



SOS BARNBYAR
SVERIGE

Akelius Foundation

Annual Report Emergency Response

2017





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Emergency Response Programme - Refugee Crisis

In 2016 and 2017, thanks to the generous donation of the Akelius Foundation, SOS Children's Villages established itself as a key actor in the response to the needs of refugee and migrant children in the region. SOS Children's Village has been able to assist tens of thousands of children in eight countries, including hard-to-reach areas in Syria and the countries along the refugee path.

After the number of arrivals of refugees and migrants in Europe peaked in 2015, the situation changed significantly when the Balkan countries officially closed their borders. This, in turn, made travelling more dangerous and has forced many refugees to remain in countries less prepared to support them.

In addition, the routes to Europe have changed. In 2017, the main route to Europe runs across the Mediterranean Sea to Italy - the most dangerous route. Children on the move continue to be extremely vulnerable facing serious risks on their perilous journeys. Many children are being exposed to sickness, injury, violence, exploitation and trafficking – violations of their rights and threats to their lives and well-being.

- 81,000 children reached European shores in 2016.
- 1 in 4 of all arrivals across the Mediterranean Sea in January-March 2017 was a child.
- 85% of all arrivals across the Mediterranean Sea in 2017 are in Italy.
- 93% of all children arriving in Italy in January-June 2017 were unaccompanied.

Despite the decreasing international attention on the needs of refugee children in the Western Balkans, Greece, Italy and Hungary, SOS' emergency response programs aim to continue in 2018. In many locations, SOS is the only service provider and the need among the refugee children has not diminished. Therefore, there has been an effort to raise funding in order to be able to continue programs in Greece, Serbia and Italy. In case funding is not secured, SOS will have to decrease the scope of the programmes or phase out completely. In such cases, SOS will work with the local government and any non-governmental actors that are present in the location to explore whether any activities can be handed over and continued.



1 - Total arrivals in Europe Jan-Sep 2017

Syria

In March 2017, the war in Syria entered its seventh year. Humanitarian needs are overwhelming with 13.1 million people still in need of assistance including 5.9 million children, which indicates little overall improvement of the situation in the country. The conflict continues to displace people and during the first six months of the year an additional 1.3 million people were displaced, raising the total number to 6.3 million. The conflict has killed over 350,000 people, including 100,000 civilians.

Children are still paying the heaviest price in the conflict:

- 1.57 million children are out of school with an additional 1.35 million at risk of dropping out.
- There have been over 1,000 grave violations against children in the first half of 2017.
- 524 children have been killed or seriously injured due to bombings.
- There have been 62 attacks on education and health structures.
- Over 300 children have been recruited and used as combatants.

Operational Update

The Akelius Foundation has contributed to making the following activities possible:

Aleppo city and surroundings

Food

- Approximately 25,000 people received hot meals every day in coordination with a local organization which has a kitchen in the Aleppo area. Priority was given to displaced families. This activity ended in June 2017.
- April 2017 was the last month of distribution of fresh fruit. Since November 2016, 61,000 bags of fruit were distributed.
- 5,271 food parcels were distributed. This activity ended in May 2017.



Medical, health education and hygiene

- Two doctors provided medical services to families and children in the Aleppo area. On average, 640 mothers and children benefitted from the services every month. This activity was suspended end of August due to budget restrictions.
- Health awareness training sessions in rural Aleppo were organized for women and men. This activity was suspended end of August due to budget restrictions.
- 12,500 hygiene kits (containing soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, towels and other personal products) were distributed to displaced families in Aleppo city. This activity ended in May 2017.

Maternity and infant care

- Over 3,000 baby kits (towels, blankets, pyjamas, shirts and trousers) were distributed. This activity ended in June 2017.

Education

- 792 children (ages 7-15) who are displaced or whose schools are closed are attending classes taught by 30 teachers in rural Aleppo. The support ended in June as schools could re-open.

Water

- The distribution of water from a well at the SOS Children's Village warehouse in Aleppo as well as the re-filling of water tankers reached 8,000 people every day. This activity ended in July 2017 as some public water services are now functional.

Winter clothing and supplies

- Distribution of winter clothing benefited 2,400 families. The winter kits included: thermal clothing, sleeping bags, pillows and blankets. This activity ended in May 2017.

Child friendly space

- A second child friendly space was established in August. The purpose of the space is to provide recreational activities, education services and psychosocial support.
- In total, over 3,500 children have benefitted from the child friendly space.

Damascus

Interim Alternative Care Centers

Through funding from Akelius foundation unaccompanied and separated children could receive support in two Interim Alternative Care Centers (IACCs) in Damascus: one in the area of Qura Alasad and another one in Al-Saboura¹.

The centers provide care, shelter, mental health and psychosocial support, health care, food, educational support, recreational activities and support to reunite with families of origin.



- **Sabourah Interim Alternative Care Center**

84 children were living at the Sabourah Interim Alternative Care Center as of 1 February 2018. 54 children were admitted in the center throughout 2017. All in all, 314 children have been supported at Sabourah center since December 2014, with children staying there for an average of 338 days; 174 children have been reunited with their families and 33 have been referred to the Sabourah SOS Children's Villages for long-term alternative care. 61 children have been enrolled in school and are supported by the SOS education department.

- **Qura Al-Assad Alternative Care Center**

39 children were living at Qura Al-Assad Alternative Care Center as of 1 February 2018. 54 children were admitted in the center throughout 2017. All in all, 231 children have been supported at Qura Al-Assad Alternative Care Center since December 2014, with children staying there for an average of 283 days; 115 children have been reunited with their families and 2 have been referred to the

¹ Due to security concerns, the IACC in Aleppo was closed down in April 2016 and the children were evacuated to Damascus.

Sabourah SOS Children's Villages for long-term alternative care. 9 children have been enrolled in school and are supported by the SOS education department of the Qura center.

Education

515 children in Damascus benefit from a programme that encourages young children who are working to go back to school by providing financial support to their families. So far, 198 families have received financial contributions, such as allowances for food and heating. The project also provided 48 parents with literacy classes. These activities were suspended in April to July due to lack of cash as restrictions were put on cash transfers to Syria. Thankfully, the activities could restart in August.

Health

Since the start of the emergency activities, 255 children have benefited from a medical referral programme to provide urgent surgery and other specialized care. These activities finished in August 2017 due to budget restrictions.

Lebanon

The Lebanese government continues to insist that the presence of refugees from Syria is temporary, despite the absence of any guarantee or prospects for their return to their homeland anytime soon. Little has changed for the refugee population in Lebanon during the reporting period and 40% of Syrian refugees continue to live in unfinished buildings, empty stores and parking lots. According to UNHCR around 50% of the Syrian refugees are between the ages of 0 and 17 years.

Operational Update

The emergency activities continue to focus on alternative care for extremely vulnerable children. The Akelius Foundation has contributed to making the following activities possible:

Interim Alternative Care Center, Kenshara

The interim alternative care center in Kenshara provides a safe space for children to protect them from neglect, abuse and exploitation. In parallel, the case workers work to find solutions to the issues that brought the children to the center. For example, if they have family, the case workers work with them to improve their situation through the distribution of food and non-food kits, improving parenting skills, vocational skills, rental support as well as preparing them psychologically to be reunited with their children. If family members are dead or cannot be identified then SOS works to find a long-term shelter where the children can be transferred, for example SOS Children's Villages in the country. In total more than 130 children have been admitted to the shelter in the period from 2014-2017 and on average more than 40 children a month have benefitted from its activities (interim care, day care as well as informal education).

With consideration of the current situation and in discussions with key stakeholders in Lebanon a decision was taken to close the care center in Kenshara by end of December 2017. Many of the children who were living in the center were reunited with their biological families. The remaining 27

children and young people now live at SOS Children's Village Sferai, because they have no living relatives or could not live with their biological families at the moment because of risks related to security and care. Of the 27 children living at the SOS Children's Village Sferai, nine are biological siblings. At Sferai, they are able to stay together and grow up as a family.

Emergency Family Support (EFS) Bekaa

In 2017 SOS Children's Villages expanded its emergency operations in Lebanon with an emergency family support project in Bekaa. The aim is to increase the well-being, provide short and long-term support, address the needs and enhance the psychological and economic stability of the beneficiaries from both nationalities, Lebanese and Syrian. The total number of beneficiaries reached is 393 individuals (306 children and adults; 87 caregivers). Activities include:

- Identification and registration of 96 families (65 families in 2017 and 31 families in 2018) in three regions in Bekaa.
- Support for transportation, food and vaccination, psycho-social support for children.
- Awareness sessions on hygiene, dental care, impact of smoking, also sessions on debt management and money saving in close collaboration with Lebanese American University and Habitat for Humanity.
- Completing a "soap" micro project with 20 women as part of the Life skills component in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA).
- Rehabilitating 5 houses in coordination with Habitat for Humanity:



Outlook

Due to the volatile and unpredictable situation, all transferred funds were not spent in 2017. Therefore we propose to use the remaining funds from Akelius foundation to continue the emergency programme in Lebanon into 2018. The team will continue implementing the same activities. With the economic situation in the country deteriorating, more focus will be on providing vocational and life skills trainings with children and mothers. Furthermore, additional efforts will be put to the coordination with the Education and Child Protection agencies working in Bekaa especially with the ones covering the same areas to avoid overlapping and to improve the situation of people in need.



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Greece

Over 20,000 refugees and migrants arrived in Greece during the first nine months of the year. In September alone, 4,900 refugees arrived which is the highest number in a single month since March 2016. 30% of the arrivals were children. Currently, there are approximately 3 000 unaccompanied refugee children in Greece. 42% of the arrivals are fleeing the war in Syria while most unaccompanied children are originating from Pakistan and Afghanistan. Over 62,000 people are living in camps or other official or unofficial facilities throughout mainland Greece and the islands.

The first six months of the year were turbulent as there have been a lot of changes to the context. As announced in December 2016, 20 out of 40 camps are closing and refugees have and will continue to be moved to more permanent structures such as furnished containers and apartments. Furthermore, the winter and summer months have seen extreme temperatures leading to an even more demanding situation for the refugees with deaths also being recorded. Tensions in the refugee community continue with reports of violent incidences. Following an incident in March when a Syrian refugee set himself on fire the Greek minister of Migration admitted that the situation in certain hot spots have crossed the line. Another notable change is the reduced availability of funding for non-governmental organizations which has forced many to close their operations and pull out of the country. However, there were positive news in September when the Greek Minister of Migration Policy stated that all refugee children will be enrolled in Greek schools in 2017/2018. By September, more than 6,000 children had registered for school.

Operational Update

SOS Greece continues to provide support for children and youth in existing camps and hotspots and runs the accommodation and support for unaccompanied children. Until December 2017, 124.841 children and 48.100 adults benefitted from SOS CV Greece services in the framework of this project. The Akelius Foundation has contributed to making the following activities possible:

Family strengthening activities in camps and hotspots (Attica, Thessaloniki, Lesvos):



- Recreational activities
- Psychological support
- Sports training
- English, Greek, Arabic language lessons
- Social services

The work in shelters for unaccompanied children in Thessaloniki and Serres continues. A new shelter in Athens has also opened. The activities in the shelters include:

- Accommodation for unaccompanied children is currently hosting 73 children and youth. Since the start of the emergency programme 240 children have benefitted from the accommodation.
- Psychological support such as counselling
- Legal support
- Pedagogical services
- Recreational activities such as sports training
- Language lessons
- Social services such as case management and crisis intervention

Outlook

SOS Greece is planning to continue the activities the rest of the year. Interventions will include educational support to children in the Kara-Tepe Camp, continuation of the operation of the home for unaccompanied boys in Athens, reopening of a corresponding home for girls, support to refugee population, family strengthening services and ensuring alternative care to refugee and migrant children.

Macedonia

The number of accommodated refugees and asylum seekers in the Macedonia decreased by 63% compared to 2016. This is due to closed borders and police interventions that have led to the return of most of the refugees who were living in the transit centers to Greece. Since then, an average of 50-60 refugees live at the Tabanovce transit center at any given time, most of them adult men and unaccompanied boys, and there are actually more refugees and migrants outside official centers (particularly in the villages of Lojane and Vaksince) than in official centers.

Operational Update

The programme in Macedonia has changed significantly as the needs are decreasing. The intervention is still focused in two Transit Centers in border areas with Serbia in the north and Greece in the south. The Akelius Foundation has contributed to making the following activities possible:

- One child friendly space in Tabanovce
- Psycho-social support has been provided through various creative and educational as well as sports activities for both children and parents. Children identified by psychologists were also targeted with early childhood development activities.
- In the child friendly space girls and boys of all ages and their caregivers, especially pregnant and breastfeeding women, have access to safe, adequate and appropriate nutrition.
- Two ICT (Information and Communications Technology) corners that are open 24 hours a day.
- Therapy through cooking and art
- International nights to promote inter-cultural understanding
- Distribution of food packages, water, baby formula milk, diapers, clothes, blankets and hygiene items.

In total 84,754 services were delivered to a total of 233 beneficiaries in 2017, including 18,805 services at Child Friendly Spaces, 37,118 ICT services and 28,831 food packages and other essential items.

Outlook

Field activities ceased in December 2017 and the programme will be phased out in the first quarter of 2018. With most organisations withdrawing from Macedonia, including SOS Children's Village, refugees who will be registered in the transit centers in the coming period will lack adequate medical care and access to the internet.

Serbia

In September, the total number of refugees and asylum seekers in the country were 4,250 of which 92% were accommodated in 18 governmental centers. 41% are children.

Serbia has been affected by the changes to the immigration laws in Hungary. During the first part of the year, Hungary halved the number of daily admissions for asylum-applications from 100 to 50 per week. This had an immediate effect on Serbia as the number of refugees observed in the border areas



rose. Due to the pressure and uncertain situation that the refugees, including the unaccompanied children, find themselves in, they become increasingly vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking. A positive development in Serbia is that more and more refugee children are being enrolled in public school. The current number of refugee children in school stands at 450.

Operational Update

SOS Children's Villages Serbia assists around 70% of all the children in refugee centers in the country. In 2017 SOS CV was working in 12 out of 18 centers. In four refugee centers, SOS Children's Villages Serbia is the only service provider supporting children and families. Our work is essential to ensure that these children have access to child protection in the refugee centers. SOS Serbia is permanently present in 8 centers and reach 4 centers through the SOS Super Bus team which visits additional Transit and Asylum centers in Serbia extending the area of SOS coverage.

The Akelius Foundation has contributed to making the following activities possible:

- Ten safe spaces for children, youth and families have been reduced to six due to changing needs.
- A Child Protection team works with identifying vulnerable children that need care as well as cases of abuse and neglect. So far, 150 cases of abuse and/or neglect have been investigated.
- 480,000 items of food, water, clothes and hygiene as well as 5,380 warm meals were distributed to children and families.

- Free access to Internet, chargers for mobile phones and computer classes were provided in 12 locations which is four new ICT corners. On average, the ICT corners had 21,330 visits per month.
- By using a mobile educational team, the Super Bus, close to 6,000 services were provided to children and young people among the refugee population as well as the host community through various educational, recreational and creative activities.
- Informal education has started for children aged 9 and 10.

Outlook

Due to the volatile and unpredictable situation, all transferred funds were not spent in 2017. Therefore, we propose to use the remaining funds from Akelius foundation to continue the emergency programme in Serbia into 2018. SOS Serbia is planning to work closely with local authorities supporting the integration of refugees to the local society by organizing joint activities and providing support to the state institutions when necessary.

Armenia

As a result of the conflict in Syria, 30,000 displaced Syrian-Armenians have migrated to Armenia. Some of them have later moved on to other countries but the majority aims to make a life for themselves in Armenia. Related to the size of population Armenia is hosting very high number of refugees (2,5 million of population related to 22.000 refugees from Syria since the beginning of the war).

Operational Update and Outlook

The Akelius Foundation has contributed to the Syrian-Armenians Emergency Project being able to continue its operation in 2017 and activities are largely similar as in the previous year. The project has targeted 300 children from 150 families. Most Syrian-Armenian families are facing issues with housing so, the programme covers apartment rents and utility fees for four months depending on their needs. This support is extended for up to eight months in exceptional cases if the families' social-economic situation does not improve.

During 2017 the programme reached 568 beneficiaries (281 children and 289 adults).

The services provided include:



- Financial support of rental costs and utilities
- Distribution of food, baby formula, diapers, clothes and shoes
- Medical check-ups and treatments (financial support)
- Distribution of vitamins and medicines
- Individual psychotherapy for children and parents
- Education support, school supplies and support of transportation to school

- Vocational training and working tools for parents
- Housing renovations

The total number of single services provided in 2017 was 3.705

Outlook

The available funding permits us to run the programme through the first quarter of 2018. Support covers rent and utility expenses, material support (cloths, 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 best possible way. The project activities in 2018 mainly focussed on beneficiaries' vocational training and purchase of professional tools, to help them to become economically sustainable.

Italy

Italy is the main point of arrival for refugees in Europe. During 2017 the number of people that arrived by sea was 119,369. Of the children arriving in Italy, 98 % are unaccompanied and separated. Most of the children originate from countries such as Eritrea, Gambia, Egypt, Cote d'Ivoire, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

At present, over 18,000 unaccompanied children are present in dedicated shelters throughout Italy which are run by State authorities, non-profit and private sector entities (UNHCR, 2017). The reception system operates under major strain. Due to the shortage of places, unaccompanied children who are supposed to spend a maximum of 30 days in first reception centers, end up living in these facilities for over a year.

SOS CV Italy works in Calabria, which registers the second highest number of arrivals of children in Italy and one of the regions in Italy worst equipped to deal with migration and suffering one of the highest youth unemployment rates in Italy and Europe.

Operational Update

The Akelius Foundation has contributed to SOS Italy being able to start activities in multiple locations in the municipality of Crotone (region of Calabria) as well as Poci in Tuscany which focus on reception and social integration, including care, regularization of legal status, education and recreational activities.

So far, the activities have reached 250 unaccompanied children in different reception centers in Calabria region. In addition, SOS Italy hosts and cares for 40 unaccompanied children and aims to increase this number as the need for housing is great.



Activities during 2017 include:

- SOS Italy signed a partnership agreement with the University of Turin, Social Community Theatre Center for the development and implementation of educational activities in the 18 reception centers for unaccompanied children.
- Life Skills Lab: a cycle of workshops focused on the acquisition of different life skills that are vital instruments for positive coping and resilience of unaccompanied children. Each workshop, co-facilitated by a team of 4 SOS staff focus on different topics such as managing emotions, identity, decision making and problem solving and takes place once a week.
- Legal counselling and orientation
- Socio-educational activities outside the centers (eg. sports) to encourage interaction with Italian youth
- Resources in the local community were engaged to provide vocational training to local youth and unaccompanied youth on a voluntarily basis. This included training on beekeeping, music, sport, recycling, and pottery making.
- Summer camp for two groups of 11 unaccompanied children. The purpose of the summer camp was to develop life skills and provide psychological support to facilitate integration.
- Over 110 staff of first reception centers were trained on psychological first aid, stress management and basic counselling skills.

The programme in Crotone has been selected as one of the best practices by UNHCR Italy in the region of Calabria. Through the programme we have developed a model of intervention upon which further staff (also of other organizations) could easily be trained and that could also be replicated in other similar refugee-influx prone settings.

In September 2017, SOS Team had a meeting with the new representative of the Italian Government in Crotone, in order to present the organization, the work that is being done and build a stronger relationship with local authorities. The government representative was impressed and has invited SOS to be a member in the Permanent Territorial Commission for Immigration.

Outlook

The programme was planned to continue with support from Akelius foundation until the end of March 2018. Due to the instable situation the set-up of the programme has taken longer than expected, and not all funding has been used. Much efforts have been devoted in 2017 to organize and launch the programme and 2018 is definitely the year on which we can finally capitalise upon these efforts. Therefore SOS Children's Villages proposes that the programme continues to the end of 2018 within the same budget. Focus will still be on expanding mental health and psychosocial support to refugee children and families including child friendly spaces and kid's corners. SOS CV Italia is currently seeking partnerships to establish a clinical unit within the Crotone area that could function as referral center for young people and families in need of psychological trauma treatment and counselling services. Also, support to teachers to increase their awareness of the needs of migrant children and their capacity to support them to reach their full potential. Provision of quality education for children on the move. Expansion and provision of vocational training opportunities for unaccompanied children and local youth, with a focus on beekeeping and bicycle maintenance and repairing.

Bulgaria

Since January 2016, 2,288 children have passed through the reception centers of the State Agency for Refugees. This number is twice as high as for 2015. Upon arrival, unaccompanied children are placed in separate premises within the reception centers where their movements are restricted. During this time, there are limited opportunities for individual work with the children in order to further their development and integration. The lack of integration support leads to further exclusion and re-traumatization of many of the children. The above-mentioned problems have been explicitly stated by the National Ombudsman person and the acute need of child-friendly residential facilities for this particular vulnerable group of children has been recognized by the national stakeholders.

Since the beginning of 2017, 370 unaccompanied children have passed through the reception centers.

Operational Update and Outlook

SOS Children's Villages in Bulgaria provided some support to refugees in Sofia during the first half of 2017, reaching in total more than 1.036 beneficiaries. The Akelius Foundation has contributed to making the following activities possible:

- Provision of infant formula – 504 packages and 100 food packages,
- Provision of winter clothes and shoes for 200 persons
- Following an explosion in one of Sofia's districts, SOS Bulgaria provided financial support for the municipality to provide products and basic necessities for children (food and clothes) from the city. Food packages and clothes were distributed to 334 children and youth.

Regional and International Office

Thanks to the Akelius Foundation the International and Regional offices are now fully staffed with a global refugee advisor, a regional refugee advisor, a flying consultant as well as two emergency preparedness advisors (who are also responsible for the topic of security).

The global and regional refugee advisors support the SOS Member Associations implementing refugee projects with regards to daily operations, trainings and capacity building, assessments, coordination with regional and international actors, advocacy as well as fundraising for follow-up projects in 2018. The flying consultant is supporting SOS Member Associations on the ground in their daily operations and starting emergency preparedness related activities. The emergency preparedness advisors drive and manage the SOS emergency preparedness activities which aim to increase the capacity of SOS Children's Villages to be prepared for a natural or manmade disaster in order to reduce its impact on SOS beneficiaries and local communities. Therefore, SOS analyses risks and vulnerabilities for SOS Children's Villages Programme locations (by using state-of-the-art technology such as satellite based data) and is pre-positioning material and providing trainings to local staff.

Furthermore, trauma healing and stress management trainings were organised for local staff in several countries to support them dealing with traumatized refugees and stress at their daily work aiming to increase the impact of our activities.

Financial report

Donated by Akelius University Foundation, EUR	2016 Budget	2016 Actuals	2017 Budget	2017 Actuals	2018 Budget
Total ERP	3 344 635	3 038 915	6 930 719	6 767 760	162 989
Administration 3 %	100 339	91 167	207 922	203 033	4 890
Total donation	3 444 974	3 130 082	7 138 641	6 970 793	167 879
SEK (using exchange rate at the time of payment)	32 038 259	30 291 699	67 817 085	67 637 590	1 628 423
Average exchange rate	9,30	9,68	9,50	9,70	9,7
Total budget/transfers, all facilities above, EUR	2016 Budget	2016 Transferred	2017 Budget	2017 Transferred	2018 Budget
ERP Syria	500 000	500 000	500 000	500 000	
ERP Lebanon	500 000	0	1 000 000	837 011	162 989 *
ERP Greece	700 900	682 899	1 518 000	1 518 000	
ERP Macedonia	200 000	175 000	300 000	300 000	
ERP Serbia	254 719	1 130 000	1 713 624	1 713 624	
ERP Hungary	414 016	180 000	0	0	
ERP Italy	500 000	60 000	1 440 000	1 440 000	
ERP Armenia	0	211 016	0	0	
ERP Bulgaria	0	0	9 096	9 095	
Regional and International Office	275 000	100 000	450 000	450 030	
Total ERP	3 344 635	3 038 915	6 930 720	6 767 760	162 989

* Remaining funds 162 989 EUR may be shifted to another project depending on the financial need