

## Disability status, physical rehabilitation and mental health needs of refugees living in four cities in Turkey (Istanbul, Gaziantep, Kilis, and Reyhanli)

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**Background:** Turkey hosts 3.6 million Syrian refugees. Access to health care is difficult with inadequate awareness of available services, language and insufficient cultural sensitiveness representing the main barriers. The burden on expenditures by the mental and psychological consequences of conflict/displacement is high; and war injuries and poor management of chronic conditions have left many refugees with disabilities. Anxiety, grief and social isolation are prevalent in people with disability.

**Methodology:** Utilizing a mix methods approach RI has measured prevalence of disability among Syrian refugees in four cities in Turkey to evaluate refugees' health security status and needs. Disability, MH issues including anxiety and depression were calculated through the Washington Group questions and key informant interviews.

**Results:** RI plans to present results from four needs assessments and the trends on MH and PR in the centers currently supported in Turkey. Results showed a higher disability prevalence than WHO estimation (15%), with a peak

(28%) in Reyhanli. Prevalence of physical impairments and MH disorders was higher in Istanbul (19%), the south showed higher depression and anxiety. Istanbul and Reyhanli had the highest ratio of disability related to war. Despite the needs, the percentage of refugees not accessing services was high in Istanbul (20%) and Kilis (24%).

**Conclusions:** Results demonstrate the burden of MH and disabilities among refugees and documenting needs will serve for advocacy purposes to establish inclusive services.

### Speaker Biography

Andrea Patterson is the Country Director of Relief International in Turkey. She is a humanitarian response worker with over 12 years of professional work experience in managing complex program portfolios at post conflict and humanitarian response settings. She has been working in assistance for Syrian refugees in a variety of countries, overseeing innovative programmatic activities and improving the lives of refugees. She holds a Master of Science in Public Health, a Master of Arts in Human Security and Peacebuilding, and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science.

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