



We participated in Black Sea NGO Forum in Bucharest

“Black Sea NGO Forum is organized to strengthen the cooperation and communication among the NGOs in Black Sea Region, to improve the advocacy capacity of NGOs in the process of intervening in the development strategies applied in the region.”



A movie out of my life

One More Step Forward Association gave short film directing training to twelve fatherless youth at the age of 15-17 years old within the scope of “A Movie Out of My Life” project.



Arzu Kaykı from the Positive Life Association:

“HIV is such a taboo in society that individuals start discrimination and ‘othering’ against their own selves when they are diagnosed HIV-positive.

Siviliz

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‘The disease of the immoral’

HIV/AIDS was considered to be the disease of homosexuals or of those who were sex workers or using drugs, in other words the disease of “the immoral” throughout the world when it arose for the first time. The point of view has changed in the world, whereas goes on to a great extent in Turkey. All the same, AIDS, which is primarily a blood-borne and sexually transmitted disease, poses risk for each of us, that’s to say for the entire “moral”.

Did you know that those named as “housewife” comprise the majority of the HIV positive women in Turkey? “Housewives” of various sorts classified as being either veiled or unveiled, either university graduate or illiterate, either poor or rich. These women who certainly have family, occupied in cleaning, washing-up day in day out, send their children to the school, who are monogamist, heterosexual, who don’t drink and take drugs, who lead quite “ethic” and “normal” lives are infected with AIDS, generally through their spouses. As a consequence, AIDS, the “marginal group disease” have started to be categorized as “family disease”. These women cannot have sufficient knowledge of AIDS as they cannot participate in social life. If they are HIV-positive, they consider themselves guilty due to the social pressure on AIDS. They cannot sufficiently make use of health opportunities for treatment. The woman who doesn’t feel herself strong in social, economic and political area, neither feels strong psychologically, she cannot say “no” to unprotected sexual intercourse with her spouse. Condition of the housewives is a good example how all fields of rights are inter-related with each other and how empowerment in one field feeds into empowerment in another.

Isn’t it violation of human rights not to be sufficiently informed of HIV and AIDS, not to be able to make use of opportunities for treatment, to be isolated from society, work areas, education? HIV positives utter one sentence in concert with one another: “It’s not AIDS that kills us, but prejudice and discrimination!”



It is required to give ear to this voice, to understand immediately that the subject matter is beyond the problem of treatment, drug, vaccine, etc. Of course, access to HIV treatment should be improved for everyone, especially for the poor, the opportunities should be extended, since, according to statistics, AIDS has each passing day become the disease of the poor and those who are lack of access to any kind of opportunities. Moreover, the government agencies, local authorities, universities, non-governmental organizations and individuals working on the subject have to develop a human rights perspective and establish a policy in order to prevent the violation of rights causing individuals to be open to HIV, and to make necessary legislative regulations for avoiding discrimination against HIV-positive individuals. Before being too late...



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The World AIDS Conference 2010 in Vienna

Following the World AIDS Conference held in Mexico City in 2008, Vienna will host the new conference from 18 to 23 July, 2010. International AIDS Society (<http://www.iasociety.org/>), the organization leading the conference, is expecting political leaders, scientists, NGO activists and HIV-positive individuals to participate in the conference and bring forward their works and opinions. NGOs from the new EU member countries or those which are in the EU accession process are invited to the conference. You can obtain detailed information on the conference from <http://www.AIDS2010.org> or you can get in contact with Christine Keplinger from Community Forum Austria (CFA): keplinger@AIDS.at

We were in Bucharest for sustainable consumption and production

We took part in the first workshop of "The Civil Society Platform on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Conference" which was held by The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), Wuppertal Institute Sustainable Design Center and Regional Environment Center from 12 to 14 September in Bucharest. The activities on the importance of SCP for the sustainable development strategy of EU and concerning efforts, the role of civil society in the effectiveness of SCP's practices and awareness activities on the subject were carried out throughout the workshop. Moreover, the second workshop program to be held in March, 2009 was discussed and attendants' suggestions were received.



We were in Black Sea NGO Forum in Bucharest

We were in Bucharest from 31 September to 2 November to partake in Black Sea NGO Forum aiming to strengthen the cooperation and communication among NGOs in the Black Sea Region, to improve the advocacy capacities of NGOs in the process of interfering with the development strategies practiced in the region. The opportunities for the cooperation of NGOs in Black Sea Region within the frame of social justice and human rights, democracy, administration and environment areas were discussed and suggestions of the attendants were received in the forum that was also organized with the aim of introducing the current state of the NGO sector in Black Sea Region, regional NGO coordination, the point of views across programs and financial contributions.



"Regulations for disabled are for everyone"

STGM carried out an activity within the scope of tailor-made trainings with The Spinal Cord Paralytics Society of Turkey. We want to introduce their activities this month.

Would you please tell us briefly how and when The Spinal Cord Paralytics Society of Turkey (TOFD) was founded and what the aims and area of activity are?



The Spinal Cord Paralytics Society of Turkey has been carried out studies on the solutions of medical, occupational, economic and social problems of all orthopedically disabled individuals, especially of the spinal cord paralytics in the national and international area since 1998. Thanks to the successful and widespread studies of the Society, it gained the status of "association for public interest"¹ in 2004. Our society conducted numerous projects aiming at the full and active participation of the disabled individuals to the social life. One of the primary objectives of our society is to prevent new permanent disabilities to occur and inform the society of the area.

Which campaigns are you conducting now? What does the success of a campaign depend on?

We are currently conducting the campaigns "Battery-Operated Wheelchair" and "Education without Barriers". We actualized the first of the "Meeting for Media without Barriers" in this year. We will organize the forth of the International Smiling Children Festival. Another important project contains the foundation of TOFD Hüsni Ayık Private Care Center for those spinal cord paralytics who have turned 18 years of age, suffer from social and economic deprivation and have nobody to care for them. The success of these campaigns can only be ensured if the society, and especially the disabled individuals, own them. This requires raising of awareness and owning of the problems. Campaigns should focus on raising awareness of and mobilizing the society.

What do you think about the policies for the disabled people in Turkey?

In fact, the projects and works being conducted are the obligatory services required to be introduced by the government to disabled people. In other words, the government must plan and implement the services to remove the obstacles to disabled people for their full and active participation to social life. The donations should be mainly utilized for the projects to enhance the life quality of disabled people and to provide guidance to such projects. Each regulation principally made for disabled people is also necessary for the old people, for those who have chronic diseases and even for the healthy individuals of the society. The more the disabled people involve in social life, the further the awareness and acceptance about their differences will develop among nondisabled individuals. The application of disabled introduced by the legislation must be ensured for all aspects of the society.

Do you carry out specific activities for disabled women who are more disadvantaged among disabled people?

We know that gender discrimination exists worldwide. It is very difficult to be a woman and live with woman identity. Being disabled adds on top of it, and life gets harder. The quotas in favor of women must also apply to disabled women. Disabled men outnumber in NGOs for disabled today. The decision makers in this field are disabled men. The employment rate of disabled men is much higher than that of disabled women. Disabled women have to undertake heavy housework. Most of them lack social security. We are aware of all problems.

How about the future activities of your organizations, what are your priorities?

We will continue our activities to ensure disabled people are involved in all aspects of social life. Awareness raising seminars, campaigns, projects will go on. We will keep acting for fair use and implementation of the disabled rights as stated in The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Our efforts will continue for prevention of disability and protection from it. We will keep examining the social reflections of our difference and raise awareness of public on the subject.

¹ "Association for public interest" is a status granted by the Board of Ministers to those associations fulfilling the criteria explained in the Article 27 of the Turkish Law of Associations No. 5253.



“Let’s get to know each other”

The project “Let’s get to know each other” conducted by Adana Association for Women’s Solidarity and Cultural Researches (AKADER) and financed by European Union was completed with the participation of the partners from four programme countries (Turkey, Latvia, Slovak, and Lithuania). Totally 25 attendants, 5 each attendants from the foreign partners and 7 young attendants and 4 group leaders from Turkey took place in the project.

Coming together, European young people and the young people from different socio-economic groups living in Adana established a dialogue and genuine friendships by means of the activities run throughout the week thanks to the project of which local partners were Adana Provincial Directorate for National Education, Adana Advanced Technical School For Girls and the Association for Education Development Research and Solution Generation.

In the contemplation that the prejudices due to the cultural differences are required to be eliminated within the EU accession process, “culture” was used as the means in the project carried out by aiming that the young people who will take active roles in Europe of the future get rid off the prejudice by getting to know each other.



“A movie out of my life”

One More Step Forward Association implemented the project “A Movie out of My Life” by the contribution of the Center for European Union Education and Youth Programmes. Twelve orphan youth aged between 15-17 years old received training in short film directing in Kadirli. The attendant youth’s skills in collective script writing, group working, task sharing and listening each other were improved thanks to the activities. The youth produced a 6- minute short film named “Test of The Life” as the output of the training classes and other activities. The trained youth were able to use camera easily from that day forth.



Women organizations came together for the training in Mersin

Employees of SHÇEK Women Guest House, the representatives from Mersin Branch of the Association in Support of Contemporary Living, Mersin Independent Women’s Association, Mersin Branch of Turkish Women’s League, Association for the Support and Training of Women Candidates participated in the tailor-made training, which was organized in Mersin on 27-28 September upon the request of Mersin Independent Women’s Association to STGM.

The introductory video of Women’s Solidarity Foundation and the French production film “Take My Eyes”, which handled the subject of violence against women were exhibited in the training in which the trainees kept informed about gender, violence against women and human trafficking.

The trainees actively participated by role playing in the training during which such topics as operation of women’s counseling centers, techniques of interviewing with the counselees at the counseling centers, and volunteerism were covered. The trainees stated at the end of the training that they will continue organizing such joint activities.



“Our dream is to found a test and counseling center”

Seeing that what our theme is the fight against AIDS this month, it is out of the question not to introduce the Denizli Branch of the Association for the Fight Against AIDS, on our page of Denizli. Denizli Branch of the Association of which the head office located in İzmir was founded by the presidents of Denizli Chamber of Construction Engineers, Chamber of Dentists, Chamber of Medical Doctors, Chamber of Veterinary Surgeons and Chamber of Pharmacists in 1993. We asked and Huriye Demirhan, member of the board answered:

For what purpose was The Association for the Fight Against AIDS founded?

Our association, which is holding “association for public interest” status² was founded to raise the awareness of public on protection from HIV/AIDS. We have made an effort to come into prominence in protection of social rights of HIV-positive individuals in recent years.

Why did you prefer Denizli?

Since Denizli is the city of tourism and industry, boarding overseas both for business trip and tourism purposes are frequent. Also Denizli is subject to migration from neighboring provinces and Ex-Eastern Bloc countries. It has a young population and the age at sexual intercourse decreased throughout the world as well as throughout our country. All of these factors pose risk of HIV/AIDS.



Which activities is your association involved in?

Our association is involved in the activities within the scope of informing the society but particularly the youth. We organize street activities, distribute brochures and leaflets, answer questions through face-to-face conversation and clear the air on the subject matter by opening stands on main roads and in the university campus, where the youth presence is high, with a training group of 30-40 people including university students on the World AIDS Day December 1, and throughout the week beginning with this day every year. We give information especially on ways of contamination and protection by means of live or recorded programs in local televisions. We conduct training programmes in universities, high schools, gendarmerie brigade command, public education center and trade associations. We have tried to attract the attentions to the topic thanks to the play called “The Lives Taken Over” (“Teslim Alınmış Hayatlar”) written by Dr. Mavisel Yener and performed by Hayal Perdesi Performers of Pamukkale University Theatre Club successfully and devotedly for three years. We cooperate with DESGEP – STGM Local Support Centre and various NGOs in the training activities.

What are your targets and dreams concerning the area?

Çok kısıtlı imkanlar çerçevesinde faaliyetlerimizi yürütmeye çalışıyoruz. Aktif çalışan üye sayısını arttırmayı, Denizli’de test ve danışmanlık uygulamalarını yapabileceğimiz belli bir merkezin kurulmasını, faaliyetlerimizde daha çok STK ve kuruluşla işbirliği içinde daha güzel işler yapmayı hayal ediyor, fon kaynaklı bir projenin hayata geçirilmesi ile güçlenmeyi umuyoruz.

² “Association for public interest” is a status granted by the Board of Ministers to those associations fulfilling the criteria explained in the Article 27 of the Turkish Law of Associations No. 5253.

Denizli Women’s Platform condemned violence

Within the scope of November 25, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, Denizli Women’s Platform made a declaration condemning violence at Denizli Çınar Square. Gürel Bingüller, the President of the Platform, stated that anyone, any constitution, any institution and traditional code which prevents women from improving and taking their deserved place in social life, should be aware that such a mentality jeopardizes the future of this country. Bingüller expressed the strong condemnation of Denizli Women’s Platform against the pressure and violence to which people are exposed due to their identities which are inherent and obtained throughout their lives.

EU Program Seminars



EU Program Seminars were held by the Pamukkale University (PAÜ) International Relations Office at PAÜ Congress Center on November 14, 21 and 28, 2008. During the program, topics such as where EU is going, if Europe needs a constitution, the future of the Treaty of Lisbon, what the Mediterranean Union means, European Union under the French Presidency, the industrial policy of EU, the differences and compliance between industrial policies of EU and Turkey were discussed during sessions chaired by expert academicians. The programme will be followed by a project cycle management workshop on December 26, 2008. A draft project proposal will be the output the workshop during which potential cooperation and collaboration between the Denizli Governorship, NGOs, Denizli Municipality and Pamukkale University International Relations Office will be discussed.



Bald ibises are on the migration route again

Bald ibises were sent to migration from Birecik after 18 years of gap as a result of the joint efforts of Nature Society and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Directorate of Nature Conservation and Natural Parks. The birds were tracked by satellite during their journey via transmitter attached on them. It is found out that the birds, which arrived at Jordan successfully, have kept their immigration drives alive. The hopes for the future of the bald ibises increased thanks to the trial which sparked all around the world. Since 1997, the birds have been kept under protection during migration seasons due to death risks on the migration routes. The fact that two bald ibises could migrate alone without experienced adult individuals with them proved for the first time that the behaviour could be instinctive. The two bald ibises lost their lives in Jordan deserts due to poisoning. The authorized officers from Nature society and General Directorate of Nature Conservation and Natural Parks made a statement: "We have learned with this study that bald ibises face significant threats on the migration routes. The examination on the bold ibises found dead in Jordan deserts will help us gain more information and protect the bald ibises on their migration routes".



We were in Mardin, Şanlıurfa and Batman

STGM Diyarbakır Yerel Destek Merkezi çevre illerdeki STK'lara vereceği hizmetleri anlatmak üzere Mardin, Şanlıurfa ve Batman'da tanıtım toplantıları düzenleyerek sivil toplum kuruluşlarıyla buluştu. STGM Diyarbakır Yerel Destek Merkezi'nin STK'ların hizmetine sundukları tam donanımlı ofis olanaklarının yanı sıra verilen kurumsal kapasite, proje döngüsü, kampanyacılık, lobicilik, savunuculuk, ağ kurma gibi eğitimler ve teknik destek hizmetleri hakkında bilgiler verildi. Bölge STK'larının sorunlarının da tartışıldığı toplantılarda güçlü, etkin ve demokratik bir STK kültürü için daha sık bir araya gelmenin önemi ortaya çıktı.



Waste Masterpieces in Mardin

Mardin Culture and Arts Association starts implementing their project "Waste Masterpieces" within the scope of the Life Plus Youth Program. The association aims to draw attention to environmental problems stemming from collection and burning of the domestic, medical and recyclable wastes at a location 7 km off the city centre. With the project, it is targeted to establish a system of separation, recycling and controlled disposal of solid wastes. The association will place recycle bins at different locations of the city will also prepare leaflets, brochures and informative CDs on the subject. The wastes to be collected in the recycle bins for 4 months will be transformed into artworks under supervision of a sculptor (trainer) and exhibited in different locations of the city. Following the exhibition, the artworks will be placed with their messages to the public institutions, NGOs and intensively used parks in Mardin.



A Selis in Ergani

Selis Women Association extended its activities out of Diyarbakır by opening a representative office in Ergani last month. Stating that they started fieldwork to obtain a profile of women in the town, Berivan Kaya, the General Coordinator of Selis Women Association said "we rearranged a space assigned for us at the top floor of the municipality building in which the women of the town can find themselves and take heart with the help of one coordinator, one psychologist and one sociologist. Since we started, we have received 22 applications from women; 21 of which were related to psychological problems and 1 of which was related to legal issues. We completed the therapy of 17 of them some of whom were led to public hospital for further treatment. Therapy of the remaining 5 women still goes on. In addition to these services, we conducted questionnaires to better know the women in Ergani and identify their problems. We started medical screening programme on the basis of the results or the questionnaire." The association delivers Turkish and English courses to children as well as women, and organizes awareness raising meetings for adults.



Citizens will rule in Eskişehir from now on

Odunpazarı Municipality organized a participatory democracy and participator budget themed search conference to which approximately 150 NGO representatives selected from various thematic field attended under the facilitation of Eskişehir Local Civil Platform (ESYO) at Alaaddin Park on November 1. The conference aims for enhancing citizens' and NGOs' right to speak and making them more effective in the decision-making processes. Another purpose of the conference was identification of mechanisms to be established through which a portion of the municipality budget will be determined.

At the opening of the search conference, beginning his words "We initiate an important project by which our fellow townsmen will directly and altogether be involved in determining the future of Eskişehir" Burhan Sakallı, Odunpazarı Mayor continued: "The responsibility we take on as our duty is the determination and auditing of local administration budget directly by the public to the extend that the laws and resources allow." Coming to the stand following Sakallı, Ali Akyüz, a member of the ESYO Facilitation Council stated that the meeting was very important for NGOs and ESYO and continued: "Civil society is one of the key concepts and probably the most crucial leg of participatory democracy. As a matter of fact the concept of participatory democracy cannot be put into practice and find its meaning without the participation and active role of civil society."



After the speeches, the participants split into 10 groups and shared their opinions on how participatory democracy could be applied more effectively in Eskişehir. The groups also discussed about their future projections of the city, identified the barriers against implementation of participatory democracy and participatory budget and ways to eliminate those barriers.

Northern Caucasians bunched together at the 11th Ashvala Festival

The 11th of the traditional Ashvala³ Festival was organized by Eskişehir Northern Caucasus Culture and Solidarity Association at the picnic site next to the Osmangazi University Meşelik Campus on October 12. A large number of Northern Caucasians from Eskişehir and environs attended the festival. Around a thousand people had a joyous Sunday enjoying folkloric dance shows and various contests.

3 Ashvala means the largest group of relatives in Northern Caucasian culture.

ESYO's visit to the Turkish Parliament (TBMM)

Starting out to bring MPs and non-governmental organizations of Eskişehir together, Eskişehir Local Civil Platform (ESYO) visited the Eskişehir AKP MPs Murat Mercan and Nedim Öztürk, the CHP MP Murat Sönmez and the MHP MP Beytullah Asil at TBMM. The MPs were asked for their support to the MP-NGO meeting planned on behalf of TBMM Joint Working Group (OÇG), an enterprise aiming to bring MPs and NGOs together throughout Turkey, late in December in Eskişehir by ESYO, the Eskişehir partner of OÇG. Appraising the meeting as an opportunity, the MPs stated that they would support the works of both ESYO and STGM Eskişehir Local Support Center, and the OÇG and attend the meetings to be held. The visits to the AKP MP Kemal Unakıtan and the DSP MP Tayfun İçli are planned to a later date.



Water framework law should be put into force without delay

Dr. Halil Güngör, Eskişehir Province Representative of The Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion, for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats (TEMA) pointed out that water framework law was required to fight with drought in his press statement. Dr. Güngör asked all sections of society to take action and exercise the responsibilities to fight with drought and owe the water wealth within the frame of the Week of Combating Erosion to be organized for the sixteenth time this year. Stating that we should learn using water economically as individuals and as the society, Dr. Güngör said "We should enable the Water Framework Law to pass through the Turkish Parliament (TBMM) without delay. We are a water-poor country and our water wealth has been decreasing gradually. Our country will henceforth be in the semi-arid climate process. Therefore we should take action and adapt to changing conditions. Most importantly, we should learn using water economically and recycle water through treatment processes. Less than a mere 1 percent of global water consumption is enough for meeting the 50 liters per day per capita fresh water need all over the world. Therefore we should learn correct, efficient and the most importantly economic use of water and ensure to pass the required laws without delay in order to fight against drought and protect our water wealth."



The Training on Campaign- Coordination and Communication with Volunteers is on December 18 - 21!

Campaigns are one of the means which NGOs implement in order to influence powerholders and receive public support. We realized the first training on "Campaigning- Communication and Coordination with Volunteers" on December 18-21 in Denizli. During the training, we evaluated the local and international campaign patterns, carried out some studies on programming and implementing the campaigns, and evaluated different analyses techniques.

We also considered extensively the relations among media and campaigns and non-governmental organizations in the training activity process. We thought over and over again the ways of making our campaigns visible in media with the experienced activists during the communication session of the training.

We also focused on the ways of a more effective coordination with the volunteers who will conduct the campaign, color up the streets with campaign activities.

The training program lasted 4 days and consisted of the titles as follow:

Day 1

Opening and Meeting

What is Campaign?

Advocacy on the basis of the right

How is a campaign program formed?

Day 2

Analysis Techniques- Before getting start to the Campaign

Components of the Campaign- Campaign Cycling

Lobbying- Relations with the Power Holders

Relations with the Shareholders- Partnerships, Network studies

Day 3

Campaigns and Communication
Communication with Media!

Local Media & National Media

If you cannot access to media, be the media!

Day 4

Why we are here?

Volunteer? Activist? Member? Agitator?

How to cooperate with agitators, members and activists

General assessment...

Closure

Our trainings on information technologies continues...

We continue organizing computer trainings for NGOs with Microsoft's contribution in the local support centers of Denizli, Adana, Diyarbakır and Eskişehir. More than 300 Non Governmental Organization volunteers have make use of the computer trainings which we have carried on for three years and the number continues to increase.

The interest showed in the computer training for beginners and intermediates encourage us to diversify the trainings. We are expecting you to send your demands on information technologies to emre@stgm.org.tr.



Arzu Kaykı (Positive Life Association)



December 1, The Day of Challenge with AIDS was organized by the World Health Organization in 1988 for the first time, however, every year, on this day, numerous activities within frame of a certain theme has been carried out by the United Nations HIV/AIDS Program. According to a recent research carried out in Turkey, 56 percent of the society don't know about HIV, 53 percent of the society don't know how to protect themselves from AIDS, and 79 percent of the society don't know that HIV can be diagnosed via a test. Within such a pessimist situation, there is a unique association founded to act with solidarity with those who live with HIV/AIDS in Turkey: Positive Life Association (PYD). Arzu Kaykı is an activist who works both professionally and voluntarily in PYD. Conducting almost all type of works from organizing a team and materializing the projects, to providing demands with the center and creating visual material, from changing the language/ terminology of Turkey regarding HIV/AIDS to forming, pressing and supplying the first pillow book for HIV positives, Kaykı also made a great effort to provide continuity of the support center. One of the subjects on which Arzu Kaykı worked intensely was to provide anti-discrimination news and interviews to prevent HIV+ individuals from being presented at media discriminatorily. Performing also some activities such as training, etc. to make HIV positive people volunteer/ activist and to increase the capacity of the association conducted anti-discrimination campaigns, Kaykı performed raising-awareness projects in medical faculties, wrote right violation reports. She was assigned to Turkey Representative of HIVTRI that's active in England, except for representing Turkey in the International AIDS Conference in Mexico.

What type of discriminations do HIV+ individuals face and in which areas of the life?

In hospital, in workplace, at the school, in the family, in circle of friends, in anywhere. The greatest discrimination is experienced in health area since all HIV positives certainly get health service and share HIV status. For an instance, those who get the reaction that "You will be dead already, no need in stomach surgery" exist. Those who "his/her mother is HIV positive" is indicated in their health records as their mothers are HIV, those who are isolated, the woman who passed away from cancer because she rejected the treatment as she suffered from discrimination... As is seen, however, the more knowledge and experience increase the less discrimination. Many friends are fired immediately from job and lost social security as well when their disease is understood. HIV is a disease of which treatment is possible but requiring regular drug therapy. Despite the fact that the drugs have become cheaper with respect to the past, they are still expensive, loss of social security sets the treatment back, it can give rise to gain resistance to the drugs and have serious health problems.

How many organizations which conduct activities in the area of the fight against AIDS or solidarity with HIV+ individuals are there in Turkey? Can we mention the existence of activism in the area in Turkey comparing the other countries?

To my knowledge, today, there are 5-6, totally 14 registered organizations including their branches, which get into the act on HIV/AIDS in various prominences. Almost all of them named as the association for either the fight against AIDS or struggle against AIDS. These associations which have been active for years were generally established by physicians and limited their activities to make speeches in schools, universities and carry out activities in the World's AIDS Day, December 1. Nevertheless, unfortunately, their prevention studies vis-à-vis those of the world are heavily inefficient. There wasn't any organization carrying out activities on struggling against discrimination until the Positive Life Association was founded in Turkey. Whereas, when we handle the matter worldwide, the organizations for living with HIV are those which were founded first upon the identification of HIV/AIDS in England and the U.S.A. Several women, children, gay- oriented organizations are available in these countries. There are various and specific-performing organizations that only provide legal support or only issue magazine for those who live with HIV, operating support line. I suggest that Turkey is at the late of "80's in comparison to these countries, we are 20 years behind the times". Of course, it can be made reference to some instances, for an example, a physician had buried his coat in the garden, reacting to the discrimination across HIV positives.

hat is the status of Turkey in point of legal rights and social solidarity or reacting in this area?

Both the fear and the perception of "Nothing will ever happen to me" on HIV/AIDS was the point in question in Turkey for years. HIV/AIDS hasn't been properly known still, though it was identified 27 years ago. As the numbers of HIV positive are not high in Turkey and Turkey close its ears to HIV/AIDS, a faintest legal regulation on HIV is not available in Turkey similar to 70-80 country. A great majority of the society doesn't react to HIV positive person being fired from job, for example, as they are afraid of living with HIV positive people. You remember that the school event in İzmir was reflected in the press, none of the parents want their children have education together with the HIV positive child. Today the child

has education separately still. Something has being changed but by bit since PYD was founded and started to tell things.

As we hear of the stories of HIV positive people, we see that HIV is the problem of the woman, the man, the person employed in the tourism sector, the teacher, the housewife, we see that HIV is not beyond the reach of us as we get know HIV positives. Many organizations, many famous people, many physicians, for instance, want to stand by us this year on December 1 Worlds AIDS Day. The number of volunteer applications to the association is increasing.

Has the existence of the organizations working on the area changed anything in the society, media, in the point of views of the state and the society?

Absolutely! The problems of HIV positive individuals have started to be listened, for example, in comparison to the last 20 years, so fast alterations have been occurred within the three years of the foundation of Positive Life Association. Today a wrong application can draw reaction and we can provide alteration immediately. State is also acquainted with the matter and its addressees. We are informed of the event when someone suffers from discrimination in prison, the advocates interfere in, even the directors of the institutions say "Our duty is to protect HIV positive people" now. While the scenes of slimmmed people in Africa, the news of "coughed in the act with prostitute" and urban legends are mentioned in the past, in other words, HIV was marginalized, the news of the HIV positive child, mother, building worker, housewife and university student are issued today. It is expressed that HIV is the matter of anyone, given the headlines that "HIV doesn't kill us but the discrimination do". Nevertheless much more advances are required. Unfortunately, HIV has been employed as contempt, a curse still. Sending them the denouncement letter, we attract their attention; these kinds of news will decrease over time.

What kind of a point of view have you gained by means of the activities you have conducted both professionally and voluntarily in the area for years?

Above all, I gained the experience of working with a problematic and heterogeneous group. New settlements and new methods are required to be developed on such cases as searching for meeting, decision-making mechanism in the group consisting of different people in terms of age, occupation, socio-economical status, world-view, manner of communicating and learning. Everybody is mobilized at the very time in the case that, for an instance, an old man, a travesty, a babe in arms, whosoever, needs drug. On the other hand I found chance to dwell upon the discrimination. I found the opportunity to experience what gives rise to the discrimination and how can be eliminated one by one. Moreover HIV is such a taboo subject in public that the individuals discriminate the other HIV positive individual whosoever, having diagnosed with HIV positive unexpectedly, they discriminate against their own selves, make themselves the other too. We have being fought against the matter in the Positive Life Association for three years. Studying on HIV individually taught me many things regarding the health, the factors affecting health negatively. Finally, I saw that alternation is possible, I experienced that people revived, the intuitions altered, a healthy babe came into the world thanks to your efforts and the discrimination in the social circle were prevented by means of conversation.

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