

LANGUAGE MATTERS

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.

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.

