

**İpek Ilıcak Kayaalp: “We’re glad to be collaborating with UNICEF on this critical project, extending our help to those affected by the earthquake.”**

In the wake of the devastating earthquakes that struck Gaziantep-Kahramanmaraş, Türkiye in February 2023, UNICEF partnered with Rönesans Group to provide essential services and support to children, adolescents and families impacted by the disaster. UNICEF and Rönesans have collaborated to set up Child, Adolescent, and Family Support Hubs (Birlikte) within the temporary living spaces constructed by Rönesans in Malatya, one of the eleven cities affected the most by the earthquakes in Türkiye, in order to protect children and ensure their mental health psychosocial well-being, and overall development.

Rönesans Holding, the conglomerate’s top investment entity, which is headquartered in Ankara, Türkiye, responded rapidly to the disaster, promptly constructing temporary living spaces in two cities in Türkiye, Malatya and Adıyaman. Carefully designed with the wellbeing of the most vulnerable members of society top of mind, especially women and children, these temporary living spaces have since become vital for those affected.

Since the 6th of February earthquakes, UNICEF has been working round the clock to provide services to children and families affected. Services provided by UNICEF have helped to ensure more than 405,600 children could return to formal and non-formal education and provided psychosocial support to over 862,000 children and carers. To date, UNICEF and its partners have established 53 child, adolescent, and family support hubs and spaces in the affected area.

During a recent joint field visit, Paolo Marchi, UNICEF Representative to Türkiye a.i. stated: “The earthquakes have profoundly affected and changed the lives of many children and left them with traumatic physical and psychological consequences. Rönesans Holding's support enables us to extend psychosocial services in safe spaces to children, adolescents, and their caregivers. Such partnerships embody the spirit of solidarity and collective action. With Rönesans Holding, we aim to create a lasting impact on the lives of the affected children and their families.”

In Malatya, UNICEF and Rönesans created centers for children, adolescents, and women including nurseries, a psychological counselling, sports & music centres for young people, social facilities, and study spaces.

İpek Ilıcak Kayaalp, Chair of the Board of Directors of Rönesans, who was recently invited to the Business Advisory Board at UNICEF Türkiye, said: “We’re glad to be collaborating with UNICEF on this critical project, extending our help to those affected by the earthquake. Our goal is to ensure that the temporary living spaces prioritise the well-being of the most vulnerable segments of our society, with special attention paid to the needs of women, children, and youth. At Rönesans, our objective is to provide not only immediate relief but also to have a long-term impact that extends far beyond the initial response. We are committed to offering assistance and support for years to come in the aftermath of this tragedy, with far-reaching implications for the region and its population.”

Aiming to create a sense of community and belonging for all residents, the temporary living spaces constructed and designed by Rönesans already serve over 10,000 people across Malatya and Adıyaman, serving as transitional structures to bridge the gap between immediate response and sustained support.

Having worked with many other partners in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, Rönesans also created safe zones and provided baby care rooms, playgrounds, special education support for children with disabilities and a children's cinema. As well as focusing on emergency humanitarian aid

during the earthquakes with an organised rapid response system that can respond quickly and effectively in times of need, Rönesans will continue to work together with UNICEF, supporting Birlikte Hubs within the temporary living spaces, and providing vital support to children and adolescent survivors of natural disasters.

[Between June 2023 and February 2024, more than 1,500 women benefited from Rönesans Holding and UNICEF-supported mental health and psychosocial support \(MHPSS\) activities at Rönesans Holding Malatya Yaşam Kent, with approximately 5,000 hours of sessions provided during this period.](#)

### **About Rönesans Group**

Rönesans Holding, the conglomerate's top investment entity headquartered in Ankara, is the 38th largest international contracting company globally and the 9th largest in Europe. With operations spanning 30 countries across Europe, Central Asia, and Africa, including subsidiaries such as Ballast Nedam in the Netherlands and Heitkamp Industrial Solutions GmbH in Germany, Rönesans has been operating as the main contractor and investor successfully for 30 years in construction, real estate development, healthcare and energy. Putting resilience and growth through innovation at the core of the company, with a priority on sustainability and social development, Rönesans has developed projects supporting students with scholarships, academic platforms and initiatives; been a signatory of the UN Global Compact since 2015; and a signatory of the UN Women's Empowerment Principles since 2016.

Rönesans Holding, under the leadership of its president, Erman Ilıcak, along with its partners GIC, Meridiam Infrastructure, Sojitz, Samsung C&T, TotalEnergies, and IFC of the World Bank Group (a minority shareholder in the group), has invested more than EUR8 billion into pioneering projects globally.