effectively in the region.

Another problem that affects the daily lives of women and their domestic labor is that some lands, especially in Hatay, have been confiscated by the state.

Since men are mostly out of town or abroad, the gardens were cultivated by women. Thus, women earn their living by selling the parts of their crops, as well as producing their subsistence products for the household. The gardens and fields have been taken away from women by telling them that container cities, container markets, and TOKIs will be built on them, and that rent will be paid to the owners. One of the women we interviewed stated that the land of the container city in which she currently lives was her tangerine garden, orchard, and greenhouse, but it was confiscated six months ago by the state under the state of emergency to establish a container city, but they have not received any rent payment yet. The loss of gardens, which are vital for women, means the loss of their livelihoods. Women, who were previously able to grow fruits and vegetables and prepare food for their winter consumption without being dependent on any market, become completely dependent on high-priced foods in markets, as these lands are taken away from them. The daily lives of women who lose these lands therefore become more costly. Moreover, they also need to join the workforce to earn a living wage and start seeking employment where the conditions are mostly quite precarious.

Withdrawal From Employment

Increasing household responsibilities under constantly changing conditions in the post-earthquake period prevent women from returning to their previous jobs or seeking a new job. While taking the extended family's care, cooking, cleaning, and dealing with housing problems, women do not have much time to work in a paid job during the day.

Many interviewees stated that after the earthquake, they and their children became more dependent on each other due to the fear they felt. Women have personally taken on the problems related to children's mental stability due to the lack of effective social services and psychological support. Moreover, they often state that their mental health is not very good. Just as women do not

want to leave their children alone, children are also afraid of being left alone at home. Women cannot trust institutions or relatives' homes to take care of their children while they work. In addition, experiencing the precarious and difficult conditions of the period after the earthquake seems to have created a general sense of insecurity among women and children. In this case, most women prefer staying at home and taking care of their children to working in a paid job.

The fact that the city and container cities are still seen as unsafe also prevents women from leaving their children behind and going to work. In cities where word of mouth has spread the increase in child abuse cases, women are especially hesitant to leave their daughters alone. Although the physical conditions of container cities allow it, the lack of safe spaces for children and the lack of services to meet the childcare burden of women make it impossible for women to leave home to work.

For this reason, women say that even if they intend to work, they can only work in places where they can be close to their children, especially their children's schools. However, since the schools were merged, it is very difficult for women to find a job around the schools, and most women become unemployed or withdraw from employment. In some cases, women choose more flexible and insecure jobs instead of secure employment, allowing them to establish a relative balance between their household burdens and working in an income-generating job.

In addition, changes in working conditions may cause women to withdraw from employment. Employees in these cities stated that there were changes in employers' attitudes towards workers after the earthquake. As the number of people seeking a job increased, they employed workers with the attitude that they could fire them at any time since she/he could be replaced anytime easily.

Responsibilities such as physically rehabilitating the shelter, carrying out the necessary renovations of damaged houses, and seeking alternative sources are also on the shoulders of women. The women we interviewed say that they have not yet established an organization in their tents and containers where their lives are affected tremendously when weather conditions change. They

constantly spend time maintaining the physical condition of the house. In this condition of lack of services and housing problems, women put getting a paid job, which they need to go to regularly, on the back burner.

One of the reasons why women cannot participate in employment in the region is the transportation problems after the earthquake. The fact that transportation in these cities could not operate effectively even months after the earthquake, decreased people's ability to move around the city. People wait long hours to get on public transportation. Sometimes vehicles may not arrive at all. Due to the change in stops and frequency of the service, women now find the roads and walking distances unsafe when they return from work in the evenings. They do not prefer work options away from home, where they would return home in the evening using public transportation. In such a situation, the only solution for most employees is to drive their cars to work, if available. It is not possible to reach some workplaces by public transportation, and workplaces do not offer shuttle services to workers. Moreover, the fact that public transportation costs have increased significantly compared to wages prevents women from going to jobs far away to avoid this cost. Women who are currently working for low wages think that when they spend a significant portion of their wages on transportation. The transportation problem, combined with the city's security problem, significantly holds women back from employment in earthquake-affected cities and prevents them from accessing possible employment opportunities.

From Precarity to Unemployment, From Unemployment to More Precarity at Work: Women's Post-Earthquake Access to Wage Work

Women must have a subsistence wage at minimum, given the conditions marked by post-earthquake precarity and lack of support. In some provinces, women have already started looking for a job and sought means of workforce participation. In Malatya, interviewees report more women who are at workers' bus stops. The fact that some factories are heavily damaged and therefore

no longer operating has partially resulted in lost jobs for women in only some provinces. It is because women's employment in these business lines is already quite low in the provinces of Hatay and Maraş where the factories are out of operation due to heavy damage. In Malatya's Organized Industrial Zone, though, functioning production factories where women's employment is intensive have little damage, and thus women workers report having been called back to work at factories sometime after the earthquake. This has given us the chance to hear about pre- and post-earthquake working conditions for women workers at Malatya's factories.

After the earthquake, although many women had to choose to stay away from employment due to increased domestic workloads and other reasons explained above, we can state that many women are looking for jobs and starting to work to meet household needs, to improve their living and economic conditions, to rebuild houses or to cope with increased rental prices. Women describe their dilemma of heavy domestic work in post-earthquake conditions and needing more income to support the household. The fact that one minimum wage is no longer enough to cover the living costs of the household pushes women to participate in the workforce.

However, many women are forced to work for wages below minimum wage. The increasing costs of daily life make women more willing to engage in informal employment. While many men do not accept minimum wage or lower wages, women are forced to accept these jobs to contribute to the household income or to save the day in households that have no prior income. Women are considering all possibilities under the current conditions to find a paid job after the earthquake.

Especially in the field of agricultural labor, women work long hours for low wages to ensure that at least some of their daily needs are met. Women say that the daily wage for female workers working in agriculture is around 400-500 TL, and even if they work 7 days a week, their monthly earnings only correspond to a minimum wage. One of the reasons why most women choose

these jobs is that they can choose whether to go to work or not daily, depending on the intensity of their responsibilities at home. However, the daily wages they receive from these jobs melt away almost the same day.

On the other hand, women state that even if they get a job that is secured but minimum wage, it is often not enough to meet the expenses of the household, so they have to go to some other daily jobs in their spare time, and on weekends. Income-generating activities seven days a week are combined with the obligation to fulfill the maintenance and reproduction needs of the household; women almost do not even have enough time to sleep.

The women we interviewed state that working conditions have changed for everyone after the earthquake. The collapse of the workplace left many people unemployed. These jobs have been replaced by insecure working environments where people feel more obliged to work. When the people who had to look for a job, since earthquake conditions created more costs, were added to the people who became unemployed due to the earthquake, these cities became reserves of cheap workers who could be replaced at any time by employers. Employers can fire workers instantly who do not accept current working conditions and quickly find others who are willing to accept any working conditions.

Women also stated that employers are decreasing the number of employees or creating part-time jobs, alleging the increasing costs and loss of work. Thus, by increasing the workload of the remaining employees or by imposing full-time workloads on part-time employees and avoiding minimum wage and insurance costs, the employers guarantee to maintain their profit rates and can even make more profit. Many people are forced to accept these working conditions because of the necessity of reaching a living wage as soon as possible. However, the spread of these forms of work turns into a phenomenon that weakens the hands of workers and unions who are struggling to improve working conditions and wages in these cities.

One core reason for labor and employment rights violations for female factory workers is the unfavorable change in working conditions especially against women. Facilities such as kindergartens, which, before the earthquake, took on some of the burden away from the woman and enabled her to work outside the home, seemed to have ceased with no sight of re-establishment soon. Although some factories provide workers with on-site accommodation or in the vicinity of the factory, women are concerned for their security in a setting where all workers stay together which involves the likelihood of having to stay with men. The families of women workers also prevent them from going to the factories under these circumstances.

Additionally, women's care work in the household also holds them back from staying on-site. A woman worker from Malatya's Organized Industrial Zone reported a loss of jobs for women as a result of the acts of plant managers faced with the lack of accommodation due to the earthquake. She also reported that the plant's conditions have changed for women, including the shutdown of daycare centers which prevents women from coming to the factory for work.

For the women who do not want to leave their children with relatives because their homes are not safe or because everyone is scattered in the aftermath of the earthquake, or unable to leave in a daycare center because of the fees, this means losing their jobs. The earthquake destroyed the order that women had established with great effort and heavy burdens. When women want to leave their jobs due to the lack of necessary preconditions for women to work, they cannot benefit from any compensation rights. Women, then, become obliged to give at most half of the minimum wage they earn to daycare centers and services. Women who cannot afford to lose their jobs without compensation end up with a wage that is not even enough to cover their kitchen expenses.

Among the women we met and interviewed in these cities, many women work in the jobs offered by İŞKUR within the scope of Community Benefit Programs (TYP). In this sense, it is important to take a closer look at these short-term, insecure, and minimum-wage jobs for women. In the container cities, we

observed that a high proportion of women work in jobs such as cleaning, security, and laundry responsibilities. These are women who were originally hired on six-month contracts under the TYP, now subject to a nine-month extension. Apart from that, women are employed by the public sector for short periods to provide certain services in schools and hospitals as part of TYP.

Thus, it is important to take a brief look at what TYP is, what the jobs within the program are like, the working conditions they offer, and how they shape the employment environment for women. The purpose of this program is stated in the TYP regulation as “to prevent the unemployed, especially groups requiring special policies, from moving away from working habits and discipline by supporting public services in times of disasters, epidemics, emergencies, and other force majeure and to provide temporary income support to these people”. Within this program, the “groups requiring special policies” mentioned in the regulation are defined as “women, youth, long-term unemployed and disabled people who have more difficulties in employment compared to other groups in the labor market” and it is stated that these groups will be given priority. Again, according to this regulation, the implementation period of these programs is six months for each program and ends upon the completion of this period, and people employed through TYP can benefit from this program for a maximum of nine months in a year. However, due to the special conditions of earthquake zones, with a new regulation, this work time limit has been lifted until the end of 2024 in these cities. Thus, TYP participants, who were initially contracted for six months, were extended for an additional nine months.

Although the TYP program offers social security coverage for the workers, it is essentially precarious work due to the short-term nature of the contracts. First of all, since the short-term contracts set a maximum of nine months of work per year, severance pay is almost unavailable for those working in the programs. In other words, due to the structure of the program, there will never be a condition for a TYP worker to receive severance pay. A person who has been employed for nine months under TYP can apply for TYP again after waiting for three months,

but the evaluation of this application depends on the approval of the workplace institution and the Provincial Directorate of İŞKUR, which may result in the worker unwillingly accept many forms of work and working conditions and refraining from unionization activities due to the fear of losing their job. Currently, TYP workers do not have union and collective bargaining rights.

On the other hand, there is no guarantee that TYP workers will be re-hired, and it remains unclear whether their TYP experience will have a positive impact on finding a new job in the future. Various field surveys on these programs show that this strategy is ineffective in terms of the employment of those people in the long run and that people wait in the hope of being hired again within the program and eventually lose their motivation during this pending process.

Although TYP is an employment policy designed for times of crisis, it seems to have turned into a de facto employment policy that hides the real unemployment figures, as can be seen from the practices in recent years. The TYP, which remains only a short-term source of livelihood for the participants who are hired within the program, constitutes a directly state-regulated form of labor exploitation with the precarious form of work it offers.

In this context, women living in earthquake-affected cities consider being hired through the TYP in the first place as favorable in terms of having at least a minimum wage, for some of them being able to work in a workplace relatively close to their shelters and being insured. Many women say that thanks to the TYP, they were able to work for the first time in a secured and minimum-wage job.

Considering the conditions after the earthquake and the fact that women's employment in the region was mostly shaped by informal employment before the earthquake, working for a minimum wage, and social security coverage seemed to keep them above the water during those hard times. However, the short-term employment contracts and the limited duration of work also create anxiety for women in this process where they cannot see the future. This makes the whole process dependent on short-term contracts where women anxiously await whether they will be re-employed or not.

At this point, it is important not to ignore the economic conditions in which the minimum wage does not correspond to a living wage, as it is also frequently mentioned by women we interviewed. Although women working under TYP are content to have access to the minimum wage, they also emphasize that this wage is not enough to cover household expenses, considering the additional expenses that arise due to the living conditions in earthquake zones. As mentioned above, some of the women who work with TYP are forced to take casual jobs on their days off to provide adequate income for the household.

According to the women, the TYP program is available in almost every field. Women are working under TYP in all kinds of public institutions, and all of the workers in the container cities of AFAD work under TYP as well. In line with interviewees' impressions, these forms of short-term work will become widespread in cities. This means precarious employment in the region will be widespread, especially for women, by making their employment dependent on short-term contracts, exempting them from unionization, and depriving them of social rights.

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

This research, focusing on the cities affected by the earthquake, was carried out to provide a look at women's experiences in the areas of social reproduction and employment after the earthquake. We tried to reveal both the specific forms of women's paid and unpaid labor in the region and the exploitation relations regarding these two areas within the ongoing reconstruction processes after the earthquake. Thus, we tried to create some policy suggestions with which we can fight against these forms of exploitation.

Based on their experiences, we observe that women's participation in the workforce, working conditions, and wages can only be understood through its relation with social reproduction shaped by the forms of exploitation of capital and gender roles. As we stated, the burden of rebuilding the devastated living

conditions after the earthquake, re-establishing their shelter as home, taking care of all members of the family in all terms, and finding solutions to the financial difficulties, that is, rebuilding daily life, has fallen largely on women's shoulders. In addition to patriarchal relations, one of the main reasons is that even after such a disaster, the state does not correspond to its social responsibilities and withdraws from the areas of responsibility by relying on women's unpaid work. Throughout all the interviews, women generally stated that the reasons for withdrawing from employment were the workload of responsibilities in the field of unpaid labor in post-earthquake conditions and/or lack of social services, security, and other necessary services. On the other hand, working women stated that current conditions condemn them to insecure and low-paid jobs even more than before the earthquake and that employers are aware of this and have made their working conditions more insecure, flexible, and low-paid. In other words, the "reconstruction" processes in the region are taking place at the cost of deepening exploitation relations in the field of domestic work done by women where the state withdraws from its responsibilities and leaves female employment completely to the existing market conditions and the exploitation relations.

As a result, we would like to offer some policy suggestions that we hope will open a discussion addressing the problems that women have been experiencing in earthquake zones.

- Revealing the specific forms of exploitation of women's labor by opposing forms of insecure, low-paid work that were widespread for women after the earthquake in the region and revealing the specific forms of exploitation of women's labor in a post-earthquake environment by prioritizing their demands on secure, non-temporary, fixed forms of work where they can benefit from their social rights.
- Creating an agenda for the state to undertake childcare, which is one of the biggest obstacles to women's participation in employment, especially in container cities where conditions are quite suitable to establish services for organized daycare.

- Monitoring the violations of rights, wage inequalities, and violence/mobbing cases experienced by women in the workplace and developing mechanisms for female workers to consult.
- Evaluating the minimum wage issue within the context of women's wage relations and bringing the discussion on minimum wage into the feminist agenda
- Since we foresee that the forms of employment within the scope of Community Benefit Programs (TYP) will be widespread, particularly among women, it is important to reveal the working conditions of these types of work where women are coerced to work with short-time contracts and deprived of social rights, developing suggestions that will enable unionization in these areas and creating demands that will pave the way for permanent employment for women.
- Revealing the aspects of disruption or lack of municipal services such as transportation and security problems in cities that affect women's daily lives and result in withdrawal from employment.
- Creating demands for the state to provide meals and transportation to schools free of charge, especially in earthquake zones, to reduce women's livelihood and domestic labor burdens.
- Creating a demand for accessible, free psychological support services since the women are taking the responsibility of protecting the mental state of the entire household.
- Bringing up the issues of violence against women, which has increased and become more visible in earthquake regions. Considering the lack of violence prevention mechanisms in the region, it is important to demand effective mechanisms to prevent the violence and protection of women.
- Revealing the consequences of the state's seizure of subsistence lands for various reasons within the scope of the State of Emergency in terms of women's lives, and putting women's demands on the agenda

With these general suggestions, we invite women's organizations, NGOs, political parties, unions, and the feminist movement, which continues their work in the region for the discussion of the issues of female labor in those cities during the reconstruction processes. We have anticipated making a modest contribution to the works on the field and opening a discussion on the existing relations of exploitation in the field of the paid and unpaid labor of women, considering the reconstruction processes of these cities in particular.



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