



Pledge title: Women and Leadership

State(s) / National Society(ies) / other humanitarian partner(s):

Italian Red Cross, Icelandic Red Cross, Guatemalan Red Cross, Cyprus Red Cross Society, Brazilian Red Cross, Myanmar Red Cross Society, Uruguayan Red Cross, Iceland, Ecuadorian Red Cross, Turkish Red Crescent, The Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society, Netherlands, The Netherlands Red Cross, The Palestine Red Crescent Society, Honduras Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, Spain, Spanish Red Cross, French Red Cross, Belarus Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, Sweden, Australian Red Cross, Irish Red Cross Society, Red Cross of Monaco, Red Crescent of Kazakhstan, Argentine Red Cross, Cyprus, American Red Cross.

International Conference theme/topic(s) related to this pledge:

Trust in Humanitarian Action

Keywords:

Diversity and inclusion, Gender, Trust and integrity

Related resolution:

33rd IC Resolution 5: Women and leadership in the humanitarian action of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (33IC/19/R5).

A) Objectives of the pledge:

Considering that:

Women are front and centre during humanitarian crises, often as individuals who have been impacted as well as responders providing aid to others;

Women bring unique perspectives to humanitarian work;

Women are active agents of change in all facets of humanitarian engagement including as first responders and community health workers;

Women are still greatly underrepresented in leadership roles throughout the humanitarian sector;

Women in leadership positions are critical to ensuring effective and successful humanitarian outcomes. Research shows that diverse leadership teams deliver better results.

B) Action plan:

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement actors alongside Governments pledge to focus on improving humanitarian impact without discrimination and exclusion through supporting more women to become leaders across the humanitarian sector at all levels. This includes concrete and systematic initiatives to provide funding support, promote and advocate for women's meaningful and equal participation and leadership focused on:

1. Increasing the representation of women at all levels

Movement actors commit to:

- *Adopting policies and practices, that facilitate and promote gender balance and diversity at all levels and across the humanitarian sector;*
- *Take necessary steps to ensure equitable opportunities such as equal remuneration for equal work, anonymized recruitments and mentoring systems and as far as feasible, maternity and paternity leave, paid whenever possible;*
- *Develop and maintain a culture of inclusion and diversity across the humanitarian sector and thus safe and nurturing workplaces, including activities on prevention of sexual harassment, child protection and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse;*
- *Include women from diverse backgrounds and increase representation at all decision-making levels, including at both management as well as governance positions.*

State actors commit to:

- *Increase women's participation, including from local women's groups, in leadership and decision making in international for as at the global, regional, national and local level;*
- *Invest, as part of any grant, in capacities for local and national actors to develop and implement policies and practices to promote women leaders. 2*

2. Achieving proportional representation at leadership levels by 2030

Movement actors commit to:

- *Establish measurable targets towards achieving proportional representation and publish progress and achievement;*
- *Develop a systematic approach to gathering accurate, reliable, timely and sex and age disaggregated information;*
- *Continuously analyse and monitor organizational gender and diversity issues, including the gender and diversity composition of human resources at all levels (governance, management, staff and volunteers). This data will be analysed in light of potential barriers to equal opportunities, diversity inclusion and gender inequality related to power and decision making within institutions.*

State actors commit to:

- *Require humanitarian actors to demonstrate how they have increased the number of women leaders.*

3. Developing a pipeline to support the role of diverse women in leadership

Movement actors commit to:

- *Actively search, identify and invest resources in women leaders, particularly focusing on women from the most disaster, crisis and conflict affected countries;*

– Support and strengthen the pipeline of future women leaders including addressing and removing obstacles to their quality education and career development. This includes initiatives such as career path development, peer support and leadership programmes specifically targeting women.

State actors commit to:

- Support women-led organisations or initiatives growing the potential of future women leaders;
- Require humanitarian actors to demonstrate how they have strengthened the pipeline for women leaders.

4. Invest in research and building evidence

– Where possible and relevant, invest in research on women’s participation and local women’s groups’ impact on humanitarian leadership to increase the use of evidence-based actions to improve humanitarian outcomes.

B) Indicators for measuring progress:

1. Visibility of Women

- % shift towards more women leaders within respective organizations
- % shift towards more diverse women leaders within respective organizations
- Number of women participating in decision making for as at all levels

2. Proportional Representation 3

- Established targets for meeting proportional representation within respective organizations
- Publishing sex, age and disability aggregated data for respective organizations

3. Developing a Pipeline of women leaders

- % of increase in the allocation of resources to build the pipeline of women leaders
- Initiatives in place to support the building of a pipeline of women leaders

4. Use of Evidence-Based Research

- Increased investment in research involving women on specific barriers faced and strategies to remove
- Increased use of research to inform implementation of this pledge and any initiatives to support women in leadership

C) Resource implications:

Resources will be needed to support the implementation of the measures outlined in this pledge, particularly in relation to building the pipeline of women leaders and increased investments in organizational initiatives.



Since the early establishment, women have made significant contributions to the mission and humanitarian efforts of Türk Kızılay (the Turkish Red Crescent, TRC). They have not only performed supportive roles, but have also served actively in the field alongside men. Since the establishment of Türk Kızılay has been paid special attention to the support and development of women. Thus Hilal-i Ahmer Women Center was established on march 20, 1912. Since its establishment, Hilal-i Ahmer Women Center has helped soldiers fighting at the front, the wounded and the sick, the orphans and those in need of care, families of martyrs and soldiers, immigrants and prisoners.

And since then, women have worked in critical areas such as nursing, health services and logistical support, playing a crucial role in enhancing Türk Kızılay's disaster response capacity and protecting public health. Women volunteers and professionals have worked tirelessly in times of war and peace, natural disasters and humanmade crises, and have become indispensable to Türk Kızılay's mission. Today, women continue to lead at various levels of Türk Kızılay, spearheading innovative projects and advancing the development of humanitarian efforts.

With the implementation of Türk Kızılay's regulation in 2022, a women's quota was introduced in the Headquarters and Branch Managements. The inclusion of women in management roles has been notably emphasized, marking a progressive step towards gender equality. This statute of Türk Kızılay mandates that at least three members of the headquarters' Board of Directors must be women, promoting the equal representation and influence in decision-making processes. This commitment to gender diversity is not limited to the headquarters; it extends to the boards of directors in provincial and sub-provincial branches, where at least one female member is required. By institutionalizing this modality, Türk Kızılay not only acknowledges the indispensable contributions of women but also actively champions their participation and leadership within the organization. This proactive approach fosters a more inclusive, equitable, and dynamic environment.

Kızılay Women have made significant strides in enhancing female participation and leadership within Türk Kızılay. Through strategic projects, disaster response efforts, and social empowerment initiatives, women they have contributed to building resilient communities and fostering a culture of volunteerism. The ongoing commitment to training and environmental sustainability ensures that their impact will continue to grow in the years to come.

Kızılay Women has developed an innovative volunteer model aimed at enhancing the active and efficient participation of women within Türk Kızılay. Notably, 61% of the volunteers actively participating in Türk Kızılay's activities are women.



NEW VOLUNTEER MODEL

Establishment and Objectives

Türk Kızılay initiated a new volunteer model to increase the visibility and participation of women volunteers. This model focuses on:

- **Enhancing Participation:** Encouraging more women to volunteer within the branches.
- **Increasing Efficiency:** Implementing a structured approach to volunteer activities.
- **Organizational Expansion:** Extending activities to new regions and increasing the overall impact.

Women volunteers have been actively involved in Kızılay since 1912, consistently serving on the front lines. However, the establishment of a new organizational model, Kızılay Women, was necessary to achieve several key objectives. These include systematically organizing women volunteers across all branches and representative offices nationwide, expanding and enhancing targeted activities by creating specialized work areas, facilitating the coordinated development of female volunteers through mutual learning and teaching, elevating and supporting the visibility of women's activities within the organization, and creating a nationwide agenda for promoting goodwill through country-wide initiatives. Implementing this comprehensive strategy ensures these objectives are seamlessly integrated, thereby strengthening the impact and reach of Kızılay Women's efforts.

Volunteer Activities and Impact

1. Target Groups and Activities

Focus Areas: Families, children, people with disabilities, the elderly, women living alone, prisoners, orphans, and disaster-affected individuals.

Sister Family Project: Supporting women, elderly, and children through regular visits and assistance. Launched in 2022, this project connects Kızılay Women volunteers with families in need, providing cleaning, shopping assistance, and emotional support. Volunteers visit these "sister families" regularly to foster unity and address their needs.

Healthy Living and Aging Training: Promoting health awareness and physical activity. Focusing on social awareness and education, volunteers have conducted Healthy Living and Aging Education sessions, emphasizing the importance of physical activity and healthy habits. Events like World Walking Day highlight the role of physical activity in preventing chronic diseases.

2. Disaster Relief Efforts

Women play a pivotal role in disaster relief efforts, actively engaging in various aspects of support during emergencies. Their involvement spans logistical operations, health services provision, and social aid delivery in evacuation and disaster zones. Through dedicated volunteer training programs, they continuously enhance their skills and readiness to respond effectively to disasters, ensuring a coordinated and impactful relief response.



- *Earthquake Response:* Active participation in relief efforts following major earthquakes, providing logistical support, mental health services, public health initiatives, and food security.
- *Volunteer Coordination:* Effective use of the Volunteer Management System (gonulluol.org.tr) for organizing volunteer tasks and mobilizing support.

KIZILAY WOMEN'S INTEGRAL ROLE IN DISASTER RELIEF AND WASTE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES

Kızılay Women play a pivotal role in disaster relief efforts, actively engaging in various aspects of support during emergencies. Their involvement spans logistical operations, health services provision, and social aid delivery in evacuation and disaster zones. Through dedicated volunteer training programs, they continuously enhance their skills and readiness to respond effectively to disasters, ensuring a coordinated and impactful relief response.

Furthermore, Kızılay Women are at the forefront of waste management projects, notably exemplified by their participation in the "Zero Waste, Zero Concern" initiative. This comprehensive program focuses on waste prevention, recycling, and composting, with a specific emphasis on reducing kitchen waste through practical training sessions. By actively participating in clean-up activities, thematic workshops, and global initiatives like World Clean-up Day, they actively contribute to fostering sustainable practices and raising awareness about environmental conservation within their communities.

The unwavering commitment and proactive engagement of Kızılay Women in disaster relief and waste management projects underscore their dedication to serving vulnerable populations and promoting sustainable development. Their multifaceted contributions not only address immediate societal needs but also cultivate a culture of volunteerism, environmental responsibility, and community resilience within the organization and beyond. Their holistic approach to humanitarian and environmental challenges sets a commendable example for fostering positive change and building more resilient societies.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF WOMEN LEADERS & WOMEN LEADERSHIP

The First Female President

In 2023, Prof Dr Fatma Meriç Yılmaz made history by becoming the first female president in the 156-year history of Türk Kızılay. Her election was a landmark achievement that underscored the organisation's commitment to gender equality and empowering women in leadership. This historic milestone not only reflects the progressive values of Türk Kızılay, but also serves as an inspiring example to women across the country, proving that traditional barriers can be overcome and that women can reach the highest leadership positions in any field.

Prof Dr Fatma Meriç Yılmaz has an extensive academic and professional background in the medical field. She graduated from medical school and went on to pursue postgraduate studies, culminating in a distinguished career as a professor of medicine. Her contributions to public health and medical education are remarkable and include clinical practice, research and teaching. She has had a significant impact on various aspects of health care delivery and policy, demonstrating her expertise and commitment to the advancement of medical science and education.



GLOWRED Participation

Türk Kızılay is an active participant to the Global Leadership of Women in Red (GLOWRED) network. Through GLOWRED, Türk Kızılay has engaged with National Society leaders to share best practices and strategies for enhancing female leadership in humanitarian organizations.

Inclusiveness Efforts

Türk Kızılay has made significant progress in increasing the participation and representation of women at all levels of the organisation. By ensuring that women are involved from grassroots volunteers to top leadership positions, Türk Kızılay has fostered a more inclusive and diverse environment. This commitment is reflected in its proactive approach to leadership training, providing targeted development opportunities that equip women with the skills and confidence to take on leadership roles. In addition, the organisation has been a staunch advocate for gender equality, raising awareness of the critical importance of women's empowerment and advocating for policies that support this cause. These efforts not only enrich the organisation's leadership pool, but also strengthen its humanitarian mission by harnessing the full potential of its diverse workforce.

Table 1: Percentage Change in Targeted Number of Female Leaders by Year

Year	Targeted Number of Female Leaders	Achievement*	Achievement Rate	The Number of Kızılay Women Affiliated with Branches
2020	120	136	%113	136
2021	180	194	%107	194
2022	220	201	%91	201
2023	230	209	%90	209

*In 2020, Kızılay Women leaders and Kızılay Women teams were established and conducted volunteer activities in 59 provinces and 77 districts (totaling 136 leaders). In 2021, they expanded to 74 provinces and 120 districts (totaling 194 leaders). In 2022, the presence extended to 66 provinces and 135 districts (totaling 201 leaders). By 2023, they operated in 64 provinces and 145 districts (totaling 209 leaders).