MEYDAN MEETING
REPORT

We met in Meydan to talk about New Dialogue, Negotiation and Cooperation Models

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SİVİL TOPLUM SEKTÖRÜ
SİVİL TOPLUM DESTEK PROGRAMI

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INTRODUCTION

As Yaşama Dair Foundation (YADA Foundation), we held our first online meeting within the scope of the "Enhancing Civil Dialogue" project within our Meydan Meetings series, which we have been organizing to develop a new dialogue and negotiation model among CSOs. We came together online to talk about the new dialogue forms, and civil society has taken on with crises, what is learned and what needs to be understood at "Meydan Meeting" on September 28, 2020. Since 2018, to talk, listen, and discuss Turkey's issues, we come together in Meydan Meetings to observe the different problems from different perspectives and allow stakeholders from diverse backgrounds to explore topics together. We are going through a period that we have not experienced until now, where we are trying to overcome new challenges within the uncertainty. Although this extraordinary period brought unexpected amenities and opportunities; it also brought disadvantages. We have developed different strategies by planning or being obligated to prepare as a person, as an institution, as a system, and we diversified our dialogue and cooperation forms. We met in Meydan to talk about New Dialogue, Negotiation and Cooperation Models online; all these experiences we are still experiencing, make sense and discuss what we can move forward.

As the YADA Foundation, since 2005, we have been producing information on different areas of social life and turning them into practice. We research how effective CSOs are on citizens and decision-makers and try to increase their influence on the public's decisions and opinions. With the research and studies, we do, we focus on improving CSOs' ability to influence decisions and strengthen their dialogue. We aim to create common grounds where CSOs can discuss, exchange information, and establish new collaborations. We aimed to create a space where these common grounds can be formed by organizing physical and online meetings with Meydan activities. We also aimed to bring together civil society actors from different fields, views, and approaches to make these actors visible to each other. We wanted differences to be able to meet, encounter, talk and get to know each other. Thank you again for coming to Meydan Meeting to talk, listen, and discuss Turkey's issues.
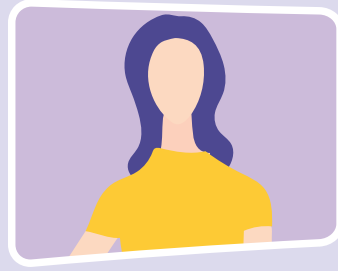
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AGENDA

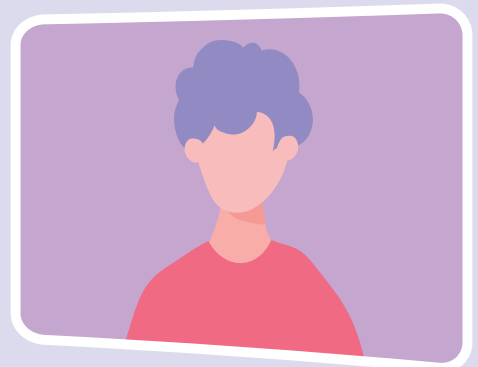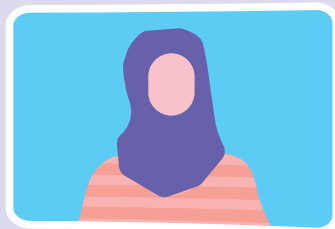|	
14.30	Opening
15.00 - 16.00	First Session: Current Situation of the Dialogue
16.00 - 17.00	Second Session: What Have We Created and What Are We Creating in the Dialogue Framework?
17.15	Closure

OPENING

On September 28, 2020; to discuss the New Dialogue, Negotiation and Cooperation Models, we came together on an online platform with civil society representatives working in different fields from 7 different provinces, namely Istanbul, Antalya, Izmir, Eskişehir, Ankara, Edirne, and Mersin. We sought answers to the following questions.

- "How was the period of the pandemic for institutions and individuals in terms of dialogue & cooperation?"

- "Will there be any differences in dialogue and cooperation after this period? If so, how will it be?"

- "What kind of methods were used during the pandemic process? What worked and what did not work? What methods are abandoned?"

The meeting started with the introduction after the participants stated their names and institutions. After the meeting, participants were asked a series of questions on menti.com to understand their experiences during the pandemic period. Participants answered the questions anonymously. The participants' responses to the question "How was the period of the pandemic when precautions were the most stringent?" was that the period was alone but active online. Different answers were given to the question "How do you evaluate your dialogue and cooperation within your environment as a person since the pandemic started?". Some said it was more active and

intense among the participants; however, a group said it was a distant and introverted period. As for the question "How do you evaluate your dialogue and cooperation as an institution since the pandemic started?", the participants answered that solidarity has increased in general, but communication has become more difficult. While the participants were evaluating the period personally, they stated that they had difficulty reaching people and civil life individually; however, they were more effective in corporate life. Some adapted to the online environment at the corporate level and thought they were ready. On the contrary, some needed support among the participants and stated that the pandemic period was less efficient than usual times. When talking about dialogue and cooperation in civil society during the pandemic period, it was mentioned that most of the participants stated that they strengthened their communication for new stakeholders; however, some institutions were moving away from cooperation. The answers given by the participants to the warming questions pointed out that the pandemic period has been experienced quite differently at both individual and institutional levels.

FIRST SESSION: CURRENT SITUATION OF THE DIALOGUE

Discussions started in the first session by dividing participants were into groups. After the participants in the groups introduced themselves briefly, they shared their experiences on the subject with the following questions' guidance.

- What is happening in your groups and communities during this period?

- Is there a bottom-up change that feeds this entire period? What is this change?

- Which dialogue and cooperation methods do you seem to be leaving after this period as a person? Which of your behavior is changing?

- Which dialogue and cooperation methods do you seem to be leaving after this period as an institution? What worked, what did not work?"

The titles from the group works can be summarized as follows;

Rights-based working associations cannot reach their target group

While it is shared that rights-based working associations have difficulties in reaching their masses and carrying out their activities, it is pointed out that CSOs that suffered from the pandemic have come together and started to establish networks. One of the prominent determinations is that more civil society networks will be found and developed in the new period.

There is a progress in civil society dialogue, compared to the earlier days of the pandemic

While it was stated that the emphasis was mainly on disadvantage and victimization at the beginning of the pandemic, it is thought that steps were taken beyond the limitations and solutions in the later stages of the pandemic. The opinion is conveyed that the question "How can we create a better environment for civil society and dialogue" is asked in the early days of the pandemic, is being studied, solutions are found, and progress is made in this direction.

Being compatible, assertive and open-minded is critical for good dialogue and cooperation

Participants share that it is desirable to be harmonious, accommodating, and empathetic in negotiation. Being patient, open-minded, understanding, friendly and assertive stand out as essential characteristics for dialogue and cooperation. In this context, the most requested adjectives added to corporate cultures are entrepreneurship and openness to change.

Dialogue, cooperation and negotiation; the areas where methods need to be learned technically

Participants share that collaboration, dialogue and negotiation techniques are skills to be learned. It is stated that the person's profile to be collaborated with, the possibility of being able to do easy work and sharing common views and resources facilitates the dialogue process.

The time concept disappears in working order

A digital transformation is taking place with the strengthening of digital participation skills. It is mentioned that the necessity of going to workplaces has begun to disappear and that solutions can be produced from home or anywhere that provides an internet connection. It is stated that the belief that face-to-face is the only way for business, education, or events to be effective and the spirit of unity has begun to disappear, so face-to-face meetings, gatherings and events have

been transferred to digital environments. It is stated that the perception of density changes and that time can be allocated for more than one thing, as participation in work, meetings, and events is mostly online.

Extraordinary times strengthen solidarity

Due to people's desire to be in communication and to be social despite all conditions, the work continues with online interviews, forums, social distance, and capacity building training with few participants. It is believed that the spirit of unity is nurtured by factors such as the spirit of solidarity brought by universal participation, online accessibility, the idea of struggling with a global problem, adapting to changing situations together, keeping our health first.

It is necessary to focus on studies that aims to increase the access of disadvantaged individuals to digital tools and equipment

It is thought that digital rights and responsibilities will increase, as it is seen that studies and procedures can be digitized. Emphasis is placed on the importance of ensuring that everyone has access to the necessary tools and equipment, so that they can continue their work and education online. It is thought that online services that are offered specially to disadvantaged groups should improve and online access should be supported.

SECOND SESSION: WHAT HAVE WE CREATED AND WHAT ARE WE CREATING IN THE FRAMEWORK OF DIALOGUE?

The second session started with the evaluation of Murat Özçelebi, the EU Affairs Expert of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Directorate for EU Affairs. In his speech, Özçelebi stated that the meetings held in the physical environment and the dialogues for the new term's preparations resulted in much more diverse results and ideas in a much shorter time; however, the same output could not be obtained online with the new normal. Özçelebi mentioned that people who are difficult to bring together can be brought together thanks to the online environment and added, "If there are existing bilateral relations, it makes it easier to maintain the online relationship, on the other hand, it is still a little more difficult to establish new relationships online." Emphasizing that the new normal and online environment is a great transition period for the public sector at the same time, Murat Özçelebi concluded his words by saying that the public sector is now more inclined to come together on online platforms.

The second session continued with the group work of the participants. Participants divided into groups and sought answers to the following questions together. Participants were asked to answer questions both as an institution and individual.

- What have you been doing about dialogue and cooperation during this period?

- Who have you approached a first time in dialogue and cooperation during this period?

- What new methods of dialogue and collaboration have you tried during this period?

- What do you doubt / cannot trust new ways of dialogue and cooperation? Why is that?

New collaborations and new business models are more welcomed

Participants state that as an institution, they approach new collaborations and new business models more warmly. In addition to local and regional cooperation, it is noted that national and international contacts have increased during this period. Some participants state that they cannot develop new collaborations institutionally because it is more difficult for their institutions to even keep up with the process.

Online activities eliminate the time and space limitations of physical activities

It is stated that online activities have advantages as well as disadvantages. It is mentioned that online methods that remove time and space limitation create opportunities to get in touch with more actors. Before the pandemic, it was difficult to attend face-to-face meetings and events due to workload; it is shared that now it is possible to devote a certain amount of time to online activities, workshops, and seminars almost every day.

The pandemic era provides the opportunity to try new methods on online platforms

It is stated that capacity building activities are organized within the institution for the use of online platforms, and physical activities are tried to be brought online. However, it is observed that some institutions are distant from online platforms for the concern that they will not be as efficient or secure as face-to-face activities. It is stated that it is challenging to create a sense of safe space in the online environment, so there is a need for new methods to be developed. It is reported that social media is used more, and CSOs are more familiar with social media platforms.

There are challenges and doubts about online methods

While working with vulnerable groups at the point of cooperation with volunteers, the difficulty of observing the relationship between being transparent and remaining anonymous is mentioned. It is said that it is challenging to include people who cannot access digital or do not believe in digital and pursue equal opportunities. Some doubts being always in the computer environment and not being able to interact with people face to face may tire people after a while and reduce the impact of the work done.

Although there are differences, learning is very common in this process

It is emphasized that the state of learning is common as a common denominator shared by people from different themes, areas, geography and backgrounds. It is stated that past methods and usual methods are put aside, and new techniques, ways and tools are learned. It is said that there is a belief that these situations will be overcome despite changing conditions.

Methods that will be permanent after the pandemic are emerging

It is stated that most of the methods used before the pandemic will change and the strategies learned in this process will be added among the usual ways. In addition to individuals who get more efficiency than traditional methods, some individuals find online methods more useful. This situation is thought to carry civil society to a future where hybrid (both online and physical) methods are used after the pandemic.

CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION

As the YADA team organizing the Meydan Meetings; we would like to thank all our participants who came together with us at Meydan to talk about "New Dialogue, Negotiation and Cooperation Models", which we organized in order to talk about the new form of dialogue and civil society that has taken on with crises, what is learned and what needs to be understood.

In the debates taking place in Meydan; we talked about the possibility of continuing this period by knowing that we have common problems. It is not by acting in line with our individual interests; but by taking action without delay, by empathizing, addressing issues in a multifaceted way, and believing in digital.

Although focusing on problems and being pessimistic was prevailing at the beginning of the process; in this meeting, we focused on how we can overcome and how we overcame negativities, we negotiated in this direction, we focused on the opportunities that the pandemic can bring.

Along with these outputs, we continue to design different activities that will support civil society's coexistence and the environment of dialogue and negotiation. In the upcoming days, we will continue to communicate with the institutions we met at the Meydan meetings we would like to see in our upcoming events. We will talk about different topics and try different methods to encourage active participation. Let's meet at Meydan!

*APPENDIX: PARTICIPANT LIST (Institutions: A-Z)

INSTITUTIONS	NAME
Aegean Contemporary Education Foundation (EÇEV)	Ersin Yüce
Atheism Association	Semih Çöre
Atheism Association	Gökçe Yetkin
Bahai Community Turkey	Suzan Karaman
Bahai Community Turkey	Hazal Oflazoğlu
Bahai Community Turkey	Sibel Karaçay
Bornova Municipality	Sedef Korkmaz Doğru
Civil Pages	Emine Uçak
ÇEVKO Environmental Protection and Packaging Waste Utilization Foundation	Fatih Arslan
Directorate for EU	Murat Özçelebi
Eskişehir Osmangazi University	Özgül Örsal
Green Newspaper - Çitta	Alper Tolga Akkuş
Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality	Serdar Karaduman
Pulsec	Caner G. Yalın
Thrace Roma and Disabled Association	Gizem Arı
Women's Human Rights - New Solutions Association	Damla Eroğlu

INSTITUTIONS	NAME
YADA Foundation	Rümeysa Çamdereli
YADA Foundation	Cihan Koral
YADA Foundation	Elif Öztürk
YADA Foundation	Ceylan Özünel
YADA Foundation	Aylin Ezgi Yılmaz
YADA Foundation	Umut Erol
Yereliz	İkbal Polat
Young Thinking Institute	Muratcan Işıldak
Young Thinking Institute	Özgün Kaplama