

Module 3 Discussion

Why language matters?



**TRANSLATORS
WITHOUT BORDERS**



Learning objective

- Discuss how we can take language into account in our various field of implementation





Marginalized language
speakers

Among the most
important people to reach
and communicate with in
an emergency

Humanitarian concern



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And among the hardest



Discussion

How does your organisation currently communicate with communities that speak multiple languages?



How do humanitarian organisations cope?



Communication in official or majority languages



Translation and interpreting by national staff or volunteers



External translation and interpreting



Combination of verbal and written or graphic communication



Verbal information gathering



Use of community members as interpreters



The risks

- Information lost in translation
- Confidentiality lost
- Community tensions amplified
- Messages skewed by power dynamics
- Vulnerability exacerbated
- Whole sections of the population unheard and potentially underserved
- Under-supported interpreters suffering poor mental health



- What questions would you ask people so that you can take language into account in your response?

Discussion

- How will you know if minority language speakers don't access your service?

- What could you do to ensure you can gather information from the different groups affected?



"The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place."



By Bernard Shaw.

"We have talked enough; but we have not listened. And by not listening we have failed to concede the immense complexity of our society—and thus the great gaps between ourselves and those with whom we seek understanding".

WILLIAM H. WHYTE.



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Questions?