

REACH Project Monthly Newsletter - January 2024

Dear REACH Partnership,

Happy New Year! We hope this newsletter finds you in good health and high spirits as we embark on another exciting year of meaningful research and collaboration. As we look back on the past month, our journey has taken us to Jordan and Turkiye, where we engaged in observations, experiences and discussions that evolved our understanding of refugee students with dis/abilities. These visits proved critical to facilitating a shared experience and context whereby all could engage in meaningful thought regarding our mutual understanding of our shared challenge.

Jordan Site Visit: Unveiling Educational Realities (November 2023)



Our team's visit to Jordan was a significant milestone in our ongoing mission to understand the educational challenges faced by refugee children with dis/abilities (RCDs). Colleagues from Kazakhstan, Canada and the United States travelled to Jordan in an effort to better understand the context of Jordan's significant experience inclusively supporting refugee children with disabilities. The itinerary was packed with insightful activities, including visiting local schools, presentations at Yarmouk University, and a visit to the Za'atri Refugee camp. These experiences allowed us to engage in meaningful contextual discussions concerning this population while directly engaging with the Jordanian context. Throughout the team's journeys in Jordan, the team expanded as multiple individuals dedicated to the education of refugee children with dis/abilities joined in discussion concerning next steps in our partnership's efforts.

Symposium in Istanbul: Bridging Global Perspectives (December 2023)



The symposium at Istanbul University was a global convergence of minds committed to making a difference in the lives of refugee children with disabilities. Distinguished speakers from around the world shared interdisciplinary studies related to people with special needs, creating an enriching dialogue that spanned diverse cultures and findings. The agenda covered a wide range of topics, from arts and disability to forced confinement and repatriation.

Connecting Global and Local Entities

At the heart of REACH is our partnership approach, designed to create nodes of interaction that bridge global and local entities. The symposium exemplified the success of this approach, with presenters joining both in person and virtually to share their expertise. Our collective goal is to not only understand the experiences of RCDs but also to identify unmet

needs and practices related to the provision of, and access to, educational services for these children.

Çanakkale Exploration: Broadening Our Horizon (December 2023)



In addition to our activities in Jordan and Istanbul, some team members had the opportunity to visit Çanakkale, Turkey. There, they met with Çanakkale University faculty and engages with local public schools. These visits facilitated further discussion concerning inclusive practices while delving into the educational landscape in the Turkish context. Discussions enabled both local and visiting participants to explore new contextual insights into the challenges faced by students with special needs and those that teach them. The Turkish context further enriched our understanding of the global educational landscape and reinforces our shared commitment to inclusivity.

Looking Forward: Advancing Understanding and Identifying Needs

As we move forward in our research, the insights gained from our visits to Jordan, Istanbul, and Çanakkale will guide our efforts to advance the understanding of children's experiences and efforts to educate all students inclusively. The visits opened new avenues for collaboration and exploration, and we are excited about the potential impact our shared efforts can have on shaping educational practices for RCDs globally.

Expressing Gratitude and Closing Remarks

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of our Jordan based experiences, the facilitation of the Istanbul symposium, and the Çanakkale explorations. Special thanks to Yarmouk University, Istanbul University and Çanakkale University for hosting these visits and to all the participants and presenters who shared their valuable insights. We look forward to the continued collaboration and progress that the coming months will bring.

Stay tuned for more updates and developments as we continue our journey with REACH. Together, we are making strides toward a more inclusive and equitable education for refugee children with disabilities.

Best Regards,

REACH