Rapid Assessment of the Refugee Crisis in the Aegean Islands during August and September 2015

SolidarityNow

Athens, 25 November 2015

Foreword

Within the framework of the EEAGR08.02 Project and according to the Project's contract, a fund for bilateral relations was set aside to fund activities that encourage cooperation between actors in Greece and the Donor states or with Intergovernmental organizations.

In view of utilizing this fund in order to enhance the bilateral relations between Greece and Norway while also addressing the urgent issue of augmenting refugee and migration flows, SN proposed to the Fund Operator and the Project's donors to cooperate with selected Norwegian NGOs within the framework of the emergency crisis that is ongoing in Greece since spring 2015. This –honestly- didn't seem as the most "mainstream" suggestion for the cause. As the main means to achieve the objective. Moreover, what was broadly discussed and also partially documented up to the time the idea of a joint assessment was finally shaped and proposed was a basic exchange project between Greek and Norwegian NGO partners including a number of visits and events to touch base and establish initial lines of communication.

Still, the ground developments in Greece couldn't leave Solidarity Now's plans unaltered or our mind and hearts unchanged to the drama unfolding. Knowing that one of the main objectives of our mutual effort with EEA Grants was to ensure access to a comprehensive package of services to the mostly need and marginalized populations, we started working on a contingency plan that would combine addressing simultaneously People on the Move as well as Greek citizens' needs while adjusting to a new reality, characterized by significant refugee and migrant flows as well as by the deepening results of a national socioeconomic crisis.

Final consensus between the Project's stakeholders, rapid developments on the ground, preparation, logistics and launching at a pick period, at late August beginning of September, when the numbers of arrivals in Lesvos in particular spiked on unprecedented levels of more than 5,000 people per day, took considerable time and effort to deal with.

More specifically, SN had proposed the formation of a team of experts in order to assess the situation prevailing on selected Greek islands and come up with useful mapping, contacts and recommendations in order for Greek state and international stakeholders to better frame and plan their future moves.

Methodologically, we were thinking of using a simplified MIRA[1] methodology in order to produce a comprehensive snapshot assessment. To achieve this, the team's composition was crucial. We were targeting NRC and NPA for general know-how and support while the existing SN partners, namely PRAKSIS, ARSIS, Together for Children and Network for Children's Rights, were to contribute with specialized medical, legal, child related and psychosocial staff and tools. SN was to organize and coordinate the entire effort.

The report at hand, an initial draft of a more comprehensive document that SN will produce later in time, describes the team's efforts while also siting facts and information that was provided to the team by various sources in a limited period of time. It does finally provide snapshots of the local, regional and national authorities' response, ideas, capacities and limitations. It gives basic context related information while glimpsing at local communities' views and engagement into the response. It is not comprehensive as the context and ground situation is not comprehensive. It is descriptive. It does not indulge into further analyses on complicated issues such as asylum claims and migration policies. But it does give an idea on what is actually happening on the ground and how some systems in place -like e.g. the Public Health Sector- work. It is not critical towards the authorities and/or policies in place or any other stakeholder. Still, the mere descriptions of everyday life are revealing a deeply irrational and fragmented reality when it comes to refugees' and migrants' basic rights and issues, let along an efficient and accountable flows' management. It is not highly technical but the environment we are called to operate in, due to a pre-existing, controversial combination of limitations and potential does not require a highly technical assessment at this point.

[1] MIRA: Multisectoral Initial Rapid Assessment

We hope that our partners will find it useful.

Throughout the islands we visited, people and stakeholders were willing to engage, participate and express their views. They all devoted their time to us and we warmly thank them all for their invaluable offer.

Has finally the “bilateral project” reached its ultimate objective i.e. to cultivate and maintain cooperation between the two countries’ civil societies in view of creating new alliances and opening new, mutual roads? Well, time will tell, but at the time of the publishing of this report, approximately 4 months after the assessment visit’s end, we are happily in contact and cooperation with our NRC/NORCAP colleagues. This is a proxy indicator of success, still it is reliable enough to claim it.

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Contents

Context **p.3**
Assessment aims and methodology **p.4**
Five islands Thematic Reports **p.6**
Conclusions and Recommendations **19**
Solidarity Now Response **20**

Context

During the past ten months, the Greek islands have seen an unprecedented increase in the influx of refugees and migrants from Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Eritrea, Somalia and Iraq crossing the Aegean from Turkey. UNHCR estimates that in the first eight months of 2015 alone, Greece has received 205,000 new arrivals, out of which 91% originating from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq. Once in Greece, refugees and migrants travel to other European countries; from Athens and Thessaloniki they cross the border into FYR Macedonia and continue through the Balkans towards Northern Europe. For most, the preferred final destination is primarily Germany and Scandinavian countries.

According to UNHCR, Greece is facing an 850% increase in arrivals from January - August 2015 compared to the same period in 2014. The trend of an accelerating increase is continuing. 40% of all sea arrivals in 2015 occurred in August, over 80,600. This is 30,000 more than in July; almost double the figure of the total arrivals in 2014 (43,500).

Up-to-date arrival figures are available on UNHCR webpage "Refugees/Migrants Emergency Response - Mediterranean".

Map of the Aegean islands

More than 90 per cent of the people arriving are from refugee-producing countries, principally Syria (over 60 per cent of arrivals this year), Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia and Eritrea. The refugees cross the eastern Aegean Sea from Turkey in small, flimsy boats and inflatable dinghies. They are landing in as many as 15 different Greek islands or being rescued at sea by the Greek Coastguard. The largest arrivals have been on Chios and Samos and the Dodecanese Islands, particularly Kos and Leros.

The large numbers of refugees arriving has led to bottlenecks, as the authorities struggle to identify, register and fingerprint them. The three existing reception facilities in Chios and Samos are severely overcrowded. Refugees awaiting registration, including families with children, have no choice but to sleep in the open. In addition, many refugees landing on remote beaches, including older people and small children, have to walk for miles carrying their meagre belongings because of the lack of transport.

There is no regular provision of food or drinking water to refugees, unless they are accommodated in police-run facilities for registration and processing. In some of the islands, volunteers have asked local restaurants and bakeries for food donations to distribute to the refugees who are sleeping rough or in unused buildings.

On Kos, there are no official facilities for those awaiting registration, and conditions are particularly dire. Hundreds of women, children and men are sleeping in cramped and unsanitary conditions in an abandoned hotel.

Faced with a growing backlog of people waiting to register with the police and a deteriorating humanitarian situation, the authorities in and Kos, in cooperation with the central government, have decided to allow Syrians with valid passports to board the regular passenger ferries to Athens to be registered there.

Assessment aims and methodology

In view of enhancing bilateral relations between Greece and Norway, while also addressing the current and urgent issue of migration flows, Solidarity Now and its NGO partners in Greece in cooperation with selected Norwegian NGOs, set up a team of experts with the objective to assess the situation on the Greek islands of Rhodes, Tilos, Kos, Samos and within the framework of the current emergency.

This Assessment Report was produced as an outcome of this effort, including useful mapping, contacts and recommendations, in order for the Greek state and international stakeholders to better frame and plan their future moves.

The preparation phase and the field mission provided the opportunity to Greek and Norwegian NGOs to work together for approximately a month; to learn from each other and exchange know-how and best practices on emergency response as well as on migration policy issues. It was also an opportunity to register a crucial part of baseline data and record what is actually happening on the ground in view of more targeted and coherent responses, as well as to discuss and analyze technicalities and methods for efficient humanitarian emergency management and planning.

Physical presence on the ground and collaboration in the shape of a field mission, using adapted MIRA[2] methodology proved to be to be an effective and meaningful strategy at this crucial moment.

During the assessment, the main objective was to identify major gaps and issues that should be addressed in order to provide adequate first-line reception conditions for new arrivals, and especially for those waiting for the processing of registration in islands. The focus has been on the following themes of the MIRA Framework:

- Scope of the crisis and humanitarian profile
- Status of populations living in affected areas
- National capacities and response
- Humanitarian access
- Coverage and gaps

More particularly,

First-line reception conditions

a. enhancement of reception sites/registration centres at first entry points
b. access to information
c. WASH
d. access to temporary accommodation and materials assistance to the most vulnerable individuals
e. assistance to persons with specific needs
f. psychological enhancement trainings for governmental and non-governmental workers
g. cultural mediation services
h. interpretation services

[2] The Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment:
https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/mira_final_version2012.pdf

Thematic Reports from Five Islands

Rhodes

Map of Rhodes and Tilos islands

Rhodes is the largest of the Dodecanese islands in terms of land area and the island group's historical capital. Administratively the island forms a separate municipality within the Rhodes regional unit, which is part of the South Aegean region. The principal town of the island and seat of the municipality is Rhodes. The Municipality of Rhodes had 115,490 inhabitants in 2011. It is located northeast of Crete, southeast of Athens and just off the Anatolian coast of Turkey.

Scope of the crisis and humanitarian profile

Even though most immigrants arrive in Kos, Leros and Farmakonisi, in 2015 until August, 2, 1580 people arriving were arrested in the whole territory of the coast of Rhodes (Lindos, Megisti, Tilos & Chalki), while a total of 24 traffickers were arrested. Some of the immigrants surrender on their own, or call directly by phone asking to be rescued.

National capacities and response

The **Coast Guard** in Rhodes is on the first line, rescuing and collecting migrants and refugees at sea as well as along the coast. Staffed with 7 people in the security department and having to handle also their daily cases apart from the migrants (as they said, “they had one big ship and a corpse to deal with, while 13 immigrants were waiting in their backyard for registration”). The Coast guard deals with the first Recording of rescued, namely taking photos and personal data. In case of criminal charges, the application is sent to prosecutor, while for Syrians they file no charges for illegal entry. If there are people with criminal charges they are handed over to the Police for detention. They have limited equipment - 3 vessels at their disposal and no vessels in Tilos, a helicopter and aircraft Cessna from Frontex, as well as training from Frontex regarding illegal immigration management. The interpreter is a volunteer, an Afghani, migrant himself, living in Rhodes for the last five years. There is good cooperation with other stakeholders, the Police Force, with UNCHR and Red Cross, as well as with fishermen when and if needed, while there is lack of cooperation with the Municipality and regional authorities. As Mr. Benos explained, “they are trying by themselves and by their own means to handle the situation. They even call the interpreter late at night in order to assist them. Sometimes they call specific people again and again for help and he is not feeling very comfortable about it ("then it becomes personal"- that others help more because he is asking). They provide the refugees with milk, water and food with the help of friends, relatives and nearby cafeterias. Grave needs were noted, such as the creation of a First Reception Centre, food supplies and of someone to handle the distribution, first reception materials (masks, gloves, water, and milk).

The **Regional Police c**overs five islands, Rhodos, Tilos, Symi, Karpathos, Chalki, and testifies that “7,000 migrants arrived on the island in 2014, while until now for 2015 the number is 9,000. Even though ‘only’ 2,000 in Rhodes, a big concern is raised for Symi with already 5,000; and Tilos - where no single migrant arrived until 2013 - now there are more than 1,000”. According to the Chief Commander and Migration Police Officer, the average smugglers price for a boat trip from Turkey is 2,000 Euros (1,000 Euros if the driver is a migrant). Yet, the police’s activities that are not all related to migrants: many EU entry points, many tourists, security for inhabitants and tourists, shipping, etc. The focus on migrants/refugees includes screening/fingerprints/photo/checking of data (For EU/Schengen purposes EUDAC database-computerized), then the police sends migrants to the Court, which has to issue the document that will give them authorization to stay one month before leaving Greece (six months for Syrians). The police has a budget of 5.87 Euros per day per person to cover food costs for detained persons; they are also in charge of organising transport on ad hoc basis – the Police has only one vehicle and in some cases, migrants have to be transported at more than 90 km from the city of Rhodes. The average time to process registration of migrants/refugees is two to three days. After the registration, migrants can go to the asylum service office, but many of them do not. Pregnant women are automatically protected by Law. There is good collaboration with the Court (papers generally issued after one day), yet there is no cooperation between the mayor, NGOs. Buildings and spaces are available, but no coordination and will from municipality and citizens. The army is not helping either in terms of logistics and transportation (use of military assets possible only for fire and natural disaster). The Police is using all available in order to respond to the situation, i.e. they receive help from citizens and/or relatives for food supplies and for immigrant`s transportation from the arrival point to the police station; often using with their own pocket money and friends’ networks with no support from the local authorities. All training comes from Frontex and from Police Headquarters in Athens

The police main concerns are that a clear picture of who is doing what is lacking; that they are under staffed (350 police officers instead of the planned 450) and not adequately equipped (transport, office

equipment, not enough space for detention, no sites for temporary shelter); that there is a high influx of migrants/refugees in Symi with no reception infrastructure and limited staff available; that migrants arriving from other islands fall under Rhodes jurisdiction, such as Karystos, Symi, Chalki and Tilos; that there are no first reception services (food, water, clothing, doctors, nurses, psychologists, lawyers); that the policemen are performing, apart from their daily duties, all other procedures regarding immigrants, such as recording, screening etc.; there are no interpreters while the roles and responsibilities are blurred - everyone should play their role and take responsibility over the situation. The Protection issues which were identified include that migrants driving the boat can be accused of smuggling; there is lack of adequate capacity to screen and determine identity/nationality (until 2014 the Migration Police Officer was himself assessing asylum requests!), there is a significant problem of translation (they request NGO Metadrasi support- or trusted people from the community); that the detention facilities are stretched and overcrowded; that human trafficking is not adequately addressed (more attentive when a male adult is accompanied by children) nor referred; and that there is an ad hoc response for non-Syrians (ensuing risks that people will not have the possibility to claim asylum or risks that protection needs of non-refugees will be overlooked).

According to the Vice-President of the **Social Care department of the Region of the South Aegean,** Mr. Ilias Zografidis, the hospital works with a limited number of doctors. Even if there was an open call for doctors at the hospitals, the salary was around 800 euros per month, an amount that cannot cover the living costs of a doctor that has to move in to an island and work there. The Region provided tents for covering the needs of migrants that are hosted in the temporary settlement at old “Sfageia”; it officially applied for the establishment of a first reception center at the island allowing migrants to stay for 72 hours or 3 days according to the law. Mr. Zografidis also claimed that “Frontex doesn’t work, while in Rhodes the needs are few, the capacity is big and the response inexistent”.

Humanitarian access

The Budget **of the General Hospital of Rhodes "Andreas Papandreou"** is currently 12,5 million euros from the state budget (from 60K in 2009), total beds 334. The coverage was planned for 125,000, yet during summer season this hospital covers 500,000, including tourists (mostly), migrants and refugees.
Emergency transfers take place to to Athens (C130) or Crete (helicopter) via central national coordination for emergencies (EKEPI and EKAB). Average time needed to complete a transfer is 3 hours, while the hospital has capacity to even respond to Ebola, while It operates for emergencies 365 days a year being the only hospital in the region of Dodecanese covering all medical specializations. It has an intense unit for adults (capacity 16 beds) and for new borns, yet the new born intense unit does not function due to lack of specialized doctor and emergency transfer of new born is the priority for transfers to Athens or Crete. The total migrants/refugees that have been hospitalized since January 2015 are 129 persons. Data were not easy to extract since there were several potential definitions to register migrants/refugees (e.g. noninsured third country nationals, undocumented migrants, illegal migrants, foreigners etc.). They will only attend to the people that are hospitalized and they will exhaust their options to refer and cover needs. They will use all their contacts not only from the island but also elsewhere (Athens or Thessaloniki). They will try to refer according to the needs to NGOs or agencies in Athens and then follow up.

Emergency response (EKAB) has the capacity of three cars per day/occasionally for four. All mobile units are fully equipped. They have the capacity to respond within 10 minutes in the town of Rhodes and maximum 30 min to the furthest point of the island. They refer no more waiting time, and they are able to cover their needs. Current pace is 7-8 cases per day. There are four persons capable to pilot and do

air-transfers. There is one doctor. The rest of the personnel are trained rescuers. They lack human resources to cover the shifts accordingly. Social workers working at the hospital commented that since migration in the islands has been occurring for a long time and since this hospital started they used to move around a team of a doc and them to triage the most vulnerable cases, preferably mothers with children which they could transfer to the hospital offering shelter, food and clothing for few days. They do currently have the capacity to accommodate at the hospital (using a medical reason) maximum 30 persons, again the most vulnerable but they do not triage any more. They collaborate with Red Cross, UNHCR and Human Rights Association (Lawyers)

The facilities of the **Red Cross**, according to Mrs Delaporta, Head of Samaritans Mr Tzanos, D.head and RFL Expert - member of Legal Union for Rhodes-Responsible for Human rights Mr Salamastrakis, are able to cover clothing systematically, food on ad hoc basis and limited primary health care/first aid. There is a Samaritan body and Rescuers. Currently they support the temporal camp set by the Municipality at the location of the old slaughterhouses (Σφαγεία). The Red Cross has capacity for NFi Distributions (Clothes, towels), food and in kind donations. People refereed to the Red Cross by the Coast Guards and Police is 30 people per 2 days approximately. Red Cross info posters and leaflets are available in the settlements.

There are specific procedures for the dead persons – the bodies are stored in the hospital refrigerator until they are identified or have the funeral expenses covered. Usually the funeral expenses are covered by the family members. If a person is not identified then they are covered by Vakuf, assuming that the person is a Muslim (see below). They may stay in the fridge even more than three months.

The **Vakuf (ΒΑΚΟΥΦ)** is an organization responsible for the Muslim's assets in the island of Rhodes, mainly land and temples. They try to support also the poor (regardless of their religion). They are responsible for the Muslims' cemetery and they are responsible for the migrants/refugees funerals as well, since there is the perception that all foreigners arriving, especially from the east, are Muslims.
They had a burial of 17 or 18 persons in 2009. Their most difficult moment was lately with the case of a Syrian father that has lost his two daughters and only one decapitated body was found. As the president repeated over three times, they have no institutional role to support with any other way the migrants or refugees. However they support ad hoc cases.

The **Regional Asylum Office** has been operating since spring 2014 and is handling the asylum applications. During a meeting, the administrative officer and UNCHR`s Associate Asylum Expert Mrs Janniki clarifies that they arrange Skype Interview applications for those who have passports - this speeds up the procedure; there is a general flexibility of the service, enhanced by the Skype option to set up date for interview. Most applications from Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Albania, while there is priority for the Syrians. According to them, there is lack of human resources, including personnel, interpreters (only from Metadrasi NGO), psychologists. There is cooperation with EKKA and NGOs for referrals. As there is also lack of offices, thus even if they receive more personnel they simply don`t have enough space to accommodate them. The procedureis completed in a few months (4 months at average), while UNCHR`s Representatives on nearby islands inform the refugees/ immigrants about their right to apply for asylum and give them information.

Coverage and gaps

There is a Municipality run provisional refugee camp, which started on 17th August 2015 and until the 25th was hosting 1,011 persons (men, women and children). The conditions of the camp set at Sfagia are far from appropriate, with the major issue being its management. It is supposed to be able to cover

180-200 persons, and is recently connected with water and electricity. Mattresses are put on the floor uncovered and clothes have been mounting in the middle of the space. Broken glasses and doors, dirt and lack of any care for the space are just a few words to describe the absolutely inappropriate conditions on top of the lack of any safety measure. There are showers with cold water only, and toilets currently are not adequate for the flow of people. Food is distributed from the Red Cross and there is more support on the logistics from another Voluntary Organization that Supports Disaster and Protection allegedly providing a night shift. The Red Cross is also providing limited primary health care. There were two referrals registered at the hospital. The settlement is clearly not according to standards, dangerous, dirty and raising hygiene and dignity concerns. Is not protected, there are no proper beds or cleaning process, practically no showers and only two toilets. The Samaritans cooperation ensures a minimum of standards (health care referrals, water and electricity supply and a good system of food distribution - two hot meals per day). The small number of migrants and the fact that people stay there on their own will makes the situation bearable. At this point of time there are about 90 refugees from Syria, Afghanistan & Iraq separated by nationality; most of them stay up to 3 days; 3 times per day food offered by the Municipality, Hotels and citizens. Also some bakeries offer bread; 2 chemical toilets on the outside; Separate showers for men and women; Water and electricity provided. During the day genitors are used; Samaritans every day from 17:00 until 20:00; Support from volunteers, especially from ΕΟΠΚ; Storage facility for clothes, dippers, food; In need of solid food and "easy to eat" fruit (such as apples); Disinfection to be performed for bedbugs and fleas

Tilos

Map of Tilos island

Tílos is a small Greek island and municipality located in the Aegean Sea. It is part of the Dodecanese group of islands, and lies midway between Kos and Rhodes. It has a population of 780 inhabitants (2011 census). Along with the uninhabited offshore islets of Antitilos and Gaidaros, it forms the Municipality of Tilos, which has a total land area of 64.525 square kilometres (24.913 sq mi). Tilos is part of the Rhodes regional unit.

Scope of the crisis and humanitarian profile

Refugees rent boats from Daca (Turkey) which is 9 nautical miles away from Tilos. They usually arrive at Loumpoudi, Stavros, Tholos and the port of Tilos, often in groups, from 30-40 going up to 80-90, while only in July 2015, 687 people arrived and from the beginning of the year approximately 1,000. The number of children arriving has dramatically increased. Until mid-August, migrants/refugees used to stay temporarily in a Monastery until the local priest refused to provide shelter any more due to "disturbances" that they had caused. A temporary camp was then set up at an ex-military facility but the land belongs to the church. The priest and church have a distant if not aggressive stance towards the migrants.

National capacities and response

The **Police is** screening/fingerprints/photo/checking of data (For EU/Schengen purposes EUDAC database- computerized). They receive approximately 1600-1700 migrants yearly. The port authorities do not have a rescue boat since 2004, a permanent resident of the island (Nikos) helps in rescue missions with his own boat, covering the costs on his own. The police used to have 2 personnel members but now has 5-6. According to the police representative, approximately 1 in 10 migrants is a passport holder. There is cooperation between the police and the municipality. The municipality helps in the transport of the migrants.

Additionally, although the military is not involved, there seems to be a basis for cooperation if needed based on the good relations they keep with the commander. The previous commander did not cooperate at all with the police. The main problems that they face are the lack of infrastructure and personnel. Additionally, the temporary camp they have set up is not sustainable if there is an (expected) increase in flow or in the winter months.

Humanitarian access

For the past 2 months a doctor and a nurse from Medecins Du Monde are on the island, mainly for the locals but they help out with the migrants when needed. Before that and for about 8 months, doctors arrived on a weekly basis and on rotation from Rhodes. The island has 2 permanent doctors which have been temporarily reallocated to other places. Before that, the previous mayor of the island used to be the doctor as well. In emergency situations, patients are transferred to Rhodes.

In regards to the temporary Camp, according to Mr. Stathis Kontos, Mayor`s advisor, the land belongs to the church. Formerly, the refugees were staying in the monastery (250 people were staying during July). 64 people were in the camp on the date of the interview.

As regards rescue operations, there is no vessel; instead a private boat from hotel owner is used, owned by Mr Nikos Christofis, who usually covers the cost for 4 routes, 450 euros (and the danger is big). Everything works and runs voluntarily - upon arrival 5 people are informed and they coordinate the whole procedure. There is help from Doctors of the world (sleeping bags, clothing). The food, which is cooked there by Mr. Nikitas Morfopos (Municipal Council President) is provided twice a day, together with 2 liters of water each person per day. The mattresses are washed frequently. No cooperation and no help from the church.

Coverage and gaps

There are urgent needs, such as the creation of a first reception centre; of first reception supplies (gloves, masks, antiseptics, blankets); of food, sleeping bags, tents & sunshades, women`s kits, cauldrons/cooking boilers, food trays, plates, forks.

Kos

Map of Kos Island

Kos is a Greek island, part of the Dodecanese island chain in the southeastern Aegean Sea, off the Anatolian coast of Turkey. Kos is the third largest of the Dodecanese by area, after Rhodes and Karpathos; it has a population of 33,388 (2011 census), making it the second most populous of the Dodecanese, after Rhodes. The island measures 40 by 8 kilometres (25 by 5 miles), and is 4 km (2 miles) from the coast of Bodrum, Turkey. Administratively, Kos constitutes a municipality within the Kos regional unit, which is part of the South Aegean region. The principal town of the island and seat of the municipality is Kos

Scope of the crisis and humanitarian profile

Kos is receiving an average of 1.5 million tourists per summer (April-October). The number of the migrants arriving in the island in eight months of 2015 has been more than 40,000. According to Mr. Gerasklis, Vice Mayor responsible for cleaning, “The influx of migrants/refugees has significantly increased this summer and the municipality is doing the best it can. However, it is frustrating that the government is not dealing with the issue responsibly and that the local society is left abandoned to deal with it. Regardless of the challenges, the society of Kos should be feeling proud for its way to deal with the issue”. According to him at the day of the visit there were, out of the approximately 3,000 persons in the island, only 200 along the beach and no more than 500 sleeping rough! According to Mr. Gerasklis, the Municipality is providing public toilets and clean roads and streets, while the cruiser ship “Elefterios Venizelos” has facilitated the backlog created from the increased influx, however he has observed that the service provided is also affecting the arrivals - when its arrival is known, peoples’ arrivals are increasing

Yet, facts state that there is no will to organize anything and the municipal council wish not to have a First Reception Centre in the Island of Kos. A minority of the council is ready to support is a temporal registration set up, located 15 km away from the main town. The Municipality closed all public toilets and water taps, despite demands made by MSF who offered to repair any damages that might incur. The picture someone gets as he/she walks around the town is that there are people everywhere and the beaches, especially closer to the police station are full of tents and people sleeping roughly. We have not seen any toilets and, especially at the park behind the police station, there is a strong smell. Few public taps are providing water at different locations: at the parks, along the beach, in the municipal market.

National capacities and response

The Police is registering 200-250 person per day exhausting its maximum capacity, according to Katsilioris Michalis, ad interim representative “it does whatever is humanly possible with existing

means." On a daily basis the police is announcing the list of people to be processed. Lists of new arrivals are sent by the Port Authority and they are the ones processing the rest. They also support the proposal for an independent location to be used to register the people.

Humanitarian access

Solidarity Kos, started as a group of friends at the end of May, majority of them teachers at the island, the most active group in Kos and possibly the only one. They support the people staying at Captain Elias camp, by facilitating the purchase of ferry tickets, providing food, hygiene kits and clothing. They keep a warehouse in the town where they gather all different donations they receive in kind from citizens, supplies donated by locals and tourists.. The storage facility is private property and it is possible that the owner will need to use it in the near future.Despite their limited capacity they are well organized. Their representative said that lots of people stay at the very cheap hotels paying 10 euros per head, sleeping 5 or 6 in the same room, especially families. There are about 40 volunteers - 30 mainly active due to holidays and other personal activities. Solidarity Kos doesn't have a legal basis, a volunteer who is a lawyer tries to fix it and register the organization. Once per day (at about 17:00) they provide the refugees with sandwiches, water and fruits. When the need arises they also provide them with sleeping bags. They also provide supplies to people staying at the beach, near the stadium and in other places in Kos. Sometimes they receive supplies from abroad. They have a system with credits for their needs in the super markets. When someone wants to donate for solidarity Kos, she/he goes to the super market and buys credits. So solidarity goes to the super markets and gets the things according to their needs. These needs are the following: alternate storage facility and equipment (fridges), money donations/ credits, a means of transportation, such as a van

In order to accommodate temporarily the new arrivals, the government provided Captain Elias camp/shelter, an abandoned hotel, currently owned by the Bank of Piraeus due to debts of the owner. There is no coordination or anyone responsible for managing the facilities or the people living in. We have been told that smugglers currently manage it; however, this was not possible to crosscheck. There are grass huts at the front yard and two tents with showers at the back yard. The ground floor is dedicated to singles, sleeping in filthy mattresses, while the two floors are shared to different nationalities families mainly. There are single men sleeping at the terrace as well. The time of the visit there were about 500 people there. Food is provided daily by the informal group of citizens Solidarity Kos. When it was not possible for them to provide meals, the Red Cross and Army stepped in for 2 and 6 days respectively. Some cook the food themselves and this has caused damages and fires (twice). They get in line by themselves when the food distribution begins. The Army provided food only for one week - actually they distributed the food two days and the rest five Sol. Kos handled the distribution. The Municipality has connected the water and sewage as well as electricity, for a while. Twice there was fire in the yard because people are cooking using open fire. The hygiene condition and all the existing facilities are inadequate and well under any known standard.

Coverage and gaps

The situation on the ground can be described as an abandoned hotel, occupied by about 500 non-Syrian refugees, with a lot of tents also in the fields around Captain Elias, while at the time of our visit only five women and three children were staying there. There is a high possibility of smugglers presence, while the venue doesn`t meet the basic hygiene standards. As the building is owned by Pireaus bank, following the prosecutor`s repossession order migrants will be forced to leave.

Samos

Map of Samos Island

Samos is a Greek island in the eastern Aegean Sea, south of Chios, north of Patmos and the Dodecanese, and off the coast of Asia Minor, from which it is separated by the 1.6-kilometre (1.0 mi)-wide Mycale Strait. It is also a separate regional unit of the North Aegean region, and the only municipality of the regional unit. According to the 2011 census, it has 32,977 inhabitants.

Scope of the crisis and humanitarian profile

Due to vicinity of Turkey large number of boats are arriving (47,019 arrivals in 2015). The majority of them are men, then families. Most of them are Syrians.

National capacities and response

The role of the **Coast Guard** is vital. According to Mr Tsiaousis Thomas and the Chief of Coast Guard Mr Nikolaos Konstantelis, everything runs with money from the Coast Guard Fund, i.e. the toilets with showers built at the port by the coast guard; the migrants arrange their tickets to Piraeus, tickets are sold to them by coast guard immediately upon their arrival which is a huge boost for their moral as they know that they will continue their journey; the first registration is completed by the coast guard (some information about demographics & nationality and photo) during a registration process which lasts approximately 30 mins for 50 people. In need of vaccines for the coast guard staff. There is cooperation with the Police Force, the Samos`s Divers Team Association, doctor from KEELPNO and nurses from Red Cross (who provide them with survival kits). There are donation of supplies (water and milk and clothing) from locals, while twice a week there is a boat to Pireaus so migrants have to wait for couple of days after the registration procedure

According to the **Police**, there were more than 3,000 arrivals in the island during the last weekend of August, out of which 1,600 have departed with Elefterios Venizelos, the ship deployed by the government to deal with the increased influx in the islands. They have allocated a waiting area for those to pass screening by the port authority at the edge of the port, an area called Malagari. There is a canteen where people can buy water and snacks. Majority of the arrivals are Syrians (90%) who are processed within few hours. They only receive an appointment to Police Station in Athens that has the relevant department. The rest are going through proper screening via FRONTEX and are detained until

their papers are fully processed. At the moment of the visit there were 185 under the screening process. The discourse suggests that migrants/refugees are divided into Syrians and non-Syrians, a clear indication that all the rest of nationalities, Afghanis, Iraqis, North and West Africans, Somalis, Eritreans, Kurdish, Palestinians, are considered simply migrants.
According to the Police Commander, **t**here is an efficient system in this way set up where majority of people arriving in the island are leaving within few hours or latest after 7 days, depending on the ships while the rest are detained. During summer there was 5 days a week ship departing from the port of Samos and three days a week from the port of Karlovasi. The police collaborates closely with travel agency to facilitate the tickets needed, based on the notices that have completed.

There are currently 400 people detained in a centre with a 250 capacity. Out of them 7 are said to be unaccompanied minors, already in process to identify shelter in Athens. Food is outsourced. Due to delays in payments (around 3 months delay) there was a gap where one of the two providers has stopped the service completely and the other has adjusted in terms of frequency and quality accordingly. They are currently providing two meals, small portions. During the food supply gap the army stepped in. There used to be a maintenance team that does not exist anymore. There are only 3 police officers to guard the centre.

Humanitarian access

Other active actors in humanitarian access are the First Reception Centre, Metadrasi (providing interpretation, guardian and transport to minors), MEDIN (doctor, two nurses, psychologist, social worker), IOM (two officers for information and three interpreters-wondering really what they do since the return programme is not currently running), UNHCR for asylum and protection information provision (two officers).

The role of the First reception Centre is to manage existing data and to coordinate the various agencies covering the different needs. Ab issue of concern is the fact that the First Reception is totally relying on FRONTEX screening for the identification of nationality. There is a need for drugs and medical supplies. There is medical cabinet, for proper clinical examination. Medical service is available from 9 to 5 daily and in case of emergency there is hospital referral. Once they have used air transfer to Athens. Issue is the transport of non-emergencies. Major complains are linked with traveling and living conditions. Chronic diseases reported are frequently diagnosed at the country of origin and are known. Cardiac problems, diabetes most commonly reported. The ones who are in need of doctor are simply sitting in the yard. The doors within the detention centre are open during the day.

FRONTEX is present with two identification officers and two interpreters as well 8 police officers for patrolling the borders (4 for the shift and 4 for the cameras). According to Mr. Bakirtzis (FRONTEX Coordinator), they are processing the non-Syrians while they identifying Syrians by their passport or using the random selection method to cross check their statement (randomly selecting in group of 500 that have stated Syrians).

According to Mr. Konstantinos Tsagarakis, Police Commander of the First Reception Centre (FRC), 420 people are processed each day by the Police, while Syrians first identification is conducted usually on the first day if they arrive before 3 pm. Otherwise, it takes place the next day. After that they are obligated to go to Alien`s Department in Athens, to complete the identification process. Non Syrians are transferred at the FRC for the screening - debriefing processes. Ships to Piraeus sail 5 times per week (tickets are being paid by refugees themselves, unless they are unable to. In that case, they are covered

by the Police). The Army and Fire Department help and support when the need arises, with food supplies and others. There are needs in staff, as well as maintenance services in the FRC.

According to Sakis Papathemelis, Head of the FRC, there is a capacity for 280 (actually for 260 because of a fire), while 500 are staying now - they have hosted so far a total of 1500 people. Organizations present in the centre are services of First Reception, Medin, MetaAction, IOM, FRONTEX, UNHCR, namely social worker, psychologist, pediatrician, surgeon and interpreters from IOM and MetaAction; there are cleaning services, yet there is need of a laundry and blankets, an urgent need for water and milk supplies (they need to buy their own water). There is excellent cooperation among the FRC and other actors, but bad cooperation with the Municipality and the Government (lack of coordination).

UNCHR is also present. According to Myrsini, Expert UNCHR Associate, covering Samos on behalf of UNHCR since the beginning of July - UNHCR structure broken down in Dodecanese, there are 2 expert associates working in the FRC and other places (port, hospital) with 1 interpreter from MetaAction in their disposal - in need of one more and in need of sleeping bags and survival kits. At the given moment 95% of the people are Syrians, actually since January 2015 the numbers are 63% Syrians, 20% Afghans, 5% Iraqis, 12% other. Most Arabic speaking people on the move (PoM) are apparently mainly registered as Syrians in order to speed up the registration procedure and have them move on to Athens ASAP. This is in order not to have a backlog and accumulate migrants waiting for their papers in the streets- having to go through the detention center, and surpassing its capacity even more than usual. The method is to have PoM stay as little as possible on island so as to avoid conflict of all sorts.

According to Myrsini, there is no presence and support from NGOs, especially regarding food supplies. Over the weekend, she estimates 2500 arrivals, but has not finished registering final list with numbers (and details) from authorities. She confirms there is a 260 person capacity in the detention center and a bit less than the double amount of people currently residing there(for an average of 7 days). Daily procedure for people on the move coming in to Samos starting by: arrivals; a body search and registration of names, Frontex asks questions (but not to all), fingerprints are taken for the Eurodac database, and visibly vulnerable cases are screened (for referral) in first reception centers.

We asked whether there are asylum claims registered in Samos. Myrsini answered that it is rare as it is against anyone's interest to do so because asylum seekers would have to start the procedure in the detention center and be automatically detained (location unknown to us or Myrsini) until their decision is received; as such all claims are made in Athens (if in Greece at all) where they are free until their a decision is taken regarding the status of their claim. A parallel was drawn with Amygdaleza to illustrate how the procedure works in Samos. The issue is that once registered as Syrians, they will have problems later on in procedure when authorities in Athens notice they are not Syrian. The procedure for Syrians was explained as follows: Police order received stating that they will not be detained followed by a second paper for the suspension of their deportation, allowing them to remain 6 months on the territory (which can be renewed when terminated if they provide an address). More concretely for Syrians, the Port Authority (PA registers name and very basic info; this list of names is then sent to the Police; PoM wait at the commercial port until the police comes over to distribute personalized paper with appointment in Petrou Ralli (Alien`s Office Athens) that will allow them to remain in EU for 6 months. Palestinians go through same order as Syrians. Other nationalities are usually granted one month in Greece , but many may get confused as their paper (in Greek) confirms the scheduled meeting in Petrou Ralli in Athens in order to obtain legal stay in Athens – but they think this is the final paper with their departure date and leave for Athens anyway.

Myrsini reported that there are very few resources, such as kits, sleeping bags of this kind; there is a great gap in this respect and UNHCR does not currently have enough personnel or clear instructions and criteria to distribute items for this type of support. e.g UNHCr was given 80 sleeping bags but too few given the number of people in need of such items, and the lack of clear distribution criteria made it impossible also considering the risks run by herself and other UNHCR employee without security officer around to protect them.

The Red Cross distributes kits (hygiene and sleeping bags) but this does not occur systematically or frequently for that matter: Last Friday was the most recent distribution and next Tuesday (check) is the next scheduled date. We had been led on to think distribution happened on a daily basis. The Red Cross consists of Samaritans, the Hellenic Red Cross, 2 nurses. They have a storage space next to the coastguard which was supposed to serve as an office but never happened.

On site observation related to the organizations working in the detention center indicated that IOM seems to be duplicating UNHCR's work which is information sharing on 'their rights' (as cited from IOM workers today in center and confirmed by Myrsini). They do not seem to have clear instructions or a clear role. They provide the center with 2 interpreters, which suits everyone. They are not currently running any substantial return programmes as they are waiting for AMIF, this is a programme linked to the first reception service only. Myrsini used to work for the IOM, and claims it did a good job of returning 10, 000 people in the programme that ended last June (with obvious protection question marks since an important number were detainees).

Coverage and gaps

The view of the refugees

In interviews with Syrians and Iraqis, all complained about lack of support in Greece (Samos), nothing to eat, drink or where to sleep. They were all forced to throw away belongings and money en route and are left with nothing. Some had been there three days and had to wait another few to catch next available boat. They said they paid 4,000 dollars to travel from Greece to Germany. We tried asking more about their smugglers with no success. They are mainly going to Germany; maybe Finland and other Scandinavian countries. They confirmed their journeys were terribly dangerous, putting emphasis on Turkey to Greece part. Asked why they must endure the next three or four countries before reaching Germany. They said that they are aware of dangers awaiting in the Balkan route.

Lesvos

Map of Lesvos island

Lesvos sometimes referred to as Mytilini after its capital, is a Greek island located in the northeastern Aegean Sea. It has an area of 1,632 square kilometres (630 sq mi) with 320 kilometres (199 miles) of coastline, making it the third largest Greek island. The narrow Mytilini Strait separates it from Turkey. Lesbos is a separate regional unit of the North Aegean region, and is one of five governing islands within it. The others are Chios, Ikaria, Lemnos, and Samos. The total number of islands governed by the North Aegean are nine: Lesbos, Chios, Psara, Oinousses, Ikaria, Fournoi Korseon, Lemnos, Agios Efstratios and Samos. The capital of the North Aegean Region is Mytilene. The population of Lesbos is 86,436 (census 2011), a third of which lives in its capital, Mytilene, in the southeastern part of the island. The remaining population is distributed in small towns and villages. The largest are Plomari, Kalloni, the Gera Villages, Agiassos, Eresos, and Molyvos (the ancient

Scope of the crisis and humanitarian profile

The situation is been perceived is an immediate need for real, practical support and humanitarian assistance. People have to walk many kilometers, as the police or the coast guard does not transfer them from the arrival point to the port - where the first registration happens. There are people living at the port and in parks around the city. People are also staying in hotels, but still there is low availability.

First registration has become a challenge, even for Syrians. Procedures change every day. There are cases of people waiting for 4 - 5 days for the first registration. This happens because of the tensions that burst out at the port and slow down the procedures (and because of the amount of people). When they are registered they receive a paper with the date and a number. After some days they receive their documents.

National capacities and response

The **Police Officer in Moria** says the situation is out of control. 3 months ago he thought he was sure that he was doing his job well. But now he has lost control. There are 3.964 tents outside Moria. In the port today (3/9/2015) there are 2.162 Syrians. The number increases every day. There are only 4 buses in the island and 50 people can be transporter in one bus. So they have to walk for several hours under the heat without any water or food available on the road. The Police is technically capable of taking only 300 fingerprints per day. They are in immediate need of water, sunshades, equipment (computers, photo machines), refuse collectors, technical support for the damages occurred, big problem with the internet connection. He needs 100 more staff. Toilets around Moria camp are in extremely dangerous hygiene conditions. Inside Moria toilets, showers and food are provided. The situation is no longer manageable. The immigrants and refugees understand that they will go faster if the number (of them) is bigger. The State has to create the conditions under which everybody will follow specific procedures.

Humanitarian access

In **Moria First Reception Centre**, Mr George Mpakas, Social worker, MdM, informed that there are about 700 people inside and from 1500 to 2500 outside (living in tents). Most of them are from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Africa – they are staying & waiting for their administrative note for at least 5 days (some claimed that have been waiting for even 15 days). Food id provided by catering company twice a day, yet there is not enough food for everyone. Outside toilets and showers are in awful condition, most of them clogged, surrounded by mud and stagnant water. There is also a cantina that sells water and snacks. A 21 year old boy told us that he didn`t want his sister to stay in the camp because it is dangerous (she is staying in a hotel). Different nationalities do not mix up; those who are not considered vulnerable tend to leave immediately

Several organizations are working in the camp, FRS, MdM, Msf, IOM, UNCHR. The *Moria MdM team is comprised by* 1 social worker, 1 psychologist, 2 nurses, 3 doctors, 2 interpreters & volunteers, they provide people with some basic hygiene supplies and also with sleeping bags, clothes and towels, undertake referrals to other organizations. They are in need of shoes for men (sizes 40-43), trousers and T shirts SM, huts, underwear, hygiene supplies.

At the **Moria Regional Asylum Service**, Mrs Papailiou, Head of Asylum Service, claimed that there are very few asylum seekers. Those who are really in need to apply for asylum per week are more or less 20, while many peel out their fingerprints in order to avoid identification. This happens after they leave Greece, so as not to be identified through the Eurodac system. The first appointment is possible to be scheduled even through Skype, while there is a Fast track procedure only for Syrians. For all others procedure may last 4 to 5 months according to case & handler. They are in need of equipment (computers) and more personnel. They get help from UNHCR and Metadrasi (interpretation services) and have asked extra financial help from Norway concerning the need for translation.

At the **Kara-Tepe Temporary Camp**, there are mostly for Syrians, with tents provided by Shelterbox NGO. The organizations present are MdM, Msf. Many Syrians made a point that they have been waiting for at least 4 - 6 days for their papers although being passport holders and also stressed out the fact of lack of food and insufficient water, while many were wondering what they were waiting for as they have no information on procedures

Coverage and gaps

Mrs Zoe Leivaditou from IOM complained that due to a large number of arrivals staff is working every day, all day. In the first line they are providing people with blankets, clothes and medicine. IOM provides MdM with medicine and works closely with all NGO`s. She noted that she also represents Children's Smile, distributing supplies to people when they arrive, to people outside of the port, in a nearby park and the surrounding streets, providing vaccines for policemen and coast guard staff. In a situation where no one takes responsibility, NGOs are helping, but lack of coordination is a major and constant issue. Currently they are in immediate need of rescue blankets, thick gloves and 3M masks.

Mrs. Lucia Teoli from UNHCR, confirmed that the registration of immigrants had stopped, everybody (the services) blames the other. The coastguard didn't let the immigrants to put tents (38 degrees under the sun) because ships were coming. She believed that everything was happening because there were elections to come; that all the money they want to invest are useless if there is no organization, that there are many NGOs but most of them address the same one or two problems and they don't split up; there is lack of organization and co-ordination.

Map of the Aegean islands

Conclusions and Recommendations

The report at hand does not contain pies and charts. Still, it is pretty evident that there is a broad consensus on behalf of the reception/host communities as well as on behalf of the beneficiaries on what the basic gaps and needs are:

- There is still a significant gap in the provision of mainstream humanitarian assistance and relief services. Efforts of all actors involve need to intensify and scale up.
- There are gaps with regards to the provision and proper (exchange of) information on legal and civic issues.
- There is a need to improve and intensify coordination. The roles and mandates of different actors remain unclear. There is no harmonization of practices and systems, a fact that complicates the response.
- State bureaucracy remains a challenge.
- There are limited resources to correspond to the influx and limited knowledge and capacities on behalf of state, regional and local authorities to effectively manage the crisis.
- There is also a need to further improve NGOs and Civil Organizations capacity to respond and work aside the authorities.
- There is a need to improve the know-how of the volunteers that are reforming as first line responders while utilizing their knowledge of the local context to enrich the international organizations' response.
- There is a cross-cutting need for more quality of interventions and stronger accountability towards the beneficiaries.
- There is a need to nourish, sustain and upscale local communities and local citizens' involvement in the response by taking also their needs and expectations into account
- There is a need to structure and organize scattered and ad hoc advocacy efforts of different actors involved in the response. The momentum is positive and should not be lost. The humanitarian actors must spearhead and guarantee protection and humanitarian principles' respect.

The PoM Crisis is complex and "comes on top" of a pre-existing socioeconomic crisis in Greece that directly threatens social cohesion. It is a threat as well as an opportunity.

In order to address the needs and gaps briefly mentioned above, some broad suggestions are:

A. **Synthesis:** The strategy of combining strengths while minimizing weaknesses. It is working towards avoiding duplication and stretching implementing partners on the ground thin. It enhances transparency and accountability. It creates an automatic positive side effect: information on who is doing what is more openly and more accurately shared. A donors' consensus on this would greatly facilitate the effort and create added value for all.

B. **Rationalize and Simplify:** One of the core weaknesses usually attributed to the state/public administration, it might also be an issue for donors and bigger international organizations. At the same time, all partners involved need to be strengthened in their capacity to respond, as also mentioned above. Standardizing simple methods and tools while also rationalizing (excessive monitoring and other) requests and procedures on behalf of donors, international organizations etc. might boost the -so far- poor performance on the ground.

C. **Commitment is necessary:** Commitment of resources, funds, HR and expertise shall be needed. Vague promises won't work.

D. Innovation is a new programming trend perhaps for good reasons. While this cannot be our main target, we should nevertheless not be afraid to **try new solutions to new problems**. Innovation as such is not a must but being creative and resourceful when dealing with a complex crisis, is. This should be practically translated and be brought also over to donors, partnerships and synergies' level.

E. **Upgrade Coordination**. Though there are positive results in terms of info sharing and exchange and there is a mechanism in place -something very encouraging for the future- more needs to be done,

especially with regards to the more remote locations and towards increasing and qualifying the basis of participation/representation. Smaller NGOs and CBOs simply can't cope with demanding meetings and other inter-agency coordination requirements. Still, they must be supported to participate as – among others- they share an extensive knowledge of the local networks and ways to make things work. The same is the case with donors. They should be mobilized to engage and openly share their views and priorities. This will also facilitate future planning.

F. A joint **advocacy** effort that is open, organized and realistic should be promoted and supported by different civil society actors in Greece. While the Coordination Mechanism already set up by UNHCR could serve as the breeding space for such an effort, Greek and International NGOS involved in the crisis should take efforts a step further and claim for concrete and tangible reforms.

G. **Clarify and streamline roles and mandates** of all those actively involved in the (first line) response.

Unfortunately, and as summer 2016 approaches, the report art hand remains relevant. Few progress has taken place with regards to creating proper accommodation and facilitating access to health and legal support. Even more, actual steps back have ben taken by different countries on the issue of relocation and borders' opening. While people are still drowning by hundreds in the Aegean, public solidarity is weaning low due to the Paris attacks and the fear of "the spilling over effect" of Daesh extremism. Civil society and UN organizations are responsible to spearhead and safeguard principled humanitarian action.

Reception and host communities' needs and parallel support remain rather wishful thoughts and intentions than true strategies translating to concrete actions. With the exception of few, big NGOs that are recruiting local capacity thus indirectly supporting employment and are maintaining good relations with the local leaders, few things have been done in order for the hosts to also feel protected and supported in an hour of need.

The entire migration law and policies in Greece are problematic, their implementation even more. They newly established authorities of First Reception Service and Asylum Service are in risk of collapsing if they do not receive critical and time bound support.

The sociopolitical environment in Greece continues to be tensed. Balances of power are fragile. This is not in favor of a robust response effort. At the same time, the government's relation with its EU partners as well as the overall relations among EC members are not at their best period. Clearly, there is no consensus with regards to the crisis or the crisis management. Europe's, open values are disintegrating while polarization between Western and Muslim world is again picking up.

While we see more and more that the problem is a regional one thus a regional, multifaceted plan is needed to address it, we also sadly realize that we are nowhere near total or even partial consensus that would allow for the creation of a more coherent and holistic regional response plan at EC level, aside the relocation scheme.

It is important that the relocation scheme works and we in Solidarity Now are actively supporting this objective. Still, it is not going to solve the problem. We also support the timely operation of the new hotspots and the rationalization of the registration procedure. Still, we also feel it is important that courageous, realistic, time-bound and principled revisions and amendments of migration related law and policies should take place in and in between the EU member states. We can't not afford delaying these processes longer due to short sighted local or states' politics. A new vision and new practices should be put in place asap in order to address a new, complex phenomenon with dignity and by upholding our humanitarian and cultural values and principles at a dark hour of history for Europe and the entire region.

Solidarity Now Response

SN is coordinating its action with all major stakeholders like UNHCR, IOM, ICRC, state and local agencies. During March 2015, we organized an **inclusive workshop** in cooperation with OSF in order to conclude to a commonly shared roadmap for taking targeted, coordinated and impactful action and for shaping a conducive strategy and impacting positive policy change towards asylum procedures, reception and detention practices. More than 60 different organizations and 200 participants jointed the event, state agencies i.e. Asylum and First Reception Service, Police, Hellenic Coastguard, UNHCR, IOM, National Rapporteur on Trafficking and others among them.

A **Call for Proposals on migration** with a total allocation of 1.5 million was circulated on 30.06.2015 as also announced during the workshop.

A total of 8 projects have been selected as follows:

ORGANIZATION	PROJECT	SECTOR	LOCATION	STATUS
Medecins du Monde - Greece	Emergency Project - Immediate Humanitarian Support to PoM in Lesvos, Chios & Tilos	Health	Lesvos, Chios, Tilos	to kick off
Greek Council for Refugees	Fighting the refugee crisis in Athens	Relief	Athens	to kick off
METAction	Humanitarian Emergency reLief Provision	Relief	Idomeni	to kick off
ASTIKI MI KERDOSKOPIKI ETAIRIA KOINONIKIS FRONTIDAS & ANAPTIXIS TILOU	EMERGENCY PROJECT FOR SAVING LIVES, (PoM RECEPTION)	Relief	Tilos	to kick off
Society for the Care of Minors	Youth Centre for Refugees (18-22)	Shelter / Integration	Athens	to kick off
Praksis	Humanitarian support via outreach / interventions at Korinthos Detention Center	Health	Korinthos	to kick off
Municipality of Thessaloniki	Action for refugees in Thessaloniki - Hospitality and Support services	Shelter	Thessaloniki	to kick off
KASAPI Organization	Promotion of the integration of migrant women domestic workers and their families in	Integration	Athens	

Working towards shelter, housing and integration, SN is supporting **one shelter of migrants in Lesvos** and **one shelter hosting an average of 17 unaccompanied minors in the center of Athens**. **One "Solidarity house for all" project in cooperation with MDM-Greece** aiming to offer shelter to 45 tenants is also underway.

SN also provides a small grant to METAction in order to support the operation of **interpretation and legal aid services on Lesvos Island.**

Last year, SN funded MSF to respond to the "New arrivals emergency" while in 2015, we are supporting MSF towards the realization of a **project in support of Victims of Torture to be traced among migrant populations.**

We are also extending our support to **Greek Council for Refugee's office in Thessaloniki**, financing for a second year the psychosocial activities undertaken in support of refugees as well as the border missions of GCR at the Northern borders of Greece.

A **ground assessment** of the situation faced by vulnerable groups arriving on the islands (Dodecanese and other islands of the Aegean) took part between 25.08.2015 – 01.09.2015 within the framework of the Athens Solidarity Centre Project (EEAGR08.02). A thirteen member team coordinated by SN and Symbiosis and consisting of Greek and Norwegian agencies (namely: PRAKSIS, ARSIS, TfC, NCR, NRC and NPAID) visited the islands of Rhodes, Tilos, Kos, Samos and Lesvos in view of a coordinated and adequate relief response. The experience gained and the lessons learned will also promote an informed advocacy at local and national level.

SN has also launched a **5 points approach** in order to correspond to the recent crisis.

Institution	Description	Rationale
1. Asylum Service	SN hosts the Asylum service in Athens Solidarity Centre. The action aims to offer necessary support to vulnerable people, victims of international conflicts and residents of problematic/failed states. SN is also supporting the Asylum Service across the following axes: - HR - Office stationary & consumables - IT and other equipment - New spaces for peripheral structures (Patra, Samos, Chios / rent, utilities, renovation)	Building the state's capacity to deal with the emergency. Support the newly created services. Mitigate future backlog. Support the Asylum Service's official advocacy point in favor of the review of the Dublin III regulation
2. First Reception Service	SN supports the First Reception Services (FRS) in order to activate two new mobile teams at the Islands of Dodecanese. The intervention is based Leros (Kos pending) while the approach is an integrated one and seeks to offer to the beneficiaries' access to a holistic package of services. Two (2) different NGOs, namely PRAKSIS and Meta-Action will cooperate with the FRS in order to launch medical screening and services, distribution of NFIs and interpretation services to the beneficiaries. FRS staff supervises and coordinates all activities.	Building the state's capacity to deal with the emergency. Support the newly created services. Facilitate timely registration / Ensure vital medical screening. Activate a wide partnership i.e. FRS, NGOs, local authorities, SN, build consensus. Correspond to the current workload, reduce unregistered refugees and migrants, reduce waiting time and related tensions

3. National Rapporteur on Trafficking	Supported the "Break the Chain" transmedia event that aims at raising awareness amongst the general public, in an attempt to tackle some of the main challenges associated with the phenomenon.	Activate a wide partnership, build awareness and consensus. Intensify and improve anti-trafficking advocacy. Prevent and mitigate dangers arising from trafficking, put forward and support an agenda of protection and human rights respect. Dismiss negative stereotypes.
4. MDM - Greece	Greece remains the main entry point to the European Union for thousands of people, both refugees and migrants, who enter the country in mixed migratory movements. Partas serves as an « exit point » for populations on the move. The Open Polyclinic of Patras operates in the reasoning of the other Open Polyclinics of MDM with the primary aim of strengthening primary healthcare for uninsured residents in Western Greece, of people in need of international protection and all those who have limited or no access to the National Healthcare System. Special consideration is given to the protection of sensitive population (women, children and unaccompanied minors) and to supporting local health structures. The key objective of the project is to support all these types of beneficiaries, and especially people in need of international protection, via the establishment of collaboration between the Patras Open Polyclinic and the regional Asylum service Office.	Support access to a comprehensive package of primary health care services. Fostering a cooperation among state and non-state actors. Enhancing the capacities of the civil society to correspond to the increased caseload. Initiating Asylum Services in Western Greece.
5. MSF - Greece	The purpose of this grant is to maximize advocacy and communication on the people on the move accessing Europe using the Eastern Mediterranean and Balkan road accompanying the MSF intervention: *"Survival and dignity of the people on the move accessing Europe using the Eastern Mediterranean and Balkan road: a regional approach". MSF-Greece assumes the effort of making strides in the discussions and reflections regarding humanitarian dilemmas and*	Fostering advocacy and open debates. Promoting positive change at national and international level. Forging alliances and networks in support of better practices and new, applicable legislation.

	continuing to work hard and creatively in order to increase its contribution to people's on the move trajectories.	

Steps ahead

While monitoring the results of the above mentioned efforts, SN is also ready to launch and manage the operation of a Solidarity Centre/ Temporary Accommodation camp at Lesvos Island.

At the same time, we are revising our strategy for Northern Greece according to new scenarios and priorities. Soon, our Thessaloniki Solidarity Centre will re-operate with enhanced services from a new space.

SN consolidates and monitors the work of ~ 60 partners, many of them directly or indirectly involved also in crisis response. While we foresee no significant re-granting to partners in the months ahead, we do foresee a period of results evaluation and continuous involvement into the crisis management.