



HERA - a mobile health platform that connects refugees with existing healthcare worldwide to decrease death and disease among refugee populations

The Problem Statement

Refugee and forcibly displaced populations worldwide are projected to increase due to humanitarian conflicts and climate crises. **The UN estimates that by 2050 at least 200 million people will be displaced** from their homes. The displacement of refugees is associated with high health risks; mortality among moving populations can increase by up to 60x, particularly for pregnant women and young children. The refugees, particularly women and children, face many challenges in accessing healthcare services for themselves and their children. These challenges include **language barriers, competing demands, fear of deportation, loss of medical records, and general instability.**

Turkey has been hosting the world's largest refugee population since 2014, with **over 3.6 million Syrians** under temporary protection and over **330,000 refugees and asylum seekers** under international protection. Only **13-25% of Syrian refugees in Turkey are fully immunized**, and vaccine-preventable diseases among refugee children are rising. Refugee **women and children suffer higher mortality and morbidity** from preventable diseases. During pregnancy, **refugee women receive an average of one pregnancy checkup** - the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends at least eight.

Addressing the Challenges

The **HERA Inc.** started in 2018 as a mobile health intervention project and is now a US-registered non-profit organization operating in the US and Turkey. **Our vision** is to decrease death and disease among refugee populations. **Our mission** is to provide a mobile health platform that connects refugee populations with existing healthcare worldwide.

As a **free downloadable app**, HERA leverages a digital health platform to **increase the uptake of preventative health services for pregnant women and immunizations for children under two years of age.** HERA application reduces demand-side barriers to accessing care by sending medical checkup and vaccination appointment reminders, centralizing medical records, and guiding users in navigating their local healthcare systems.

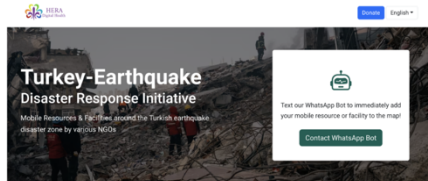
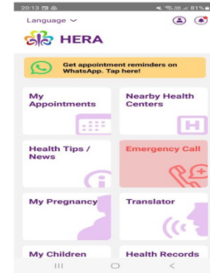
Unlike most interventions that supply medical services, we focus on **increasing demand among vulnerable populations.** We are **the only service provider** that empowers the refugees to take **ownership of their health decisions** while also affecting behaviour change in their healthcare-seeking. We also do it **at no cost to the end-users and** the vulnerable populations.

Our goals for 2022 - 2025 are to increase our user base within Turkey **from 10,000 to 50,000 – 100,000 users** and **scale up** our support for other refugee populations worldwide. We also aim to **create a sustainable partnership** with governments and international organizations willing to use the HERA app to support their refugee crises response and humanitarian aid projects globally.

Highlights from 2023

HERA Digital Health Mobile App

Ten thousand users downloaded the HERA App in 2023, 6,500 monthly visitors are visiting the website and 10,000 users. The application provides services such as appointment tracking, nearby health centers, sexual and reproductive health information, emergency calls, pregnancy follow-ups, and translation. The HERA App is available in Turkish, Arabic, Dari, Pashto and English.



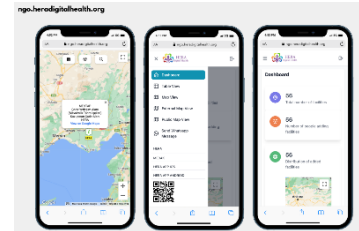
WhatsApp ChatBot

With many aftershocks still happening, mobile facilities set up by NGOs, like mobile clinics, pharmacies, toilets, etc., are constantly moving. NGOs needed a way to easily add locations of mobile facilities to a map and, for victims, to see where the facilities are at any time. After the 2023 earthquakes, we have

built a WhatsApp Chat Bot specially for field workers. Field workers can simply text our bot on WhatsApp and send their location to immediately add a mobile facility to a public map accessible by all. No app installation or special devices are required. Just a mobile phone and WhatsApp.

Afetsagliharitasi – Disaster Health Map

In Earthquake situations, it is known that aftershocks may happen. This results in the destruction of numerous public health centers. With HERA’s long history of fieldwork with displaced persons in Turkiye, we were able to rapidly mobilize our field workers and volunteers to verify, in person, the status of public health centers. With this information, we’ve created two tools: 1) a LIVE Health Center Status map – updated every 10 minutes, and 2) a Real-time doctor-patient voice translation tool in Turkish, Arabic, Dari, Pashto and English.



We give thanks to our sponsors and partners:



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 HERA App is free to download both on [Android](#) and [IOS](#).
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