KODA

Rural Schools Transformation Network

2024-2025

Activity Report



Rural Schools Transformation Network
(Köy Okulları Değişim Ağı Derneği)
Established 5 December 2016

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*This report covers KODA's activities between 1 August 2024 and 31 July 2025.

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A Letter from KODA

Imagine a teacher working in a village school who has finally found a community where they can share their experiences with colleagues. A teacher candidate who, still at university, visits a village school and tests their dreams of teaching in the field for the first time. A parent discovering new ways to support their child's development. Or a piece of research that makes the needs of rural education visible and opens new ground for sharing those needs with decision-makers. What all of them have in common is a new bond forged for better education in the village.

For nearly ten years now, at KODA we have been pursuing exactly these bonds. We believe that better education in the village becomes possible not only in the classroom, but through the shared strengthening of teachers, teacher candidates, parents and local communities. Along this journey, we also place great value on developing cooperation with decision-makers and on addressing the needs of rural education together.

The 2024–2025 period was a year in which this belief — that better education in the village is made possible by growing stronger together — deepened across many different areas.

Through our Teacher Communities Program, we worked with 14 teacher communities in different regions of Türkiye. Teachers did not merely come together at training sessions; they shared their experiences, learned from one another, built bonds of solidarity and carried what they learned back into their classrooms.

In our First Step to the Village Program, we met 676 teacher candidates from 23 universities. The candidates got to know village schools, gained field experience and had the chance to see the needs of rural education first-hand before beginning their professional lives.

Through our Post-Disaster Rural Education Support Program — and the Rural Family Studies and Social-Emotional Learning practices we carried out within it — we continued to support the adults who play a critical role in children's development. Together with teachers, parents and local communities, we kept learning, producing and searching for new ways forward.

One of the developments that pleased us most this year was the strengthening of our Rural Education and R&D Center in Orhaneli, Bursa. This space — where we develop, test and disseminate new practices for rural education — has become not merely an implementation center but a learning laboratory where we put our ideas about the future to the test.

Another important step was making our research and advocacy work more visible and more systematic. We care that the experience we have accumulated in the field, together with teachers, teacher candidates and parents, reaches wider circles through research, publications and advocacy. Because we believe that making the needs of rural education visible is an essential part of the solution.

This report tells far more than the numerical results of a year's work. In these pages you will find the courage of teachers, the curiosity of teacher candidates, the labor of parents, the contribution of our volunteers, and the transformative power of learning together.

There is still a long road ahead of us. But we know that better education in the village is made possible by people who think, produce and stand in solidarity together.

We thank all the teachers, teacher candidates, parents, volunteers, supporters and partner institutions who have walked this journey with us. Now we invite you to explore what we learned and produced together over the course of this year.

With warm regards,

The KODA Community



About KODA

Who We Are

We are an association that has worked since 2016 so that children in villages can receive a better education. We carry out educational activities for teachers, teacher candidates and parents; we conduct research and advocacy in the field of rural education; and we develop educational content suited to local needs and conditions.

Why We Exist

So that every child growing up in the villages and rural neighborhoods of Türkiye can receive a quality education.

What We Do

In villages and rural neighborhoods, we carry out education, research, content development, community-building and advocacy activities in order to ensure that:

1. teachers deliver higher-quality education;
2. parents are better able to support their children's development;
3. public institutions that shape education[1] develop policies to raise the quality of education in the village and put innovative solutions into practice.

[1] Public institutions here refers to the Ministry of National Education, Provincial and District Directorates of National Education, municipalities and muhtars (local headships / muhtarlıklar).

Our Education Vision

At KODA, we define quality education in line with the following principles:

Holistic:

Attentive to students' holistic development; caring for their well-being, enabling them to freely explore their interests, ensuring they are supported in line with their needs and can fulfil their potential.

Inclusive:

Grounded in a rights-based perspective that embraces the diversity of students and the differences this diversity brings; prioritizing their participation in every area that concerns them and ensuring every child can access the rights necessary for their development.

Local and Universal:

Approaching the twenty-first-century understanding of global citizenship, its skills and values with a perspective that moves from the local to the universal; continuously renewed in line with current needs.

Solidarity-Based:

Supporting peer learning; encouraging students to become self-sufficient individuals, to produce together and to learn how to learn.

Family-Inclusive:

Involving the whole local community — above all students' parents — in educational processes.

Responsible Towards the Planet:

Helping students grasp the importance of the economic and ecological resources around them; grounded in the protection and sustainable use of these resources, and prioritizing social awareness.

Why Rural Education Matters

So that every child can access quality education:

For quality education for all:

The United Nations set out the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to be achieved by 2030, in order to produce solutions to humanity's shared challenges. One of these, SDG 4, aims to ensure inclusive, equitable and quality education for all. Quality education helps break the cycle of poverty, reduces inequalities and enables individuals to build healthy, sustainable lives, while fostering tolerance among people and helping to build more peaceful societies.[2].

Today, students living in villages and rural neighborhoods cannot access an education of the same quality as their peers in cities. We can also see this in the results of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA): there is a significant gap between the scores of urban students and those of rural students. If we want to reach the goal of quality education for all, we can begin by working to ensure that children in rural areas receive a better education.

For rural development:

Access to quality education in rural areas strengthens not only children but rural communities as well. The presence of a school, of qualified teachers and of a strong school–parent–village interaction contributes to the development of community awareness and the strengthening of social solidarity. In this way, rural communities can preserve their cultural richness and agricultural productivity. Migration from the countryside to the city — driven by the inability to access education and by the contraction of agricultural production — declines, and the populations and productive potential of villages are preserved.

Children supported by their teachers, parents and communities build stronger ties with the region they live in; they grow into individuals who understand local needs and can develop solutions to meet them. This is also of great importance for the continuity of sustainable agricultural production in the face of the food-insecurity risk that the climate crisis is steadily intensifying.



[2] United Nations, "Quality Education: Why It Matters" Retrieved from: https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Goal-4.pdf

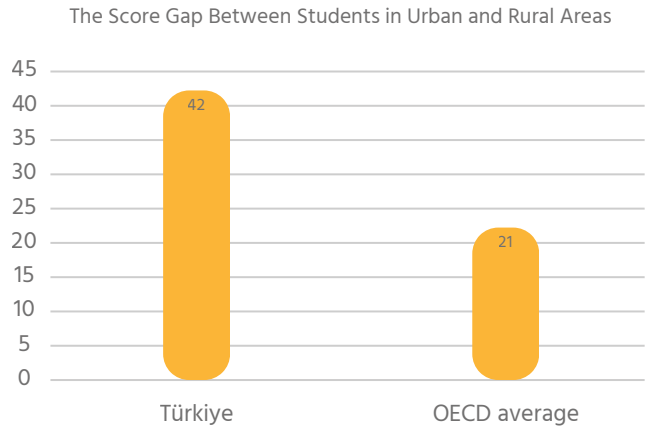
The Current State of Rural Education in Türkiye

According to figures from the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK), 14.4 million people — corresponding to 16.8% of Türkiye's population — live in areas classified as rural. Of these, 2.5 million are under the age of 15. In other words, 14 of every 100 children in Türkiye need rural education opportunities in order to access quality education where they live[3].

Because roughly half of Türkiye's villages were reclassified as neighborhoods following the 2012 Metropolitan Municipality Law, statistical data on rural education is not precise. Nevertheless, according to published Ministry of National Education (MoNE) data for the 2024–2025 academic year, we know that[4]:

- 5,241 of the 25,099 primary schools are located in villages (roughly 1 in every 5 primary schools);
- 232,815 of the 5,704,483 primary-school students attend these schools (roughly 4% of all primary-school students);
- 19,170 of the 322,305 primary-school teachers work in these schools (roughly 6% of all primary-school teachers).

So, are we delivering a sufficiently high-quality education to the child population living in villages and rural neighborhoods? The answer can be seen in the results of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), developed by the OECD and conducted every three years to examine the knowledge and skills of 15-year-olds[5].

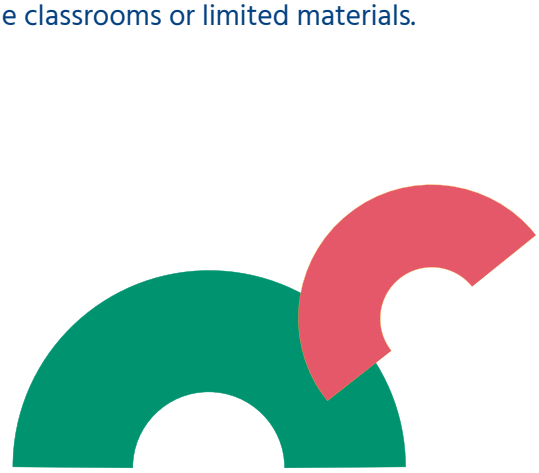


The chart derived from the 2018 PISA results in the OECD's 2022 report — based on the average of reading, science and mathematics scores — shows how much higher urban students perform than their rural peers. It reveals that, across OECD countries, students educated in cities score on average 21 points higher than their rural peers, whereas in Türkiye this performance gap doubles, reaching 42 points. In other words, the educational inequality between urban and rural areas exists across OECD countries too, but it is deeper in Türkiye.

[3] Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK) Kent Kır Sınıflaması 2025.
[4] Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı (MEB). (2025). Milli Eğitim İstatistikleri 2024 - 2025
[5] OECD (2022), Student achievement in Türkiye: findings from PISA and TIMSS international assessments, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/c8a84283-en.

The challenges facing rural education are very different from those in the cities:

- In many of Türkiye's villages there is no school for children to attend. As a result, primary- and secondary-school-age children are transported by shuttle each morning and evening under the bussed-education system to schools up to 30 kilometres away. According to 2024–2025 MoNE statistics, 240,048 students at primary level and 324,603 at lower-secondary level are bussed to 12,754 transport-hub schools in Türkiye[6].
- In villages that do have a primary school, teachers change frequently. This both complicates children's academic development and fosters negative attitudes towards teachers and education in the villages.
- Multigrade classrooms are used in most village schools. In this model, students of different grade levels study in the same classroom, requiring teachers to work simultaneously with multiple age and level groups. According to MoNE, in the 2020–2021 academic year some 128,432 students were educated in around 7,000 schools using the multigrade model — corresponding to 2.4% of the 5,328,391 students at primary level that year[7]. Contrary to common belief, multigrade classrooms are not merely a set of disadvantages[8]; but for them to become a model that supports students, teachers must be competent in multigrade teaching.
- Social and cultural learning opportunities are more limited in rural areas than in cities. This reduces children's chances of encountering different ways of life and experiences, and constrains out-of-school learning opportunities.
- Village schools may not have adequate equipment for education. Children cannot access suitable physical facilities, educational materials or a diversity of learning. Most schools have no pre-school education, no guidance counsellors and no subject teachers for areas such as art or music.
- Teachers appointed to villages are generally newly graduated from education faculties and at the very start of their careers. Yet teacher-training processes do not focus sufficiently on the knowledge and skills that rural education requires. As a result, teacher candidates cannot access opportunities to get to know villages, to gain professional experience in rural areas, or to learn pedagogical approaches and methods for situations specific to rural education, such as multigrade classrooms or limited materials.





[6]Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı (MEB). (2024). Milli Eğitim İstatistikleri, Örgün Eğitim 2024-2025
[7]Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı (MEB). (2020, Haziran). Birleştirilmiş sınıf uygulaması yapan okullar için 17 çalışma kitabı hazırlandı. MEB İnternet Sitesi Haberi.
[8]Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı (MEB). (2024). Milli Eğitim İstatistikleri, Örgün Eğitim 2024-2025

- Teachers working in villages face many everyday hardships, such as housing and transport. They are also largely deprived of opportunities to socialise with and learn from colleagues, and often lead isolated lives.
- Alongside their teaching duties, teachers also take on responsibilities that go beyond the profession: improving the physical infrastructure of schools (cleaning, painting and whitewashing, plumbing, roof repairs, installing stoves, and so on), mediating between the needs of villagers and public institutions, and running the administrative affairs of the school in single-teacher schools.
- The structure of families in villages also differs from those in cities. Owing to families' socio-economic conditions, prejudices about education and school, cultural and linguistic barriers, heavy workloads, large numbers of children, and the limited availability of educational materials and spaces at home, some families cannot support their children's education sufficiently.
- Because of factors such as violence, lack of access to adequate and healthy food, inadequate hygienic conditions at home and at school, and untreated illnesses, children in rural areas are more likely to experience psychological and developmental disorders — and have less access to the means of overcoming these difficulties.
- Children whose first language is not Turkish, who have not received pre-school education, or whose education has been interrupted by seasonal labor or by being made to work at home or in the fields, cannot reach the same readiness level as other primary-school students. These situations can lead to fatigue and/or low motivation in lessons, to absenteeism and to disengagement from education.

On the other hand, despite all these problems, rural schools also hold important opportunities for a more holistic and higher-quality education. Small class sizes in village schools, the physical closeness among school, parents and villagers, the space villages open up for learning in nature, and the greater ease with which teachers and villagers can take initiative on education in small schools are just a few of these. Raising the quality of education in the village therefore depends not only on tackling the problems we have listed, but also on making the best possible use of these opportunities — and on strengthening teachers so that they are equipped to do so.



Our Values

Solidarity:
We are not alone; we grow stronger when we come together.

Resilience:
When difficulties arise, we do not stop; we seek solutions and carry on.



Continuity:
We are not content with temporary fixes; we pursue lasting change.

Inclusion:
We do not discriminate; we form an inclusive circle and listen to one another.



2024-2025
KODA Team

Co-Directors
Mine Ekinci (1 Ağustos 2024 ~ 1 Ocak 2025)

Co-Directors
Esra Yıldırmış

Co-Directors
Ayşe Gökçen Karaman

Co-Directors
Menekşe Canatan

Education Advisor
Cavit Yeşildağ

Research and Advocacy Coordinator
Demet Taşkan

Project Development and Fund Relations Coordinator
Mert Okcebe

Teacher Communities Field Coordinator
Merve Unutmaz

Teacher Training Officer
Ufuk Sultanoğlu

Post-Disaster Rural Education Support Program Coordinator
Onur Atalar

Mentor Teacher Advisor
Gülsüm Duman

Social-Emotional Learning Program Coordinator
Özüm Baykaş

First Step to the Village Program Field Coordinator
Öykü Kocaman

Orhaneli Education and R&D Center Coordinator
Emre Ekinci

Rural Family Studies Program Coordinator
Nur Akdemir

Rural Family Studies Program Specialist
Ayşegül Özman

Volunteer Coordinator
Hatice Azin

Orhaneli Field Officer
Ali Başay

Resource Development Specialist
Esra Çalışkan Dönmez

Communications Specialist
Muhammed Salih Atalay

Communications Officer
Betül Balcı

Finance and Administrative Affairs Coordinator
Derya Yükrük Kılıç

Administrative Affairs and Human Resources Specialist
Başak Sonbahar

Administrative Affairs and Human Resources Officer
Rabia Rumeysa Karadağ

2025-2026
KODA Team

General Coordinator
Mine Ekinci

Trainer Development and Community Unit Coordinator
Esra Yıldırmış

Communications Unit Coordinator
Menekşe Canatan

Education Unit Coordinator
Aysun Hartevioğlu

Project Development and Fund Relations Unit Coordinator
Mert Okcebe

Teacher Communities Program Coordinator
Merve Unutmaz

Teacher Training Coordinator
Ufuk Sultanoğlu

Post-Disaster Rural Education Support Program Coordinator
Onur Atalar

Mentor Advisor
Mine Karakaya

Content Development Coordinator
Özüm Baykaş

First Step to the Village Program Coordinator
Öykü Kocaman

Family and Local Studies Specialist
Ayşegül Özman

KODA Implementation Center Coordinator
Emre Ekinci

R&D Unit Coordinator
Gözde Polatkal

Corporate Partnerships and Donor Relations Unit Coordinator
Arzu Özdemirci

Assistant Communications Specialist
Betül Balcı

Resource Development Officer
Melda Nur Süleymanoğlu

Finance and Administrative Affairs Unit Coordinator
Derya Yükrük Kılıç

Volunteer Administrative Affairs Officer
Hakan Akın

Our Board of Directors and Board of Auditors

2024-2025

Board of Directors :

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Ahmet Tuğrul Ağırbaş
Vice-Chair

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Suat Kardaş
Secretary-General

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Gökçe Zeynep Kurmuş
Full Members

Murat Ürüm
Full Members

Board of Auditors:

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Fatma Ayşen Özsan
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Beşir Özmen
Full Members

2025-2026

Board of Directors:

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Chair

Ahmet Tuğrul Ağırbaş
Vice-Chair

Murat Ürüm
Treasurer

Derya Tombuloğlu
Secretary-General

Gökçe Zeynep Kurmuş
Full Members

Özgür Günaydın
Full Members

Soner Cesur
Full Members

Board of Auditors:

Çeşminaz Didem Bilgin
Chair

Hande Yurtsever
Vice-Chair

Emel Şenzengin Mergen
Full Members

2024-2025 Eğitim-Öğretim Yılında İş Birliği Yaptığımız Öğretmen Toplulukları Sorumluları (ÖTS)

Adıyaman-Tut: **Seda Lüleci**
Adıyaman-Tut: **Yurdagül Kuzkaya**
Afyon-Emirdağ: **Fatih Özdemir**
Afyon-Emirdağ: **Halil Körpınar**
Batman: **Mehmet Emin Yıldız**
Batman: **Muzaffer Başaran**
Bingöl: **Erhan Koçer**
Bingöl: **Zeynep Tan**
Diyarbakır: **Abdülkerim Kaya**
Diyarbakır: **Berçem Aslan**
Gaziantep: **Halil Polat**
Gaziantep: **Kübra Nalpara**
Hatay-Antakya: **Ceylan Uçar**
Hatay-Antakya: **Tuğçe Demir**
Kars: **Sibel Ataseven**
Kars: **Taner Ölmez**
Mardin: **Ezgi Koşar**
Mardin: **Hicrannur Sidan**
Muş-Varto: **Canan Sakal**
Şanlıurfa-Birecik: **Yıldız Uçan**
Şanlıurfa-Birecik: **Zümrüt Gazioğlu**
Şanlıurfa-Siverek: **Sedat Çiftçi**
Şanlıurfa-Siverek: **Yaren Çelik**
Şırnak-İdil: **Elif Hilal Turgut**
Şırnak-İdil: **Emre Kökçü**
Çevrim içi-Çankırı: **Kübra Çağlar**
Çevrim içi-İstanbul: **Kübra Nur Hotoğlu**

2024-2025 Eğitim-Öğretim Yılında Beraber Çalıştığımız Gönüllü Eğitmenler

Ankara: **Cansu Er Erün** (Sınıf Yönetimi – Sınıfta Katılım, Şiddetsiz İletişim)
Ankara: **Mustafa Bektaş** (Kırsal Kalkınmada Eğitim)
Ankara: **Onurcan Ceyhan** (Proje Uzmanı Eğitmeni)
Bursa: **Elvan Özsel** (Stres Yönetimi)
Bursa: **Cavit Yeşildağ** (KODA Eğitim Danışmanı ve Sosyal Pedagog)
Bursa: **Nur Akdemir** (Aile Katılımı)
Çanakkale: **İlker Çıplak**
Diyarbakır: **Abdüllatif Demir** (Öğrenme Yolculukları eğitmeni — Bütünsel ve Kapsayıcı Eğitim)
Diyarbakır: **Kemal Altunboğa** (Yaratıcı Drama Lideri, Çocuk Gelişimci)
Isparta: **Güllü Duman Yegen** (Şiddetsiz İletişim Uygulayıcısı)
İstanbul: **Aslıhan Hazar** (Hikaye Anlatıcısı)
İstanbul: **Aylin Vartanyan** (Eğitmen, Dışavurumcu Sanatlar Uygulayıcısı)
İstanbul: **Aysel Erkovan** (Özel Gereksinimli Öğrenciler ve Kapsayıcı Eğitim)
İstanbul: **Ayşe Burcu Eren** (Eğitmen ve Danışman)
İstanbul: **Burçak Öner**
İstanbul: **Cihan Koral** (Derin Demokrasi Eğitmeni)
İstanbul: **Deniz Spatar** (Şiddetsiz İletişim Eğitmeni)
İstanbul: **Dilşad Güngör**
İstanbul: **Elif Vatansever Özkan**
İstanbul: **Emine Özcan** (Stres Yönetimi – Çözüm Odaklı Olmak ve Çözüm Üretmek)
İstanbul: **Esra Çalışkan Dönmez** (Şiddetsiz İletişim)
İstanbul: **Fulden Ergen** (Topluluk Temelli İletişim Eğitmeni)
İstanbul: **Handan Özdoğan** (Profesyonel Yönetici ve Takım Koçu)
İstanbul: **İlkay Nişancı** (Orff-Schulwerk Elementer Müzik ve Hareket Eğitimcisi, Perküsyonist, Davulcu)
İstanbul: **Kenan Diribaş** (Mesleki Gelişim Uzmanı)
İstanbul: **Mevlüde Sahillioğlu** (Kolaylaştırıcı ve Danışman)
İstanbul: **Nihan Uçar** (Sınıf Yönetimi)
İstanbul: **Nilsu Eray** (İş Geliştirme Uzmanı)

İstanbul: **Nurcan İnan**
İstanbul: **Nurçin Karabıyık** (Tiyatro ve Mim Oyuncusu - Eğitmen ve Yaratıcı Drama Lideri)
İstanbul: **Özgür Özer** (Sanat ve Terapi Eğitmeni)
İstanbul: **Selma Hekim** (Görsel Sanatlar Eğitmeni)
İstanbul: **Sezer Aksoy** (Zürafa Dili – Şiddetsiz İletişim)
İstanbul: **Tuba Çal**
İstanbul: **Tülin Özçağır** (Hikaye Anlatıcısı)
İstanbul: **Zeki Engin Çolak**
İzmir: **Evin Doğan Kor** (Oyun Temelli Yaratıcı Drama)
İzmir: **Mehmet Ateş** (Öğretmen Eğitimcisi)
İzmir: **Nuray Ardıç** (Eğitmen)
İzmir: **Orhan Cengiz** (Köy-Okul İlişkisi)
İzmir: **Zeynep Gülçin Altun** (Orman Eğitmeni)
Mersin: **İlker Özoğul** (Hareket ve Beyin Gelişimi)
Mersin: **Sibel Yaşin**
Muğla: **Ramazan Sağ** (Sınıf Yönetimi)
Niğde: **Özlem Çeltek** (Yaratıcı Drama)
Van: **Veysel Dokumacı** (Doğada Öğrenme Eğitmeni)

Sosyal Duygusal Öğrenme Eğitmenleri

Denizli: **Ayşe Deligöz**
Diyarbakır: **Berfin Ermiş**
Diyarbakır: **Serap Akboğa**
İzmir: **Bahar Onur**
Kahramanmaraş: **Leyla Aksak**
Mardin: **Gamze Beg**
Şanlıurfa: **Ebru Yeşildağ**
Şanlıurfa: **Gülistan Şimşek**
Tekirdağ: **Günay Karagöz**

Öğrenme Yolculukları - Müzik & Hareket

Aydın: **Ayşegül Tüzün**
Afyon: **Zeynep Doğan Demirci**
Diyarbakır: **Ömer Acar**
İstanbul: **Gözde Geyik**
Kırklareli: **Ahmet Ebubekir Çolak**
Kırklareli: **Emine Özder Çolak**
Manisa: **Perihan Yüksel**
Mardin: **Özge Savunucu**
Mersin: **Nurgul Uğuz**

Öğrenme Yolculukları - Pedagoji & Öğrenme

Diyarbakır: **Abdüllatif Demir**
Elazığ: **Şeyma Gür Sağırlar**
Hatay: **Rıza Dalkıran**
Manisa: **Suna Yusuflu**
Manisa : **Volkan Kaz**
Mardin: **Nevin Akkuş**
Muğla: **Tuğba Harmankaya**
Sakarya: **Arzu Salbaş**
Tekirdağ: **Günay Karagöz**

2024 - 2025 Eğitim-Öğretim Yılında Köye İlk Adım Programı Kapsamında İş Birliği Yaptığımız Öğretim Üyeleri

Alper Kaşkaya (Doç. Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Erzincan Binali Yıldırım Üniversitesi)
Aysel Demiroğlu (Prof. Dr. Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit Üniversitesi)
Bengisu Kaya Özgül (Doç. Dr. Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit Üniversitesi)
Cengiz Kesik (Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Harran Üniversitesi)
Ceren Alaçam (Dr. Ege Üniversitesi)
Ebru Selçioğlu Demirsöz (Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Trakya Üniversitesi)
Emre Küçük (Arş. Gör. Erzincan Binali Yıldırım Üniversitesi)
Fatih Yılmaz (Doç. Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Dicle Üniversitesi)
Gülşah Kuru (Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Muş Alparslan Üniversitesi)
Handan Kılıç (Arş. Gör. Kütahya Dumlupınar Üniversitesi)
Hafife Bozdemir Yüzbaşıoğlu (Doç. Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Kastamonu Üniversitesi)
İrfan Emre (Prof. Dr. Fırat Üniversitesi)
Levent Vural (Doç. Dr. Trakya Üniversitesi)
Meram Uzundal (Arş. Gör. Amasya Üniversitesi)
Muhammet Özdemir (Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit Üniversitesi)
Olcay Özdemir (Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit Üniversitesi)
Özlem Doğan Temur (Prof. Dr. Kütahya Dumlupınar Üniversitesi)
Pınar Çavaş (Prof. Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Ege Üniversitesi)
Rabia Sarıkaya (Prof. Dr. Gazi Üniversitesi)
Ramazan Sağ (Prof. Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Burdur Mehmet Akif Ersoy Üniversitesi)
Rumiye Arslan (Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Amasya Üniversitesi)
Rüyam Küçüksüleymanoğlu (Prof. Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Bursa Uludağ Üniversitesi)
Samet Demir (Arş. Gör., Kütahya Dumlupınar Üniversitesi)
Serdar Bulut (Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Erzincan Binali Yıldırım Üniversitesi)
Serkan Çelik (Prof. Dr. Hacettepe Üniversitesi)
Suat Çapuk (Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Adıyaman Üniversitesi)
Şükran Uçuş Güldalı (Doç. Dr. Kırşehir Ahi Evran Üniversitesi)
Yusuf Kızıltaş (Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi)

2024 - 2025 Eğitim-Öğretim Yılında Afet Sonrası Kırsalda Eğitime Destek Programı Kapsamında Mentörlük Yapan Öğretmenler

Aydın: **Mehmet Kiraz**
Aydın: **Huriye Karademir**
Balıkesir: **Ebru Kılıç Arguç**
Batman: **Oktay Avim**
Çorum: **Gülser Kırış**
Denizli: **Ayşe Deligöz**
Diyarbakır: **Dilber Acar**
Diyarbakır: **Abdüllatif Demir**
Diyarbakır: **Nesrin Şahinoğulları Balıkçı**
Diyarbakır: **Sercan Yıldız**
Diyarbakır: **Sezgin Kaya**
Diyarbakır: **Şemsettin Tosun**
Elazığ: **Naciye Arzu Demirtaş**
Hatay: **Tamer Karakan**
İstanbul: **Fatma Sağlam**
İstanbul: **Nebahat Barış**
İzmir: **Bahar Onur**
İzmir: **Murat Çıtır**
İzmir: **Nilüfer Erdemir**
Mardin: **Ferhat Erol**
Mardin: **Mehtap Gülsüm Özbey**
Sakarya: **Arzu Salbaş**
Şanlıurfa: **Yasin Döğmeci**
Tekirdağ: **Sevinç Güneş**
Uşak: **Alime Duran**
Uşak: **Pınar Korkmaz**
Zonguldak: **Samet Terzi**

2024 - 2025 Eğitim-Öğretim Yılında Afet Sonrası Kırsalda Eğitime Destek Programı Kapsamındaki Mentör Danışmanlarımız

Aydın: **Nigar Eda Çetinkaya**
Aydın: **Semra Odabaşı**
Aydın: **Sevgi Demir**
Diyarbakır: **Ömer Açar**
İstanbul: **Şeyma Karan**
Hatay: **Selda Yarim**

Danışma Kurulu

Ahmet Celal Bozer
Batuhan Aydagül
İpek Kaya Ilıcak
Sinan Kurmuş

Volunteer Advisors

Communications Advisors

Gülcem Bayer
Meral Ata
Fırat Ersoy

Monitoring and Evaluation Advisors

Müge Bakioğlu
Fulya Koyuncu

A. Our Field Activities





1. Teacher

1.1. Teacher Communities Program

The Need We Took to Heart

Teachers working in small, sparsely populated schools in villages and rural neighborhoods rarely have the chance to be among many colleagues. We took to heart the negative effect this has on teachers' professional, social and personal development.

Through the Teacher Communities Program — which we have run since 2017 and which is KODA's most well-established program — we build sustainable communities in provinces and districts with large numbers of rural teachers. These communities support the strengthening of quality rural education and also encompass professional and social solidarity. The long-term aim of the program is to build a strong network of teachers who will accompany this change so that quality education can take root in rural areas, to expand that network each year with new provinces and districts, and to create a sustainable community model.

For Whom?

We designed the program primarily for classroom teachers working in villages and rural neighborhoods, giving particular importance to the participation of early-career and newly appointed teachers. We also opened part of the quota to teachers working in schools in provincial or district centers and to subject teachers. In each community, designated Responsible Teachers took on a role supporting the KODA team in managing the program's processes.

What Happened This Year?

In the 2024–2025 academic year, we established 14 teacher communities in total — 13 in person and 1 online — in September and October 2024. In each community, teachers from the local area took on the role of Responsible Teacher, facilitating and leading the meetings; in all communities except the online one, we worked in cooperation with local Directorates of National Education (DoNE).

As part of the program's expansion strategy this year, we aimed to establish four communities in cooperation with local institutions. We were unable to sustain the community we set up in Bursa throughout the year owing to budget constraints on teachers travelling to the center from different districts; and the community we had planned in Şanlıurfa-Viranşehir with the Support to Life Association was postponed to the following year because the resource-mobilization process took longer than expected. As a result, we ran the meetings of 14 communities regularly throughout the year and carried out our monitoring and evaluation work through these communities.

Regions where Teacher Communities were established:

Adıyaman-Tut, Afyon-Emirdağ, Batman, Bingöl, Diyarbakır, Gaziantep, Hatay-Antakya, Kars, Mardin, Muş-Varto, Şanlıurfa-Birecik, Şanlıurfa-Siverek, Şırnak-İdil and Online-Türkiye.

We began preparing for the new period in July 2024, once the selection of Responsible Teachers was complete; the Responsible Teachers came together at the Responsible Teachers' Orientation Camp held in Ankara in August 2024. We designed the year's flow around camps and orientation meetings that strengthen the Responsible Teachers who lead the communities throughout the year, together with the volunteer trainers.

For the volunteer trainers who support our local education meetings on the topics chosen by the communities, we held an online Trainer Orientation Meeting where we shared KODA's principles and collaborative approach. In September and October 2024 we established 13 in-person and 1 online community; in October 2024 we held an online Opening Meeting bringing together the teachers who joined the communities, the Responsible Teachers, the volunteer trainers, representatives of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), the program's supporters and the KODA team.

Throughout the year, almost all of the communities held five meetings each and received three training sessions from KODA trainers at these meetings. In addition, 14 of the communities organized a total of 16 voluntary gatherings, at which teachers broke fast together, took part in additional training or went on outings.

The trainer-led meetings, on topics we determined according to each community's needs, proceeded region by region as follows:

- **Adıyaman-Tut:** Brain Games (Veysel Dokumacı), Movement and Brain Development (İlker Özoğul), Creative Drama (Nurçin Karabıyık)
- **Afyon-Emirdağ:** Music and Movement (Zeynep Doğan Demircioğlu), Giraffe Language – Nonviolent Communication (Sezer Aksoy), Stress Management (Elvan Özsel)
- **Batman:** Visual Arts (Selma Hekim), Music and Movement (Ömer Acar), Stress Management (Elvan Özsel)
- **Bingöl:** Students with Special Needs and Inclusive Education (Aysel Erkovan), Creative Drama (Kemal Altunboğa), Nature Education (Nuray Aydın)
- **Diyarbakır:** Creative Drama (Kemal Altunboğa), Nonviolent Communication (Esra Çalışkan Dönmez), Classroom Management – Participation in Class (Cansu Er Erün)
- **Gaziantep:** Nonviolent Communication (Cansu Er Erün), Music and Movement (Nurgül Aluftekin), Brain Games (Veysel Dokumacı)
- **Hatay-Antakya:** Dance and Movement (Özgür Özer), Classroom Management (Kenan Diribaş), Learning in Nature (Özlem Çeltek)
- **Kars:** Nonviolent Communication (Esra Çalışkan Dönmez), Students with Special Needs (Aysel Erkovan), Participation in Class (Kenan Diribaş)
- **Mardin (Central):** Participation in Class – Child Participation (Cansu Er Erün), Play-Based Creative Drama (Evin Doğan Kor), Classroom Management (Ramazan Sağ)

- **Muş-Varto:** School, Family and Village Relations (Orhan Cengiz), Stress Management – Being Solution-Focused and Producing Solutions (Emine Özcan), Creative Drama (Nurçin Karabıyık)
- **Şanlıurfa-Birecik:** Music and Movement (Ömer Açar), Creative Drama (Özlem Çeltek), Nonviolent Communication (Atalay Göçer)
- **Şanlıurfa-Siverek:** Out-of-School Learning – Education in Nature (Zeynep Gülçin Altun), Creative Drama (Özlem Çeltek), Dance and Movement (Özgür Özer)
- **Şırnak-İdil:** Classroom Management (Nihan Uçar), Creative Drama (Evin Doğan Kor), Nonviolent Communication (Cansu Er Erün)
- **Online-Türkiye:** Holistic Inclusive Education (Şeyma Gür Sağırlar), Family Participation (Nur Akdemir), Social-Emotional Learning (Özüm Baykaş)

Our New Community

As a participant of the Suna's Daughters School-Focused Solution Community, we established a new teacher community made up of guidance counsellors in central Şanlıurfa. Within this community we delivered "Creative Drama" training with Nuray Ardıç, "Nonviolent Communication" with Bediz Gürel, and Family Participation with Ayşegül Özman.

Throughout the year we carried out 12 field visits with our team, during which we visited Directorates of National Education and attended teacher community meetings. In November 2024 we met the Directors of National Education and our local Responsible Teachers in Şanlıurfa-Birecik and Adıyaman-Tut, and were guests at the community meetings in Adıyaman-Tut, Şanlıurfa-Birecik and Şanlıurfa-Siverek. In October 2024 in Gaziantep and Mardin, and in January 2025 in central Şanlıurfa and Şırnak-İdil, we came together with Directors of National Education and our Responsible Teachers to exchange ideas on how to work more effectively.

Camps and Support Meetings

Responsible Teachers' Orientation Camp: We held this in Ankara on 12–14 August. Throughout the camp we addressed topics such as community democracy, communication, project writing, technical processes and teacher engagement. We completed the camp with 29 participants and organized follow-up sessions for the 4 teachers who could not attend for health or family reasons. Drawing on what we learned at the camp, we updated the Responsible Teacher handbook and shared it digitally.

Trainer Orientation: We held an introductory meeting with new applicants to KODA's volunteer trainer role, and also organized an online KODA orientation session for all past, current and newly joining trainers. In the session we conveyed KODA's principles and education strategy, clarified our expectations of volunteer trainers and shared our plans for 2024–2025.

Responsible Teacher Support Meetings: We held 3 Responsible Teacher Support Meetings during the year. At the first, in late November 2024, the Responsible Teachers shared the experience they had gained from the initial meetings and we reviewed the evaluation results together. At the second, in February 2025, we held a session facilitated by a guest speaker on the theme "Self-Perception in Communities," opening space for the Responsible Teachers to reflect on their roles and identities within their community. We used the third meeting as a space to thank departing Responsible Teachers and to update the community for the 2025–2026 strategic planning.



Community Workshop: In February 2025 we came together again with volunteer trainers to discuss the learnings of the autumn term. In April 2025, with the participation of 25 Responsible Teachers, we held a day-long online Community Workshop in which we developed ideas on different community models. Working in groups, the Responsible Teachers shared both the strengths and the areas for development of the current community model and presented new community models of their own design; we assessed the proposals arising from the workshop for implementation the following year. Throughout the workshop, Nesrin Köseler offered an opportunity to reflect on different community models; we discussed ways of learning within communities with Zeynep Aykul Yavuz; Mehmet Ateş shared his experience of the Servas Peace School, and Nagihan Demirsu her experience of the Network Mindset Community; we discussed the role of education in rural development with Mustafa Bektaş; and Şükrü Altunsu shared his experience of resource development.

End of Period and Preparations for the New Period

In June 2025 we held the Teacher Communities Closing Meeting, to which all our stakeholders were invited, and presented certificates of appreciation to the 2024–2025 participants. We prepared the main draft of the Guide to Establishing and Sustaining Communities — which brings together KODA's experience in building and running professional communities — and gathered feedback on it. We began protocol processes with Provincial Directorates of National Education for the regions we will add to the program in the new period; we assessed the new-period Responsible Teacher applications, held one-to-one interviews with candidates, and planned an Introduction and Training Program for candidate Responsible Teachers.

Voices from the Field

"I'm so glad I joined! The very existence of such a program is hopeful. It made me feel that teachers are not alone — we really needed a structure that supports us."
– Teacher, program participant

"I love this community so much. I travel from far away for it. I don't think I could have come for anything else."
– Teacher, program participant

"I shared the emotion cards from the Nonviolent Communication training with my students. They told me privately how they felt during the day. By observing their emotions as the process unfolded, I had the chance to respond immediately. Because I valued my students' feelings, our bond in the classroom grew even stronger in their eyes."
– Teacher, Nonviolent Communication training

Monitoring and Evaluation Findings, Teacher Communities Program

To assess the benefits and impact of the program, we collected, analyzed and reported 134 surveys and 442 evaluation forms from teachers and Responsible Teachers. The survey results (n=134) showed that the program brought about meaningful change in teachers, both professionally and in the social-emotional domain.

Professionally, the strongest change was in the methods and techniques teachers use in the classroom: around 88.1% of surveyed teachers said their knowledge of educational methods and techniques had increased, and 87.3% said their competence in applying these techniques had grown. 83.6% of teachers said they could now organize the learning environment according to students' different needs. More than half reported gains in their awareness of the importance of pedagogical content, their knowledge for improving school infrastructure, their planning competence, and their ability to organize the learning environment in line with the needs and opportunities of rural areas. Awareness of the distinctive needs and opportunities of rural areas, the necessity of planning, the importance of coming to lessons prepared, and getting to know the region — in all of these we observed notable progress. These observations show that community meetings have a direct and tangible effect on teachers' day-to-day classroom practice.

Perhaps the program's most valuable impact emerged in teachers' inner worlds and in collegial solidarity. The great majority of teachers said their social-emotional skills had developed (85.8%) and that they had gained awareness of these skills (80.6%). Three in four teachers (76.1%) said they now knew better where and from whom to seek support when facing a difficulty — an invaluable gain for teachers who often work alone in rural areas. Around three-quarters (73.1%) said their professional motivation had increased — in other words, the community became an antidote to burnout. 61.2% of teachers said they felt more competent to support the ecosystem in which rural children live, and more than half (50.7%) said they shared knowledge and experience with colleagues more frequently.



In short, this year teachers felt they were not alone; the more they came together, the more space they could open for both themselves and their students.

SFindings from the Suna's Daughters Community

22 teachers enrolled in the Suna's Daughters School-Focused Solution Community; in the first term we held 2 meetings (15 teachers on 28 November 2024; 12 teachers on 27 December 2024 with Nuray Ardıç's Creative Drama training). In their evaluations, teachers found it especially valuable that the issues addressed related to real needs in their professional lives and that meetings were planned together; planning and organization received an average score of 9.8 out of 10, and in-community communication 9.4. We observed that the meetings increased teachers' professional motivation, strengthened their competencies, eased feelings of loneliness and supported their well-being, and that the activities they learned were quickly carried into their classrooms.



1.2. Our Other Activities for Teachers

1.2.1. Rural Holistic and Inclusive Education Capacity-Building Program

In cooperation with the Diyarbakır Provincial Directorate of National Education, the Şanlıurfa Provincial Directorate of National Education and the Karacadağ Development Agency, we completed the second phase of the "Change in the Village Begins with Innovation in Education: Rural Holistic and Inclusive Education Capacity-Building Program." We delivered the Core Training Program, consisting of eight topics, together with teachers working in the villages and rural neighborhoods of Diyarbakır and Şanlıurfa. Within the program we worked with teachers on Classroom Management, Social-Emotional Learning, Music and Movement, Learning in Nature, Nonviolent Communication, School–Family–Village Relations, Creative Drama, and Working with Students with Special Needs.

The evaluation we carried out at the end of the program clearly showed its impact on teachers: almost all of the teachers who took part said the program had contributed "fully" or "considerably" to their professional and personal development. Teachers found the topics of Learning in Nature and Music and Movement especially valuable, as they could be applied in the classroom immediately.

1.2.2. Core Training Program

We ran the Core Training Program (CTP) — which focuses on the essential subjects that teachers in villages and rural neighborhoods most need as they begin the profession — this year for the participant teachers of the Post-Disaster Rural Education Support Program and for the community-officer teachers of the Teacher Communities Program. We delivered the program online over a total of 4 days, in 2 parts placed before and after the orientation camps.

We held the first part on 1–4 July 2024, working on the following topics:

- "Holistic and Inclusive Education" (Learning Journeys trainers Abdüllatif Demir and Şeyma Gür Sağırlar)
- "Social-Emotional Learning" (Özüm Baykaş)
- "Learning in Nature" (Zeynep Gülçin Altun)
- "Child Development" (Cavit Yeşildağ)

We held the second part on 8–9 August 2024, working on the following topics:

- "Music and Movement" (Ömer Acar and Zeynep Doğan Demircioğlu)
- "Nonviolent Communication" (Deniz Spatar, Esra Çalışkan Dönmez)
- "Art and Creativity" (Özgür Özer)
- "Village, School and Family Relations" (Mehmet Ateş, Orhan Cengiz)

In the evaluation we carried out afterwards with the trainers and our colleagues, we saw that bringing the training into the classroom created a positive perception among participants, that including Social-Emotional Learning in the program was extremely valuable, and that the Learning in Nature and Music and Movement sessions spoke most to teachers' professional experience.

We experienced once again how refreshing it is for teachers to be together with colleagues and to share experiences. In the coming years we plan to treat the CTP as a separate program, to deepen and digitise its content, and to hold an in-person preparation camp with the trainers.

1.2.3. Social-Emotional Learning Workshop

At the Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Workshop we held on 14 June 2025, we came together with teachers applying SEL in their classrooms; alongside sharing experiences, we explored the place of social-emotional learning skills in the classroom together across 8 different workshops. We also published our Social-Emotional Learning Poster, prepared to help children and adults recognize and express their emotions and move forward together.



2. Teacher Candidate

2.1. First Step to the Village Program

The Need We Took to Heart?

Through the First Step to the Village Program, we took to heart the importance of teacher candidates getting to know the village and village schools while still at the education faculty. We cared that they gain the professional skills needed to teach in villages, acquire hands-on field experience, and know where and how to seek support when they need it in a village school. This year we treated the program not merely as professional preparation but as a journey that empowers young people; we added to our goals the aim of supporting the social-emotional skills and well-being that will serve teacher candidates for life, such as creative thinking, communication, self-awareness, coping with problems and problem-solving.

For Whom?

We designed the program for teacher candidates studying in the classroom-teaching departments of university education faculties. Teacher candidates join us through our volunteer academics in order to discover their own potential and to become closely acquainted with the dynamics of rural education. The program's direct and indirect impact extends to the academics we work with, to the village teachers at the schools where the program is implemented, and to their students.

What Happened This Year?

In the 2024–2025 academic year, we ran the First Step to the Village Program (FSVP) at 23 universities, through 27 separate implementations and under the coordination of 33 academics; in total we worked with 676 teacher candidates. The number of candidates benefiting from the program at different levels reached 728. In both terms we ran the program through a hands-on model combining fieldwork, training modules and online lessons. At universities where this was not possible, we used a non-fieldwork model consisting only of training modules and online lessons, thereby maintaining the program's reach at universities where fieldwork could not be carried out. Candidates in the hands-on model took part in 9 training modules led by academics, completed 3 online lessons prepared by KODA, and carried out 4 field visits to village schools where they held workshops. Candidates in the non-fieldwork model benefited from 5 training modules and the 3 online lessons prepared by KODA.

Reaching more universities was one of our priorities this year. To this end, we sent the introductory e-mail prepared at the start of the year to academics at universities we had not previously worked with; when we received no reply, we reached out through platforms such as LinkedIn and Academia, and where necessary by telephone directly. As a result of these efforts, we held introductory and briefing meetings with 9 new universities, and began working with 6 of them.

Autumn Term

In the autumn term we ran the hands-on model with 7 academics at 7 universities, reaching 142 teacher candidates (Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat, Aydın Adnan Menderes, Burdur Mehmet Akif Ersoy, Çankırı Karatekin, Dicle, Harran and Kırşehir Ahi Evran universities); we ran the theory-based model with 3 academics at 3 universities, reaching 144 candidates (Bartın, Eskişehir Osmangazi and Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit universities). After the theory-based lessons, candidates in the hands-on model carried out workshop practices with students at village schools. At universities where fieldwork was not possible, we shared our content through short videos, summary texts and visuals; we ran a WhatsApp discussion open to all candidates in the program, focused on multigrade village schools; and we held an in-person talk titled "Rural Education," open to the entire education faculty, at Eskişehir Osmangazi University. At the end of the term, we brought together all candidates from both the hands-on and non-fieldwork models online at an "Experience-Sharing Meeting."

Spring Term

In the spring term we ran the hands-on model with 269 teacher candidates at 13 universities (Afyon Kocatepe, Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat, Amasya, Aydın Adnan Menderes, Çukurova, Dumlupınar, Ege, Fırat, Hacettepe, Kastamonu, Malatya İnönü, Trakya and Uludağ universities), and the non-fieldwork model with 6 academics at 5 universities, reaching 121 candidates (Çankırı, Dicle, Gazi, Konya Necmettin Erbakan and Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit universities). To increase the impact of the fieldwork, we prioritized the schools of the village teachers in our network; in the implementations in Aydın, Bursa and Diyarbakır we selected the schools of village teachers taking part in other KODA programs. The fieldwork we carried out over the term consisted of 14 university visits and a workshop event held at the Middle East Technical University (METU).



Summer Camp

We held focus-group interviews to understand the changing needs of young people in the earthquake region. At the end of June, we held a 4-day summer camp in Adıyaman with 29 teacher candidates living in the earthquake region or studying at universities there. Structured around problem-solving, teamwork and communication skills at the young people's request, the camp gave them the chance to come together with peers from different regions and to experience producing together and communicating in depth. The responsibilities they took on and the work they produced during the camp strengthened the candidates' active participation and intrinsic motivation; reflecting on what it means to be young, critically assessing their own circumstances, and recognizing both individual and social needs increased their self-confidence in producing creative solutions.

Voices from the Field

“Experience really matters. It was a blessing to have such an opportunity so as not to feel like a fish out of water. We know what to do in our lessons and how to do it, but application is something else entirely. KODA provided that support. I made progress and I feel ready to become a teacher.”
– Kırşehir Ahi Evran University

“Before the FSVP, my knowledge of pedagogical content was limited and I didn't know teaching methods well enough. After FSVP, I gained in-depth knowledge of pedagogical principles, teaching strategies and student-centerd approaches.”
– Dicle University

“We had been told before that we should come to class prepared, but through this program I realized that coming prepared is a necessity.”
– Eskişehir Osmangazi University



Monitoring and Evaluation Findings, First Step to the Village Program

As in previous years, we monitored the program this year through various data-collection tools and measured its impact on teacher candidates.

According to the monitoring and evaluation findings, professional development remained the program's strongest area of impact. The most marked change under this heading was in candidates' awareness of the importance of pedagogical content; in both terms, almost all of the candidates reported development in this area. The great majority said they had gained awareness of the importance of coming to class prepared, had acquired a genuine teaching experience in the classroom, and felt more competent in using various educational methods and techniques; the rise across all three indicators in the spring term was striking. This finding demonstrated that the relevant gains are only possible through direct practice in village schools. Nearly three-quarters of candidates said their competence in organizing the learning environment according to students' different needs and in planning the lesson process had increased; close to two-thirds said their ability to adapt teaching to rural education conditions and their sense of being ready to teach in rural areas had strengthened. In the areas of awareness of the distinctive conditions of village schools and of knowledge for improving school infrastructure, more than half of the candidates also showed development; the impact of these two indicators rose markedly in the spring term.

Nearly three-quarters of candidates said their sense of being ready to teach in rural areas had strengthened; the findings showed that village visits and the first-hand experiences they heard from village teachers reduced young people's anxieties about entering the profession. According to the results, teamwork skills developed in close to two-thirds of the young people who prepared and delivered workshops together with peers. The development of social-emotional skills, meanwhile, rose markedly this year compared with both the autumn term and previous years, approaching two-thirds of the young people — a heartening advance for the program. More than half of the young people said their competence in supporting children's rural ecosystem and their motivation to work in rural areas had increased, while more than half said their self-confidence had strengthened. Knowledge of children's rights and safety, meanwhile, remained high among the great majority of young people in both terms. For some, the program became an opportunity to embrace the profession more consciously; for others, to realize the profession was not right for them and to clarify their career plans.

This Year in Numbers

- **33 academics:** The 33 academics who ran the program at their universities brought their academic experience together with the field.
- **100 village teachers:** The village teachers whose schools were visited got to know KODA, while those with prior KODA experience strengthened their ties with us — expanding our existing network.
- **1,500 children:** Through workshops held in classrooms, children were introduced to a holistic approach to education and had the chance to step outside their routines through art and movement, expressing their emotions, and games.
- **211 First Step to the Village Program graduates:** We reconnected with young people who had completed the program and graduated from university, making it easier for them to take part in KODA's current work.
- **29 new First Step to the Village Program graduates:** The young people who attended the summer camp grew stronger social-emotionally in the transition from graduation to career and remained part of our solidarity network.

The most important learning we gained this year was that the village visits — where teacher candidates directly experience their profession in the field — are decisive for the program's impact; although the non-fieldwork model has its own advantages, in the coming years we will continue to expand the hands-on model. We saw that social-emotional support is at least as important as professional development in helping young people cope with the challenges of both their profession and their youth; for this reason, next year we aim to focus not only on young people's professional development but also on their well-being. The inspiration, motivation and sense of belonging that the summer camp created in the young people showed once again the value of adding in-person components to the program.









3. After the 6 February Kahramanmaraş Earthquakes

3.1. Post-Disaster Rural Education Support Program (ASKDEP)

The Need We Took to Heart?

In the aftermath of the 6 February Kahramanmaraş Earthquakes, education in the villages and rural neighborhoods of the affected provinces was seriously disrupted. Newly appointed teachers in particular faced more intense feelings of loneliness, adjustment and uncertainty, while children and parents struggled to cope with the devastating effects of the disaster. We took to heart the protection of the right of children in the disaster region to access quality education under all circumstances.

In designing the program, we focused on the following needs:

- that teachers working in the villages and rural neighborhoods of the earthquake region can support students' holistic development, both academically and social-emotionally;
- that teachers can access the knowledge and skills to strengthen their psychological resilience in the post-disaster period;
- that teachers in the first years of their careers can cope with feelings of adaptation, cultural adjustment and loneliness;
- that teachers can better understand the needs of children and parents, and develop empathy, communication and support mechanisms;
- that children grow stronger in areas such as self-awareness, empathy, communication, group work, problem-solving and anger management;
- that a professional support network is built that does not leave teachers alone in the post-disaster period and that grows solidarity.

For Whom?

We designed ASKDEP for early-career teachers (mentees) working in the villages and rural neighborhoods of the provinces affected by the 6 February Kahramanmaraş Earthquakes, and for the experienced teachers who accompany them (mentors). Mentee teachers are those in their first three years of the profession working in the affected provinces. Mentor teachers are those with experience of working in villages and rural neighborhoods who volunteer to share that experience. Through regular meetings with mentees, mentors accompany early-career teachers as they grow stronger in areas such as adaptation, classroom management, communication with students and parents, and emotional resilience in the post-disaster period. Mentor advisors are teachers who support mentors in order to protect the quality of the mentoring process and strengthen its sustainability. They contribute to the regular progress of the meetings, to adapting the guides to the field, and to finding solutions together on difficult issues.

In the program we wove a learning and solidarity network with 56 mentee teachers directly (48 in the second term), 29 mentor teachers (plus one reserve mentor), 6 mentor advisors and 8 social-emotional learning trainers. Through our parent-participation work we reached families; we reached a total of 2,246 students — 1,782 through mentees and 464 through mentors.

What Happened This Year?

We began the new period with a training camp in Ankara in August 2024, where we came together with the new-period mentors; on 3 September 2024 we met online with all the year's participant teachers to say “Hello” to the period. Throughout the year we ran the program through mentoring meetings, social-emotional learning training, parent-participation work, monitoring and evaluation steps, and digital-infrastructure improvements that strengthened the process.

Regions where the program was implemented: Adana, Adıyaman, Diyarbakır, Elazığ, Gaziantep, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Kilis, Malatya, Mardin, Osmaniye and Şanlıurfa.

Running the Mentoring Process

With the matching of 56 mentees and 29 mentors, one-to-one mentoring meetings began. Mentors and mentees completed their fourth one-to-one meeting on 23 November – 1 December and their fifth on 28 December – 5 January; in the second term we carried out group-mentoring meetings. We continued the orientation of mentor advisors, clarifying their authority and responsibilities, and updated the mentor–mentee handbooks. To monitor the process regularly, we focused on digitising the tracking structure with tools such as forms and meeting logs. In April 2025, facilitated by our Education Coordinator Cavit Yeşildağ, we held the “Seeing the Unseen” training aimed at helping teachers rethink the mentoring role; we also came together with our mentors for a social evening.

Ekim 2024'te;

- Menti öğretmenler,
  - Nazlı Çevik Azazi ile "Hikâye Anlatımında İmgenin Gücü",
  - Deniz Spatar ile "Şiddetsiz İletişim" eğitimlerinde bir araya geldi.
- Mentör öğretmenler ise,
  - Nilsu Eray ile "Eğlenceli Bilim" eğitiminde buluştu.

Strengthening Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Capacity

Within ASKDEP, we continued to strengthen village teachers and students in the affected regions social-emotionally. Through our SEL work we aimed to increase teachers' competence in recognizing emotions, communicating effectively and supporting social-emotional skills in the classroom, and thereby to influence children's development. 23 trainers attended the SEL Trainers' Camp we held in July 2024. At the end of the camp, trainers' self-assessments of their gains were very high:



The online SEL training began with mentee teachers in November 2024 and, this year, proceeded under the leadership of the SEL trainers who were themselves in the trainer-training process.

At the SEL Winter Camp we held in Diyarbakır on 19–20 January 2025, we worked in depth on social-emotional learning skills with 39 mentee teachers; over 2 days the teachers worked with our trainers on the activities they would apply in their classrooms in the second term. The camp comprised one-to-one meetings on individual development areas; for mentees who could not attend for personal reasons, we held online SEL training. In the second term, mentee teachers began SEL practices in their classrooms and completed the self-awareness module.

We updated our SEL guide and uploaded the SEL poster we had prepared to our website. Our SEL trainer teacher Bahar Onur delivered a pilot SEL training in İzmir; we also delivered SEL training to the online community of our Teacher Communities Program.

Family Studies and Parent Participation

We believe that quality education in rural areas is not confined to the school but is strengthened by the bonds formed at home. For this reason, this year we ran Rural Family Studies as a Parent Participation Program within ASKDEP. We designed the program in three core steps:

- we sent teachers audio recordings supporting parent participation;
- teachers shared these recordings with parents in their classrooms;
- KODA trainers held one-to-one teleconference meetings with parents.

We built the program's content around three themes: strengthening communication within the family; sharing household responsibilities and routines; and increasing parent participation in children's educational processes.

During the process, through mentor and mentee teachers, we shared our training content on these three themes with 160 parents as audio recordings; 76 parents attended the 12 question-and-answer sessions we organized. Following the sharing of the recordings, KODA trainers held teleconference meetings with parents. The aim of these meetings was to give parents the chance to ask questions about the recordings and to deepen the process by building a bridge between teachers and families. 20 mentors and 35 mentees took part in implementing this work.

To measure the program's impact, we conducted an external monitoring study with parents by telephone survey. Its findings showed that the Parent Participation Program created a positive impact across all three dimensions. Comparing parents' responses before and after the training on a three-point Likert scale (1–3), the following improvements were recorded:

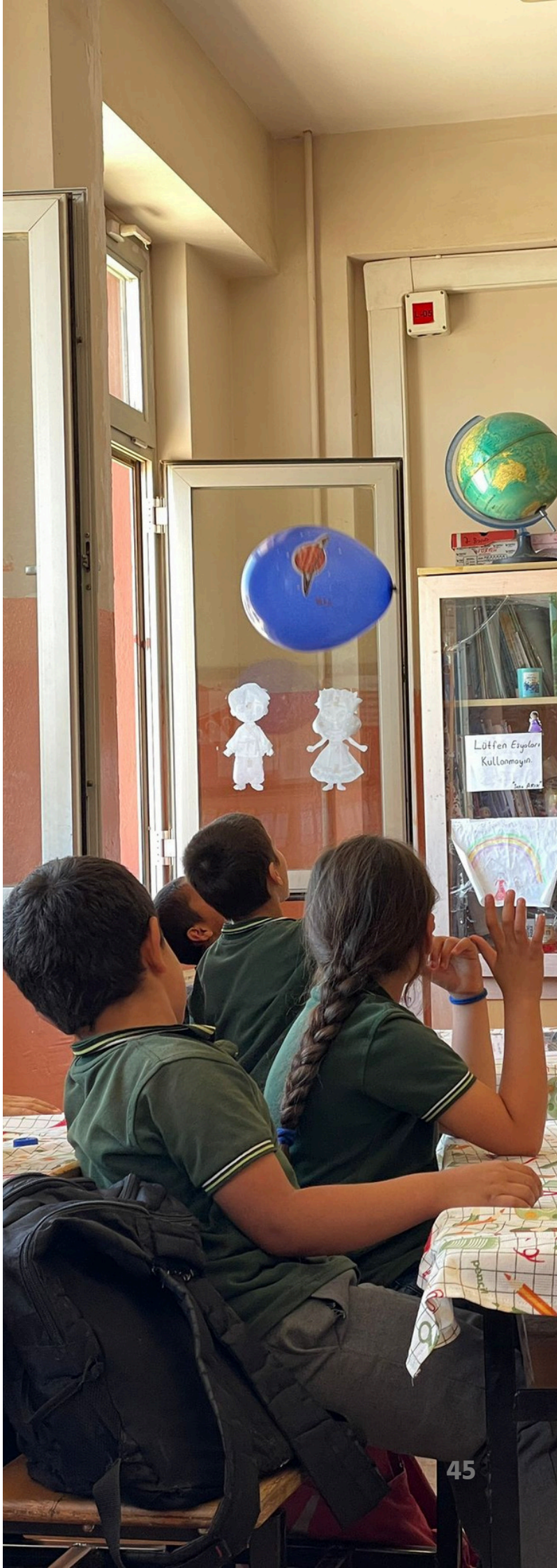
- **Family relationships and communication:** The average score rose from 2.44 to 2.81. Parents made the most progress in talking with their child and involving the child in the solution when the child behaved wrongly.
- **Household responsibilities and routines:** The average score rose from 2.21 to 2.72. The most marked improvement was in establishing rules for children's use of electronic media.
- **Participation in children's educational processes:** The average score rose from 2.33 to 2.50. Progress was seen especially in supporting children's education and reading books together.

The great majority of parents said they had applied the recommendations in the audio recordings partly or fully; positive changes were observed as a result, such as stronger communication, fewer conflicts, and children becoming more willing to take on responsibility. We also delivered Family Participation and Social-Emotional Learning training integrated into teacher training in Diyarbakır. In this way, we aimed to contribute, through steady steps, to strengthening the bond between home and school in the post-disaster period too.

Family Communities Pilot Study

An important source of learning for our family work this year was reporting the monitoring and evaluation findings of the Family Communities pilot study we had carried out in the previous period in four villages of Orhaneli, Bursa (Akalan, Karıncalı, Gümüşpınar and Göynükbelen). Reaching a total of 55 parents through family training, this pilot offered valuable findings on the impact that family work can create in rural areas. When the findings from parent surveys, focus-group interviews and expert opinions were brought together, the following picture emerged:

- Parents put the knowledge gained in the training into practice at home; the changes that stood out were organizing meal, sleep and homework times, spending more and higher-quality time with their children, communicating calmly instead of shouting, and applying positive discipline.
- Parents observed positive transformations in their children: calmer communication, greater responsibility-taking, regular routines, and reduced technology use.
- The contribution of togetherness to parents' well-being emerged strongly across all villages. Parents also described the meetings as a space of social and psychological support; feeling that they were not alone was a gain in itself.
- The cumulative impact of the training and meetings was also evident; the great majority of parents said the two phases complemented each other and made the process productive together.



Voices from the Field

"I honestly evolved through this training; all my relationships changed — not only with my child but with my mother-in-law too. We've started to get along well."
— Parent, Family Communities Project

"I used to be stricter; I've eased off. They understand better when we talk; when I shout they don't understand, they get scared. I saw this — you have to explain by talking."
— Parent, Family Communities Project

"It feels like therapy to me, as though I'm making time for myself."
— Parent, Community Meeting

"Everyone is the same, all children are the same; we try not to be prejudiced towards children. I realized I was not alone"
— Parent, Community Meeting

Supervision and Expert Support

Our mentor advisors held supervision meetings throughout the year alongside KODA Mentor Teacher Advisor Gülsüm Duman, and our SEL trainers alongside Assoc. Prof. Mine Göl Güven of Boğaziçi University. In April 2025, with the participation of Fetiye Erbil, we held a meeting with our SEL trainers titled “SEL and Teacher Well-being.”

Field Visits

We carried out field visits to the schools of mentor teachers in Diyarbakır, Mardin and Batman in November 2024; to Hatay, Adıyaman and Gaziantep in April 2025; and to Şanlıurfa, Mardin and Diyarbakır in May 2025. During these visits we observed teachers' in-class SEL practices, met our stakeholders and gathered suggestions for improving the program. We carried out fieldwork for the ASKDEP promotional video and visuals, and stayed in contact with Directorates of National Education for announcements.

Training Camps

We held 5 training camps, one for each participant group in the program.

Mentor Advisors' Camp (July 2024) — With 6 mentor advisors, we held sessions on KODA culture and values, the definition of mentoring and mentor advising, a coaching-oriented communication style, active listening and asking powerful questions, feedback that moves people forward, a restorative workshop, organization and time management, project management, leadership skills and a creative perspective.

SEL Trainers' Camp (July 2024) — With 8 SEL trainers, we held sessions on the pedagogical building blocks of SEL, self-awareness, self-management, communication skills, social awareness, training skills, responsible decision-making and artistic activities.

Mentoring Camp (July 2024) — With 33 mentors and mentor advisors, held in 2 parts. In the first part we brought together both teachers mentoring for the first time at KODA and experienced mentors from KODA's earlier Village Teachers Hand in Hand Program. This part comprised sessions on mentoring, parent participation, digitalisation, the Mentor Handbook and puppetry, along with a content-development workshop. In the second part we focused on SEL, with sessions on its fundamental building blocks, self-awareness, self-management, effective communication, a station activity, and the artistic assessment of SEL.

Mentee Training Camp (August 2024) — With 56 mentees, we held sessions on rural education pedagogy, play, inclusive education, music and movement, classroom management and drama.

Mentee Winter Camp (January 2025) — With 37 mentees, we held group presentations on points to consider in group work, self-awareness, self-management and communication-skills activities, a station activity, and an artistic-work session.

Voices from the Field

"I realized that routines take the classroom somewhere entirely different; for me, routines that change the classroom atmosphere, let me express myself and open space for my students are the finest thing ASKDEP has given me."
- Mentee teacher

"Listening to the child's opinion and communicating in a way that seeks to understand their feelings and thoughts increased."
- Parent

Monitoring and Evaluation Findings, ASKDEP

This year we designed monitoring and evaluation to track the regularity of mentoring meetings, the applicability of SEL content and the reach of parent work. We held evaluation meetings on the data at two-monthly intervals; conducted focus-group interviews with mentors, mentees, mentor advisors and SEL trainers; completed an interim report; and finalised the data at year's end. Three points in particular became visible in the monitoring and evaluation: the conditions that preserve the continuity of mentoring meetings (clarity of schedule, clarity of roles and responsibilities); teachers' need for readiness in SEL content (the importance of pre-camp online preparation meetings); and accessibility in parent meetings (the teleconference format made participation easier).

ASKDEP was not merely a mentoring program; it became a learning space that brought KODA's village-school expertise together with post-disaster needs. We observed the program's contribution at three levels:

- **Teacher level:** A peer-support line emerged through mentor–mentee matches that reduced feelings of loneliness, eased professional adaptation and supported emotional resilience in the post-disaster period.
- **School and classroom level:** By carrying SEL content into the classroom, we supported practices that open space for children's emotion regulation, communication and collaboration skills.
- **Community and system level:** Updating the guides, clarifying role definitions and strengthening the digital tracking infrastructure nourished KODA's capacity to develop a shareable model across its teacher programs.



4. Research and Development

4.1. Rural Education and R&D Center (Bursa, Orhaneli)

The Need We Took to Heart

So that the quality of education in villages and rural neighborhoods can be improved in a lasting and systematic way, we set out to put into practice exemplary applications in the field of rural education, to pilot them at our Rural Education and R&D Center, and then to disseminate them across Türkiye. Orhaneli is the space that makes this possible: the place where we develop and test our KODA implementation models and bring them into a form that can be scaled up.

For Whom?

Our target audience is all stakeholders of the education ecosystem who live and work in the Orhaneli district center and its villages.

What Happened This Year?

Throughout the 2024–2025 academic year, we carried out 4 pilot projects and numerous additional activities at our center in Orhaneli, Bursa. The standout development of the period was moving beyond the routine work run solely in Orhaneli: for the first time, our summer-camp model met a different district in İspir, Erzurum, and we developed corporate partnerships with institutions such as the Bursa Provincial Directorate of National Education, Robert College, Uludağ University and Bayer Türkiye.

Learning in the Museum Activities: In March–April 2025 we held 3 activities at Karıncalı and Fevzipaşa primary schools. At the Karıncalı Museum and the Taş Mektep Culture Center, children transformed the museum into a learning environment through drama work; in a separate session, mothers had the same experience. Two volunteer trainers from the Bursa office of the Contemporary Drama Association and one KODA volunteer ran the workshops. Together with two classroom teachers, we reached 46 students and 7 mothers.

Village Schools Memory and Artwork Exhibition: Between April and June 2025, 184 students from 9 village schools exhibited their paintings in the district square. The process began with a pilot poster workshop led by 7 volunteer students from Robert College and continued with village-school painting workshops run by 14 teacher candidates from Uludağ University and 2 KODA interns. In cooperation with Orhaneli Municipality, the exhibition opened its doors for a day and a half beside the neighborhood market and welcomed around 200 visitors. All the exhibited paintings were converted into a digital archive and published as a virtual exhibition on the KODA website, with separate virtual galleries for the artwork of Grade 1–2 and Grade 3–4 students.

You can access the virtual exhibition of 1st and 2nd-grade students' artwork here, **here**, and the virtual exhibition of 3rd and 4th-grade students' artwork **here.**

Orienteering: This pilot, run in cooperation with the Bursa Provincial Directorate of National Education's Active Living, Play and Skills Activities Project (HOBA), consisted of 2 components. In June 2025, under the voluntary leadership of Senior Coach Ayten Bozoğlu, we carried out a Grid Orienteering activity with a total of 61 children at Erenler and Termik Santral primary schools. In April 2025 we shared games drawn from different cultures, hands-on, with 21 classroom and pre-school teachers; led by the KODA team, the games were played with 74 students from 6 primary and 2 lower-secondary schools. The games continued to be used at the Gümüşpınar Children's Festival and in summer activities.

Rural Summer Camp with Young Volunteers and Children: We carried the summer-camp model we have run in Orhaneli since 2022 to İspir, Erzurum for the first time in 2025. In July 2025, in cooperation with the İspir & Pazaryolu Federation of Associations (İSPADER) and İspir Municipality, 11 young volunteers spending the summer in İspir ran a 9-day camp with 2 separate groups of children; around 40 children attended regularly. In August 2025, 8 volunteer teacher candidates who had completed our First Step to the Village Program ran an 8-day Orhaneli camp; in this way we worked with a total of 40 children, both in the district center and in Göynükbelen village. The two camps reached 20 volunteers and 80 children. Once the camps were complete, we finalised the 4-day facilitator training and the 8-day camp flows and prepared the Rural Summer Camp with Young Volunteers and Children document. Alongside the pilot projects, we also held activities for teachers and parents.

Movement and Play Training: Between February and April 2025, in cooperation with the Bursa Provincial Directorate of National Education's HOBA project, we held 2 separate training sessions under the guidance of Cavit Yeşildağ and Mehmet Ateş. 21 classroom and pre-school teachers experienced, by playing together, games suitable for children at different levels — inclusive games that steer towards cooperation rather than competition. Three of the trained teachers shared the games with 60 students; we played the games shared in the training with 74 students from 6 primary and 2 lower-secondary schools. Teachers said the training contributed both to their personal well-being and to their professional repertoire, and that they could now reach, through a different door, students they had been unable to reach in class.





Bursa Culture and Arts in Education Meeting: In February 2025, at the Nilüfer Social Entrepreneurship Center, we came together with 15 stakeholders from 11 different institutions in cooperation with Kültürakt, the Yekpare Social Enterprise Union and Nilüfer Municipality. The event's focal question was: How can we increase access to culture-and-arts activities for children living in Bursa neighborhoods that lack quality educational opportunities? The main proposals arising from the group work included workshops that turn the museum into an experiential space, drama- and story-based cultural education, bringing cultural activities to areas with limited access to art through mobile units, a process-oriented approach to protecting cultural heritage, and making monitoring and evaluation and social-impact measurement a requirement for sustainability.

Curious Classrooms in the Village — KODA and Bayer Türkiye Partnership: In this project, realized with Bayer Türkiye, we aimed to develop science literacy in rural areas through village-school teachers. The Teacher Implementation Guide for Curious Classrooms in the Village, prepared in cooperation with Eğlenceli Bilim (Fun Science), contains 12 science-experiment modules based on the 5E learning model. We ran the pilot at Göynükbelen and Akalan primary schools over 6 weeks in November–December 2024 with 32 students, and published the guide as open source in February 2025.

Music Training and Classroom Practice: In February 2025, in cooperation with Müzikist, we held music training for village teachers at the KODA Implementation Center. Afterwards, with the support of volunteer students from Uludağ University, we carried out exemplary in-class practices at schools and prepared the Music Education Guide for Village Teachers.

Nature Walk with Teachers

In line with survey responses from teachers, in April 2025 we organized a walk in the nature of Orhaneli, accompanied by KODA volunteer guide Yüksel Esen. Starting from Orhaneli's historic Taş Mektep, the route ended at Elma Pınarı, Çınarlı Dere, Şükriye, Kabaklar Kayası and the Kocasu Stream.

Anatolia Full of Art Village Festival: In June 2025, at the Gümüşpınar village picnic area, organized by Müzikist and hosted by KODA, we held a day-long village festival. Students from Gümüşpınar and Termik primary schools took part. Contributors to the festival included Müzikist, Oyun Atlası, Çekmece, Zeynep Çinkay, Niloya, Yer Community, the Amateur Radio Operators' Society, Ahmet Ali Arslan, Evrencan Gündüz and M-Collective. Bringing to the stage the music content they had worked on with their teachers at school, the children experienced the excitement of giving a concert for the first time; with workshops offered to children in different areas by various civil-society organizations and with the participation of villagers, an exemplary festival model emerged during the end-of-year activity week.

High-School Students' Volunteering Weekend: In April 2025, in cooperation with Robert College's social-responsibility unit, 14 volunteer students and 2 teachers spent a weekend in Göynükbelen village. They helped the villagers with garden work, hoed the vineyards and blueberry fields, and held an art workshop with the children.

Voices from the Field

"In terms of physical activity, for instance, the children we usually observed hanging back in our own lessons could succeed here because numerical and visual intelligences came to the fore. They may have gained a distinct confidence."
— Classroom teacher, Erenler

"Before the camp, I felt inexperienced about my professional development. Thanks to KODA, I began to trust myself again. I realized that teaching is not just transferring knowledge, but building a bond from the heart."
— Volunteer teacher candidate, Orhaneli Summer Camp

"I'll do this kind of work in the years ahead too. We got to learn village life on the spot and to use the village's blessings for education. In other words, we combined the lesson with village life. It was wonderful."
— Classroom teacher, Termik Santral Primary School

"What struck me was that the experiments cost very little while sparking exactly the opposite — a very high level of curiosity — which made me want to try them in my classroom right away."
— Classroom teacher, Curious Classrooms in the Village

Learnings

The monitoring and evaluation results offered us mutually reinforcing learnings:

- We saw that one of the most important factors determining the impact of our activities with children is the profile of the volunteers running them. The volunteer profile proved more decisive than children's readiness: although the volunteer group at the Orhaneli summer camp — made up of education-faculty students and graduates — worked with a more challenging participant profile in Göynükbelen, they created an impact greater than the results in İspir.
- We saw that one-off activities create impact, but that lasting change requires these efforts to be repeated. We experienced that even one-off activities such as the Museum Activities and the Memory and Artwork Exhibition create a strong first-contact effect; but that recurring work is unavoidable for this effect to deepen.
- We saw that local partnerships directly affect the quality of projects. We experienced that camps in which we brought the support of the municipality, the muhtar and civil-society organizations to an early stage of the process concluded better in terms of both participation and implementation quality.
- We saw that cultural sensitivity is not a detail but a design principle. We experienced that even a single cultural sensitivity encountered in the Street Games work immediately affected the project's adoption — which in turn made observing local norms a structural requirement in the design of the content and activities we develop.
- We saw that the holistic impact we created in Orhaneli goes beyond the numbers. The readiness of children who had taken part in our Orhaneli work many times at the start of camp, mothers coming to activities with confidence, and teachers embracing KODA as an opportunity — we experienced all of these as reflections of the relationship capital built up over the years.



4.2. Research and Advocacy

The Need We Took to Heart

KODA's fieldwork has been shaped over nearly a decade of experience with thousands of teachers, teacher candidates and parents. We took to heart disseminating this accumulated experience — and the impact of our programs — in a data-driven way. The focus of this unit is to be an independent and credible voice in the field of rural education, to strengthen our research capacity, and to bring the advocacy work grounded in KODA's experience together with both internal and external stakeholders.

For Whom?

We aim to reach all stakeholders in need of data- and experience-based knowledge — above all the public institutions, civil-society organizations, academics, teachers and decision-makers working in the field of rural education.

What Happened This Year?

The 2024–2025 period was a year in which the research and advocacy unit both produced concrete outputs and laid the groundwork for long-term capacity-building.
Rural Education Article Series: We published a 7-part article series turning our eight years of field experience into a systematic text. The parts of the series addressed, in turn, the following questions:

- Is There Still a Village (School) in Türkiye?
- What Does the Village School Mean for the Village?
- Multigrade Classrooms and Bussed Education
- The Teacher's Educational Journey
- Being a Teacher in the Village
- Certain They Don't Belong, Determined to Contribute: Classroom-Teaching Graduates Working as Paid (Contract) Teachers
- The Role of Families in Rural Education

In each part of the series we did not merely define the problem but offered examples and recommendations from our field experience.

Advocacy Notes: As a concrete output of our field-monitoring work, we prepared 2 comprehensive advocacy notes this period.

> **Cleanliness and Hygiene Conditions in Village Schools:** At the start of the 2024–2025 academic year, the cleanliness and hygiene conditions of schools featured prominently on the national agenda. However, this debate did not encompass village schools. Our advocacy note aimed to fill this gap: the importance of clean learning environments, the current situation in rural areas, and the extra burdens on village teachers — from lighting stoves to sweeping classrooms — drawing on in-depth interviews with 2 teachers from Antalya and Muş.

Supporting Families in Rural Areas: Prepared through the lens of Sustainable Development Goal 4, this advocacy note addressed the barriers to families' participation in rural educational processes and the role of families in children's holistic development. Under the headings of academic achievement, holistic development and rural-specific challenges, it brought together literature and field findings.

Research Partnerships and Academic Networks: This year research partnerships advanced across multiple channels.

- We submitted 3 separate project applications under TÜBİTAK's 2209 scheme: measuring the impact of First Step to the Village Program (FSVP) practices against a control group, with Uludağ University; mapping village schools suitable for teaching practice; and measuring FSVP's impact on children, with Aydın Adnan Menderes University.
- With Fatma Karaçoban of Çukurova University, we prepared a poster-presentation application for ECER'25 (European Conference on Educational Research) based on the results of ASKDEP; we also took part as a speaker in the multigrade-classrooms panel at the conference.
- With academics from Çukurova University, a qualitative study on parent participation in rural areas was launched; we took part in the process as interviewer support and as advisors.
- With Büşra Yılmaz of İstanbul Medeniyet University, we launched a collaboration for a term paper and subsequently a master's thesis on Orhaneli, Bursa.
- With Dr. Cath Gristy of Plymouth University, we held partnership discussions on rural education at the international level.

KODA Monitoring and Evaluation Infrastructure and Field Research Support Team: This year we placed importance on building our institutional capacity in monitoring and evaluation processes. We completed the KODA Program Monitoring and Impact Evaluation Guide. The Field Research Support Team (FRST) we established this period took part in 2 orientations on research methods and techniques and undertook 2 concrete pieces of work: teacher interviews for the monitoring and evaluation of the Teacher Communities Program and the First Step to the Village Program; and researching the reasons for absenteeism among teachers who enrolled in the Teacher Communities Program but did not attend the first meeting. As of December 2024, the team reached an active structure of 9 people.

International Network Participation: This year we turned our goal of joining an international network focused on rural education into a concrete step, with the establishment of the Türkiye Rural Regions Hub within the EdHeroes Network. We took part in a rural-education session at the EdHeroes Global Forum and made contact with international academics and practitioners.

5. Institutional Development

5.1. Communications and Resource Development

In 2024–2025 we focused on announcing to wider audiences the work we carry out so that children in villages can access a better education, on strengthening our bonds with supporters, and on growing our resource-development capacity. While increasing our visibility across digital channels, we multiplied awareness of and support for rural education through corporate partnerships and donation campaigns.

Newsletters and Digital Communication

We maintained regular communication with our community by publishing issues 67–79 of our monthly newsletter, Rüzgâr Gülü (Weathervane). In September 2024, following the loss of Narin — which deeply shook public opinion — we shared a special newsletter drawing attention to children's right to live a safe life, and invited all individuals and institutions to take up their responsibility for protecting children. We reached around 3,000 subscribers with our monthly Rüzgâr Gülü newsletter, seeing it not merely as an announcement tool but as a way to build a regular and heartfelt bond with our stakeholders. By opening our WhatsApp channel, we offered our followers a new communication channel.

Throughout the year we pursued regular, story-focused communication on our social-media accounts, which increased both our follower base and our reach. Making regular story-sharing a habit and increasing our Instagram Reels content raised our reach especially in the spring; in May and June 2025 we reached hundreds of thousands of accounts, achieving the year's highest engagement figures. We positioned LinkedIn as a channel for regularly sharing content to reach potential donors and partner institutions, preparing content specifically for it. By starting to share our newsletters on LinkedIn as well, we strengthened our corporate visibility. On Facebook, we increased our reach by sharing more frequently.





Running Events and Individual Giving

This year we turned running events into a strong meeting point for both visibility and resource development. In the campaigns we ran through the “Run for Good” (İyilik Peşinde Koş) platform, our volunteer runners raised donations to support village teachers.

At the 11th Eker I Run in Bursa in October 2024, we supported our runners running for children in the villages with our #YourNameOnTheBoard (#TahtadaAdınOlsun) campaign. At the 46th İstanbul Marathon (Türkiye İş Bankası) in November 2024, our volunteers ran for #BetterEducationInVillages (#KöydeDahaİyiEğitim). We realized the year's most comprehensive campaign at the Runtalya Marathon on 6 April 2025; our founder and General Coordinator Mine Ekinci and our volunteers ran for village teachers, and we reached our goal of covering the annual training cost of 200 village teachers. In April 2025 we came together again with our runners to review the experience and discuss new marathon plans.

We ran the running campaigns as a process in which every stage was carefully planned: from obtaining fundraising permits to one-to-one communication with campaign-opening runners, from the stand area to live donation updates, from social-media kits to sending T-shirts and certificates of appreciation, and from pre- and post-run meetings. We stood by our runners at every step. The relationships we built with corporate running teams and individual runners also strengthened the resource-development base for the periods ahead.

Corporate Partnerships and Supporters

This year too, we grew our rural-education work through valuable corporate partnerships. Various private-sector organizations, foundations and individual donors provided support — alongside general donations — for specific programs such as the Teacher Communities, summer camps, children's workshops and the Rural Education and R&D Center. In the "Curious Classrooms in the Village" project, run under Bayer Türkiye's sponsorship, we completed the pilot of twelve experiments supporting science literacy, held the launch in İstanbul in November 2024, and shared the guide we had prepared with teachers.

Donor Relations and Appreciation

This year, too, we treated our relationship with donors not merely as an exchange of support but as a sustainable bond. We structured our donor-appreciation processes to strengthen communication with regular donors and to send personalised certificates and thank-you content to special-occasion donors and our runners. We kept our bonds alive through regular meetings with our critical stakeholders and major donors. We again focused on increasing the in-kind support we receive from private-sector organizations and held new discussions.

Media Visibility and Content Production

To bring KODA's story and impact to wider audiences, this year we carried out various media partnerships and content projects. With the opportunity provided by İstanbul Bilgi University, we produced a program recording — featuring our founder and General Coordinator Mine Ekinci and our Education Coordinator Cavit Yeşildağ — recounting KODA's founding and the work it has carried out since 2016. We prepared an article series on the themes of rural education, sustainability and ecological literacy. Drawing on our eight years of experience, we disseminated the series in cooperation with Fayn; an article by our First Step to the Village Program Coordinator Öykü Kocaman, titled "The Rule of Exceptions: Let Us Return to Our Village," was published in EKOIQ magazine. With the support of the Civil Society Development Center (STGM), we shared our video "Rural Education After the 6 February Kahramanmaraş Earthquakes." The Social-Emotional Learning Poster we prepared became one of the most popular pieces of content on our website.

To promote ASKDEP, we carried out a field shoot in Hatay and Adıyaman and prepared the program's promotional video and visual content with the voluntary contribution of the AWL agency.

Görünürlük ve Paydaş Buluşmaları

ERG ve Buradayız Hatay ile katıldığı "Eğitime Erişimdeki Engeller" panelinde kırsalda eğitime erişimde yaşanan zorlukları anlattık. Kale Grubu'nun Çanakkale'de düzenlediği "Hayata Değer Üniversite Buluşmaları"nda kırsalda nitelikli eğitim yolculuğumuzu paylaştık. Vodafone Gönüllülük Günü kapsamında Vodafone çalışanlarıyla bir araya gelerek KODA'yı anlattık. Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Kariyer Bilgi Günü'nde ve 12. Kamu Politikaları Analizi Çalıştayı'nda kırsalda eğitime dair çalışmalarımızı aktardık.

5 Aralık 2024'te 8. KODA Doğum Günü'nü çevrim içi bir buluşmayla topluluğumuzla birlikte kutladık. Nisan 2025'te "Birlikte Hatırlayalım, Birlikte Konuşalım", Mayıs 2025'te ise "Sinemadan İlhamla Eğitim, Hayatta İz Bırakan Anılar" başlıklı Topluluk Buluşmalarında bir araya geldik. Şubat 2025'te ise KODA ekibi olarak yüz yüze ekip buluşmamızı gerçekleştirdik.

5.2. Organizational Developments

Keeping our changing needs in view, we reorganized our organizational structure. During the year, Arzu Özdemirci joined our team as Corporate Partnerships and Donor Relations Unit Coordinator, Hakan Akın as Volunteer Administrative Affairs Officer, Aysun Hartevioğlu as Education Unit Coordinator, Gözde Polatkal as R&D Unit Coordinator, and Melda Nur Süleymanoğlu as Resource Development Officer.

5.3. Volunteering Activities

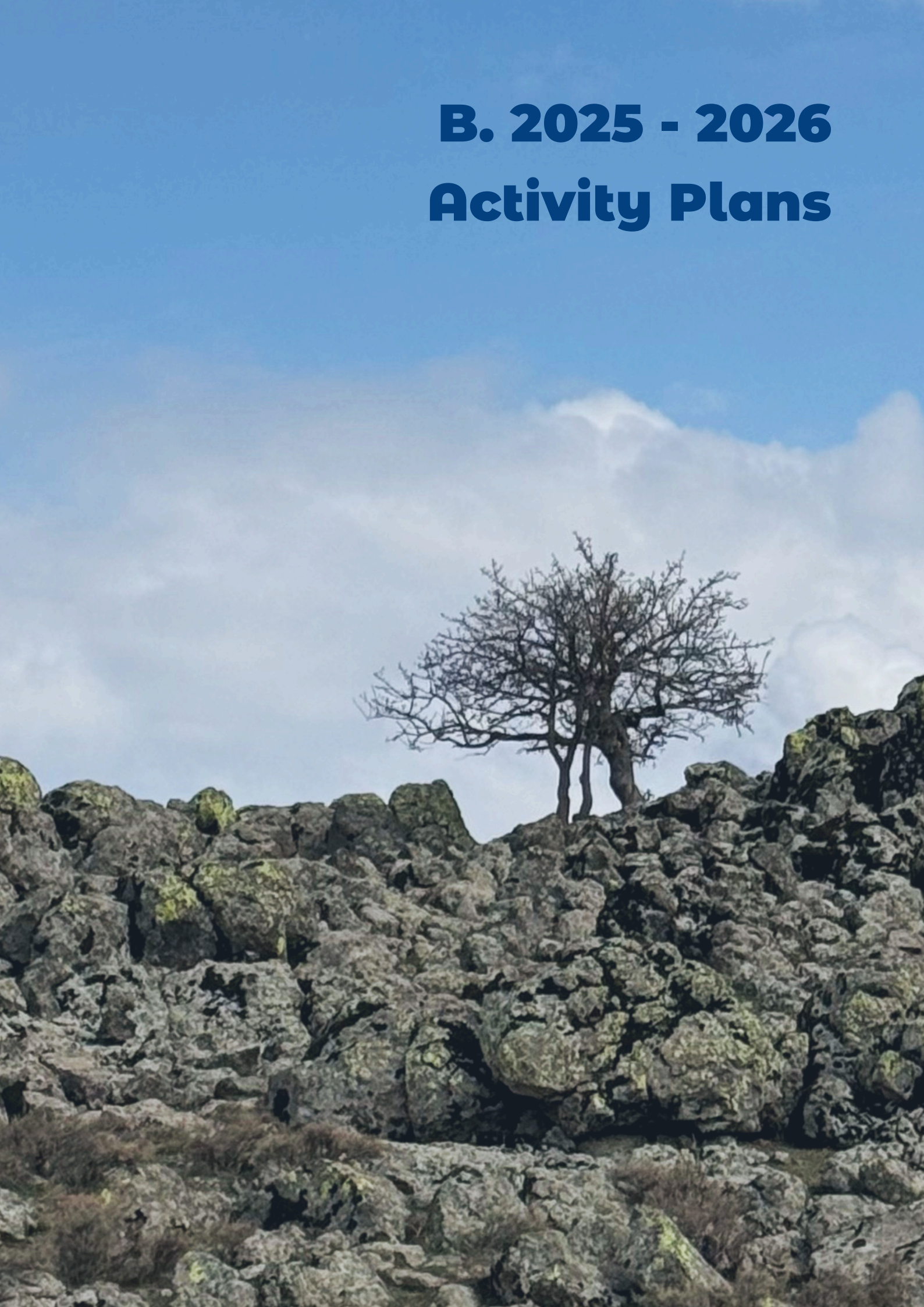
We carried out our work of ensuring a better education for children in villages together with the volunteers who stood by us throughout the year. This year our volunteers contributed labor and energy to KODA across many areas — from donation campaigns to corporate partnerships, and from administrative processes to fieldwork. Our volunteer runners supported children's education in the villages by running for village teachers and children at the 46th İstanbul Marathon and the 2025 Runtalya Marathon.

We held our community-stakeholder gatherings online throughout the year:
March 2025 — KODA's Recent Developments and Three-Year Strategy Meeting
April 2025 — Let Us Remember and Talk About Our Memories Together Meeting
May 2025 — Education Inspired by Cinema, Memories That Leave a Mark on Life Meeting
June 2025 — Let's Have Fun, Learn and Refresh! Meeting





B. 2025 - 2026
Activity Plans



The learnings we gained from the field in 2024–2025 shaped the roadmap for the year ahead too. In 2025–2026, as we grow our programs, we aim to preserve quality, deepen our sphere of impact, and give our rural-education work a more sustainable structure.

Teacher Communities Program

We will continue to strengthen the communities in which teachers working in villages and rural neighborhoods can learn from one another, build solidarity and sustain their professional development together. We will keep reaching new teachers, supporting the sustainability of existing communities, and multiplying spaces where teachers can produce solutions to local needs together among our priorities. To increase the program's impact, we will focus on improving community meetings, field visits and training processes, and on building models that are more responsive to teachers' needs, more participatory and more flexible.

Our priorities for 2025–2026:

- Reaching more teachers in existing regions.
- Piloting one of the new community models designed by the Responsible Teachers at the Community Workshop in one community; ensuring the sustainability of at least two communities through a different partnership model.
- Strengthening the structure in which Responsible Teachers take more initiative and become more autonomous; sustaining the Responsible Teachers' Orientation Camp and in-year support meetings to nurture motivation, keep values alive and support continuity; completing and disseminating the Guide to Establishing and Sustaining Communities.
- Diversifying training topics according to teachers' current needs and expanding corporate partnerships.
- Leveraging the growing recognition gained through mainstream media to strengthen the program's visibility among teachers and Directorates of National Education.

Post-Disaster Rural Education Support Program

We will continue to support teachers working in the affected regions professionally and social-emotionally, and to contribute to children's learning processes through a mentoring and community-based learning model. As we grow the program, we will focus on preserving its quality and on making the model more sustainable and scalable by strengthening the learnings gained from the field.

Our priorities for 2025–2026:

- Preserving quality while growing the program in the 2025–2026 academic year — advancing towards a target of 120 mentees, 60 mentors, 15 mentor advisors and 9 social-emotional learning (SEL) trainers in direct reach, and building a structure capable of indirectly supporting around 1,800 students.
- Updating the Mentoring and SEL Handbooks with learnings from the field and turning them into a transferable model.
- Strengthening the roles of mentor advising and SEL training; sustaining supervision and deepening meetings on a regular basis.
- Continuing to integrate disaster-focused content into the program and to sustain disaster-specific workshops.

First Step to the Village Program

We will continue to prepare teacher candidates for village teaching.

We aim to sustain the program by developing partnerships with new universities. While preserving the program's hands-on structure, we will develop new content to strengthen candidates' knowledge and experience of rural education. By supporting the academic network, alumni network and digital content we have built more systematically, we aim to create a learning community where candidates can maintain their bond with KODA after graduation too.

Our goals for the First Step to the Village Program:

- Reaching 650 more students and building partnerships with new universities.
- Sustaining the thirteen-week program structure for classroom-teaching students in education faculties; prioritizing the comprehensive model that combines theory lessons at university with four workshop practices in village schools.
- Maintaining regular communication with alumni participants and supporting teachers beginning their careers in rural areas through KODA programs.

Rural Education and R&D Center (Bursa, Orhaneli)

We will continue to strengthen the Center as a learning space where new practices are developed, tested and disseminated. In this scope we will work on new models such as open-air learning spaces, place-based education practices, ecological-literacy work and the Rural Education Support Box. By assessing the results of the pilots, we will develop scalable models that can be adapted to different regions. Our supporting plans:

- Creating social spaces for teachers and organizing introductory work for newly arriving teachers.
- Diversifying new education programs and activities; sustaining the Curious Classrooms in the Village project.
- Producing an improved second version of the Curious Classrooms in the Village Guide and creating video content on science literacy for open access.
- Building an open-air learning space that can be replicated by other districts and villages.
- Completing the content preparation of the Rural Education Support Box and making it ready for implementation.

We also plan to develop and take steps to scale up the Rural Summer Camp with Young Volunteers and Children model, whose pilot we ran in summer 2025. Shaped around the themes of nature, art, play, teamwork and social-emotional learning, this model aims to increase rural children's access to quality learning experiences while creating a strong implementation and learning space for teacher candidates and young volunteers. Our priority goals to this end:

- Building a modular camp format shaped around the themes of nature, art, play, teamwork and social-emotional development, adaptable to local needs; reaching children aged 7–11 living in the district center and villages.
- Preparing the young volunteers who will serve as facilitators (teacher-candidate university students and university students in the implementation region) through a facilitator training.
- Forming the camp-leader role from young people who served as facilitators in previous years and giving this role a periodic structure.
- Planning to increase the number of camps gradually.
- Building partnerships with municipalities, hometown associations, local civil-society organizations and muhtars; pursuing sponsors and local support for each camp.
- Linking the program to the design of the First Step to the Village Program to strengthen continuity between the two.

Research, Content Development and Advocacy

We aim to make our field experience in rural education more visible and accessible. In the coming period we plan to conduct new research on the role of families in educational processes, the local mechanisms that support children's development, place-based education practices, and the current needs of rural education. At the same time, by developing digital educational materials, video series and briefing notes, we will share our field knowledge with wider audiences. Our priority goals to this end:

- Establishing a rural-education committee and increasing international partnerships.
- Strengthening the implementation steps of the KODA Child Safeguarding Policy Document with feedback from the field and improving its applicability.
- Focusing on resilience in education by conducting studies on natural disasters and rural resilience.
- Producing sustainable projects for the development of village schools.

Stronger Partnerships and a Wider Sphere of Impact

In the coming period we aim to deepen the partnerships we have built with local governments, universities, directorates of national education, civil-society organizations and volunteers. We aim not only to reach more people but to build a stronger ecosystem that supports rural children's access to quality education, learns from the field and shares what it learns.

KODA Budget, August 2024 – July 2025

Income for the August 2024 – July 2025 Period	
Individual donations	1.522.162,17
Corporate donations	3.675.082,51
International funds / grants	16.208.699,38
Domestic funds / grants	4.222.500,00
EU grant	891.848,44
Financial income	1.430.614,85
Other income	77.405,03
Fundraising (charitable collection)	2.475.811,36
Surplus carried forward	4.208.336,09
Total	**34.712.459,83**
Expenditure for the August 2024 – July 2025 Period	
Program-related expenditure	**23.503.802,95**
Post-Disaster Rural Education Support	8.563.680,35
Teacher Communities	5.640.247,21
First Step to the Village	4.108.244,73
Orhaneli field expenditure	2.484.954,00
Rural Family Studies	1.079.723,00
Curious Classrooms in the Village	832.998,47
STGM grant fund	290.688,45
Other program-related expenditure	219.892,74
Summer Camp (Orhaneli)	283.374,00
General administrative expenses	**6.293.193,52**
Total:	**29.796.996,47**
Surplus for the period	**4.915.463,36**

The budget for the August 2024 – July 2025 activity period was realized as shown above. A surplus of 4,915,463 TRY was carried over to the new period, part of which has been transferred for projects continuing in the next period. Because the activity period is planned as August–July so as to encompass the academic year, the budget period runs from August to July. However, the Independent Audit is conducted annually according to the fiscal-year calendar.

The Independent Audit report for 2024 is also available on our website.



Thank You!



To the Public Institutions We Worked With,

Afyon Emirdağ District Directorate of National Education
Adıyaman Tut District Directorate of National Education
Batman Provincial Directorates of National Education
Bingöl Provincial Directorates of National Education
Bursa Provincial Directorates of National Education
Diyarbakır Provincial Directorates of National Education
Gaziantep Provincial Directorates of National Education
Hatay Antakya District Directorate of National Education
Kars Provincial Directorates of National Education
Mardin Provincial Directorates of National Education
Muş Varto District Directorate of National Education
Şanlıurfa Provincial Directorates of National Education
Şanlıurfa Birecik District Directorate of National Education
Şanlıurfa Siverek District Directorate of National Education
Şırnak İdil District Directorate of National Education
Ministry of National Education Directorate General for Teacher Training and Development.

Adıyaman University
Amasya University
Burdur Mehmet Akif Ersoy University
Bursa Uludağ University
Dicle University
Ege University
Erzincan Binali Yıldırım University
Fırat University
Gazi University
Hacettepe University
Harran University
Kastamonu University
Kırşehir Ahi Evran University
Kütahya Dumlupınar University
Muş Alparslan University
Trakya University
Van Yüzüncü Yıl University
Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University

To Our Supporters,

- Bayer Türk Kimya San. Ltd. Şti
- Dalyan Foundation
- Ekol Vakfı
- EMpower-The Emerging Markets Foundation
- Fiba Yenilenebilir Enerji
- Hope and Aid Direct
- Karl Kahane Foundation
- Patika.dev
- Oskim Otomotiv San. ve Tic. A.Ş.
- Sekom İletişim Sistemleri A.Ş.
- Sivil Toplum için Destek Vakfı (STDV)
- Suna ve İnan Kıraç Vakfı
- Sivil Toplum Geliştirme Merkezi (STGM) Hibe Fonu
- Tatko Otomobil Lastik ve Makine Tic. A.Ş.
- Turkish Philanthropy Funds
- Türkiye Mozaik Foundation
- Vehbi Koç Vakfı
- Yalman Ailesi

To Our In-Kind Supporters,

- Euromessage
- Spiky.ai
- Türk Hava Yolları (THY)

To Our Corporate Teams Running for Better Education in the Village,

- CISCO
- Çitlembik Montessori Anaokulu
- Socar Türkiye
- Tchibo

We thank the entire KODA Community that stood with us throughout the 2024–2025 period.

TÜHİD, Golden Compass (Altın Pusula)

The communications campaign we carried out for our Teacher Communities Program received an award in the Corporate Responsibility – Education category at the 20th Golden Compass Awards, organized by the Turkish Public Relations Association (TÜHİD).

Ashoka

Mine Ekinci and KODA joined the Ashoka Fellows Network in 2019.

İbrahim Bodur Social Entrepreneurship Award

Mine Ekinci and KODA came second at the İbrahim Bodur Social Entrepreneurship Awards in 2017.

Açık Açık Platform

KODA is a member of the Açık Açık Platform.
Its financial information can be accessed via the platform's website.







KODA

Köy Okulları Değişim Ağı

