Testing comprehension among Arabic, Dari, Farsi, Kurmanji, and Sorani speaking migrants in Greece

The Survey

202
refugees and migrants

11
sites

3
regions of Greece

“Spoken words fly away, written words remain.”
- Male refugee in Northern Greece.

Results

88%
of respondents preferred to receive information in their mother tongue.

60%
of respondents stated that they currently receive information primarily by word of mouth.

90%
of participants couldn’t understand spoken or written English.

64%
reported that they preferred information in written or poster format as they could have a family member read it to them or reference it later.

56%
could not answer basic questions on written information even when it was provided in their mother tongue.

Save the Children

A Translators without Borders service
Good practices in communicating with communities in need

**KNOW YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE**
Ask people what language they prefer to receive information in and what dialect they speak.

**REMEMBER THAT LANGUAGE IS POLITICAL**
Many languages have been suppressed, written forms have been neglected, and education is often not provided in mother tongues.

**PROVIDE MORE INFORMATION**
64% of respondents stated they needed more information, primarily related to asylum and legal rights.

**DESIGN TO BE UNDERSTOOD**
Simplify the content, use graphics, be concise, and make sure the text is large enough to read.

**TEST YOUR INFORMATION**
Don’t rely exclusively on self-reported metrics of comprehension or literacy. 85% of our respondents said they could understand written content in their own language but our testing found only 44% could.

**VARY THE FORMAT**
Provide a combination of verbal, written, and audiovisual information to ensure you reach everyone.

Contact info@translatorswithoutborders.org to discuss language services for communicating with communities in need.