

# **Akelius Foundation Annual Report Emergency Response 2018**



# Content

Emergency Response Program - Refugee Crisis .....	3
Lebanon.....	3
Greece.....	4
Serbia .....	5
Armenia .....	6
Italy.....	7
Financial support.....	8

# Emergency Response Program - Refugee Crisis

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In 2018, thanks to the generous donation of the Akelius Foundation, SOS Children's Villages has been able to assist numerous children and adults in five countries, including Lebanon, Greece, Serbia, Armenia, and Italy, and have become an active actor in emergency response.

More than 1.3 million people have crossed the Mediterranean to Europe since 2015, creating major humanitarian and resettlement challenges in coastal countries and the Western Balkans. In 2018, some 141,500 refugees and migrants have arrived in Europe through the Mediterranean migration routes. On average one in every four is a child. This includes an estimated 6,000 unaccompanied and separated children. When it comes to children, receiving countries have struggled to provide care, housing and education.

SOS Children's Villages works with other organisations and governments to ensure that child refugees receive care and protection. Thousands of unaccompanied or separated children have received care and shelter through us. We have also provided a safe and protected environment, information and communication services, health, educational and entertainment activities to children and families. In addition, food, clothing, hygiene items, counselling and other services are provided to children and families.

## Lebanon

### Operational Update

Funding from Akelius foundation contributed in 2018 to the Emergency Family support activities in Bekaa, Lebanon. The aim of the project is to support vulnerable Syrian and Lebanese families at risk in order to ensure that they are self-sustainable and to prevent family separation by addressing the needs and enhance the psychological and economic stability of the beneficiaries from both nationalities. Families have been supported with a family budget, income generating activities, support regarding education, psychosocial support activities as well as medical referrals where needed.



*Children enjoy activities provided by SOS Lebanon in the Bekaa Valley.*

Under 2018, there have been a total of 1082 beneficiaries from 269 Syrian and Lebanese families included in the project. By the end of the year, with many families having exited the project, 561 beneficiaries from 158 families remained in the project.

Key accomplishments in 2018 are as follows:

- Many families have exited the EFS project and others will exit gradually.

- Some of the families were referred to other organizations where they got the same assistance so that they can continue living with dignity.
- Different Income Generating Activities /Project such as sewing, herding (sheep), baking, hairdressing, makeup, one-dollar shop, etc. are arranged so the family can be independent and get by without assistance from an organisation.
- The 117 Children are still going to school with no drop-outs and are followed up regularly to make sure that they are doing fine and getting good grades.
- Families were supported with rehabilitation of houses (new kitchen and bathroom).
- With our assistance, some have got jobs.
- Many families are now changing to a positive attitude towards their children after attending focused awareness sessions (anger management, parenting strategies, etc.)

## Outlook

The project will be ongoing with the financial support of Akelius Foundation until May 2019. The focus will be on income-generating activities in order to make sure that families can exit the programme and are self-sustainable. In case families from the programme need further support, they will be supported by other partner organisations or be transferred into the SOS long-term Family Strengthening Project (FSP) in Bekaa. As for now, it seems that only nine families will be referred to the FSP program by the end of this program and all the others will be independent.

## Greece

### Operational Update

In 2018, SOS Greece continues to provide support for 5,206 children and youth in existing camps and hotspots on Lesbos Island, and has been running two shelters (one for boys and one for girls) for 62 unaccompanied children (of which 29 have been reunified with their parents, family members or legal caregivers) in Athens. Furthermore, SOS Greece operated a daycare centre in Thessaloniki which is opened for both refugee and host communities in order to foster integration, and around 75 children per day participated in the activities there.

In more detail, the Akelius financial support contributed to the following activities:

- Recreational projects to let children express themselves emotionally, create and connect with each other
- Non-formal education including language courses in Greek, English and German, and PC, etc.
- Enrolment of children to schools, and extra educational activities for those who are on islands and don't have access to schools



*SOS Children's Villages lawyer Lena takes a break to walk one of the shelter's youngest boys home from school.*

- Sports activities targeting psychosocial relief and empowerment
- Personalised program of activities, medical care referrals and access to health services, provision of necessary state documents, contacts with services, referrals to local authorities, integration support and life skills training.
- Psychological support: Assessment of cases, individualised psychological intervention and treatment plan through counselling sessions (one to one and groups), referral to psychological services, collaboration with external mental health professionals.
- Legal support: individualised legal representation for all programme participants (asylum family reunification, voluntary repatriation, relocation and 'Dublin system' procedures)

## **Outlook**

The project and its activities continue in 2019 with the financial support of different SOS Member Associations and donors. The need in Greece is still high due to a big number of unaccompanied children in the country and the need for educational and integrational activities which will be the main focus of SOS Greece in the coming year(s).

# **Serbia**

## **Operational Update**

SOS Serbia continued activities into the first half of 2018 with the financial support of Akelius Foundation and other donors such as UNICEF. The organisation works in four refugee centres in northern Serbia: Adaševci, Kikinda, Obrenovac, and Principovac, working actively with international and local partners as well as the government, to ensure comprehensive support to children and their families.

In 2018, around 900 children, young people and adults were supported with the support from Akelius Foundation.

Key services include:

- Child Friendly Spaces (CFSs) offering educational and recreational activities, homework support, language lessons as well as psychological and emotional care for younger children
- Child protection officers working to prevent neglect, abuse and exploitation, and help those who have experienced such events to recover
- Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Youth Corners equipped with computers and tablets, where users can contact their friends, as well as gain computer skills. The Youth Corners also offer educational, vocational and recreational activities for older children

- Educational centre providing informal education to youth with classes in Serbian, English, Mathematics, Civic Education and Geography.
- Providing health, nutritional and early child development support through Mother and Baby Corners, where mothers can receive support and feed their babies in a quiet and protected space
- Capacity building and technical assistance for government agencies



*ICT Centre in Obrenovac*

## **Outlook**

While some of the activities and locations have been closed or reduced with closure of Akelius Foundation in June 2018 due to limited funding, the activities and support of SOS Serbia will continue with other (international) funding sources.

# **Armenia**

## **Operational Update**

The Akelius Foundation has contributed to the Syrian-Armenians Emergency Project being able to continue its operation in 2018 and to extend support for the housing of Syrian-Armenian families. Activities are largely similar to those in the previous year and have been operated until the end of the project in June 2018. Most of the supported families have been self-sustainable by the end of the project.

Besides meeting the immediate needs of housing, food, hygiene, medication and clothing in the final phase of the project, we have also provided support in self-sustainability with renovation of apartments, buying tools and equipment for small businesses and longer-term investments for families (i.e. rental costs for several months). SOS Armenia had a recognizable positive impact on the lives of the Armenian-Syrian refugees in Yerevan during its 3,5 years long project.

Activities provided in 2018 include:

- Rent and utility support (gas, electricity, water) (139 families)
- Material support: Distribution of food and non-food-items like diapers, baby formula, clothes and shoes as well as shelter equipment like heaters, laundry machines, refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, etc. (172 families)
- Health and psychological support (110 families)
- Educational support (6 families)
- Transportation fees for children (5 families)
- Economic sustainability/vocational training (134 families)
- Renovation of three apartments for three families

## **Outlook**

The available funding permits us to run the programme through the first quarter of 2019. Support covers rent and utility expenses, material support (clothes, food packages, and diapers), health expenses and education. The social workers have had individual meetings with every family to review and evaluate needs in order to phase out support in the best possible way. The project activities in 2018 mainly focused on beneficiaries' vocational training and purchase of professional tools, to help them to become economically sustainable.

## Italy

### Operational Update

SOS Italy has worked at 12 first-reception centres in the Crotone area, with the support from Akelius Foundation, providing psychological and legal support, staff training and inter-cultural mediation services.

In 2018, the programme has reached a total of 389 unaccompanied children and 168 staff.



*Bicycle repair training*

Activities funded by Akelius Foundation include:

- Life Skills workshops: a cycle of 12 workshops per each centre focused on the exercise and acquisition of different life skills that are vital instruments for the promotion of positive coping and the resilience of unaccompanied children and youth. Each workshop, co-facilitated by a team of 2 SOS staff focuses on different topics such as managing emotions, identity, decision making, and problem-solving and takes place once a week
- Legal counselling and orientation for unaccompanied and separated children in different reception centres
- Group and one-to-one psychological support and referral to local services for children in need of further specialised support
- Promotion of socio-educational activities outside the centres (e.g. Sports activities, exchange with schools, music workshops) to encourage interaction with the wider community and the Italian youth
- Provision of vocational training to local youth and unaccompanied youth on a voluntary basis. This included training on beekeeping and bike repairing organised and co-conducted with local youth association.
- Training for staff of other organisations or local government, university students working with/for unaccompanied and separated minors on topics such as Psychological First Aid, Stress Management, Intercultural Mediation

### Outlook

The activities in Crotone will continue in 2019 with local funds granted by the Italian Ministry of Interiors. SOS is also exploring the possibility of expanding its support to Sicily depending on further fundraising access and success of applications to different donors.

## Financial support

Donated by Akelius University Foundation, EUR	2016 Budget	2016 Actuals	2017 Budget	2017 Actuals	2018 Budget	2018 Actuals	2019 Budget
			6 930				
Total ERP	3 344 635	3 038 915	719	6 767 760	162 989	0	162 989
Administration 3 %	100 339	91 167	207 922	203 033	4 890	0	4 890
<b>Total donation</b>	<b>3 444 974</b>	<b>3 130 082</b>	<b>641</b>	<b>6 970 793</b>	<b>167 879</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>167 879</b>

SEK (using exchange rate at the time of payment)	32 038 259	30 291 699	67 817 085	67 637 590	1 628 423	0	1 732 508
Average exchange rate	9,30	9,68	9,50	9,70	9,7	-	10,32

Total budget/transfers, all facilities above, EUR	2016 Budget	2016 Transferred	2017 Budget	2017 Transferred	2018 Budget	2018 Transferred	2019 Budget
ERP Syria	500 000	500 000	500 000	500 000	0	0	0
ERP Lebanon	500 000		1 000				
		0	000	837 011	162 989	0 *	0
ERP Greece	700 900		1 518				
		682 899	000	1 518 000	0	0	162 989 *
ERP Macedonia	200 000	175 000	300 000	300 000	0	0	0
			1 713				
ERP Serbia	254 719	1 130 000	624	1 713 624	0	0	0
ERP Hungary	414 016	180 000	0	0	0	0	0
			1 440				
ERP Italy	500 000	60 000	000	1 440 000	0	0	0
ERP Armenia	0	211 016	0	0	0	0	0
ERP Bulgaria	0	0	9 096	9 095	0	0	0
Regional and International Office	275 000	100 000	450 000	450 030	0	0	0
<b>Total ERP</b>	<b>3 344 635</b>	<b>3 038 915</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>6 767 760</b>	<b>162 989</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>162 989</b>

\* Because of fully funded activities in ERP Lebanon during 2018 the funds will be swiftd to ERP Greece, ERP Serbia or ERP Syria depending on the need. The decision will be taken in the end of May.