

International Rescue Committee Greece: Strategy Action Plan



Lesvos, October 2015: Stella Giaga (right), and IRC Information and Protection Officer gives Eman, six weeks old, to Khadija, his mother who is from Bamyán, Afghanistan.



IRC2020 GLOBAL STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The International Rescue Committee's (IRC) mission is to help the world's most vulnerable people survive, recover, and gain control of their future. The aim of the IRC's global strategy, IRC2020 (see right), is to make measurable improvements in health, safety, education, economic wellbeing, and decision-making power. Therefore, the IRC has made investments to design more effective programs, use resources more efficiently, reach more people more quickly and better respond to beneficiaries' needs.



GREECE OVERVIEW

With nearly one million new arrivals, Greece witnessed an unprecedented number of refugees entering – and mostly transiting – the country in 2015 and early 2016. The closure of the “Balkan Route” and introduction of the EU-Turkey Deal in March 2016 led to a drastic reduction in arrivals

and forced those who had arrived previously, but had not yet transited, to stay in Greece. In March 2016, it was estimated that about 60,000 refugees were in Greece. At the time of writing in November 2017, this had dropped to about 45,000, including 30,000 people who had arrived since

January 2017. The rate of arrivals in 2018 is expected to be similar to that of 2017 albeit slightly higher.

Against this backdrop, IRC Greece's portfolio has undergone many transitions. The IRC started operating in Greece in July 2015 and initially received asylum seekers at the shores on Lesbos and transported them to the island's capital. Soon thereafter, IRC was a key actor to set up Kara Tepe site. When the borders along the Balkan route closed, the IRC started operating in sites in Northern Greece, largely focusing on Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) and three protection streams: child protection, gender-based violence, and mental health care. Later on, the IRC opened operations in three sites in Attica with a similar portfolio. In 2016, the IRC was also among the first organizations to provide cash assistance to refugees and has started supporting refugees to access employment since July 2017.



July 2016: Children get water at the Alexandria refugee camp in northern Greece

IRC'S STRATEGIC PROGRAMMING

IRC's vision in Greece is that:

- on the islands, new arrivals have access to a fair, humane asylum procedure, and until that is the case and while conditions in RICs remain sub-standard, newly arrived asylum seekers have access to mental health care, legal support, and gender-based violence services;
- on the mainland, asylum seekers and refugees granted international/subsidiary protection generate income and assets, and have equitable access to improved

mainstream Greek social services and mental health care compared to the Greek population;

- unaccompanied and separated children receive care according to their best interests.

To drive progress toward these results, the core focus aims to improve outcomes related to *Safety, Health, and Economic Well-being*.

Figure 1: Signature Outcomes and Program Approaches

	Signature Outcomes in Greece	Program Approaches
Safety & Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Unaccompanied and separated children receive care according to their best interests. > Children and Women are safe in their homes and communities and receive support when they experience harm. > People are protected from, and treated for mental health and psychosocial support concerns. <p>Gender Equality Outcome: Women and girls are equally safe from harm as men and boys where they live, learn, and work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Partner with local institutions providing sustainable services in child protection, gender-based violence, and mental health care. This includes care for unaccompanied children; comprehensive case management for vulnerable children and survivors of gender-based violence; and individual and group counselling sessions as well as relevant referrals for people showing symptoms of psychological distress. > Provide technical assistance to and share best practices with these institutions to improve their organizational capacity and the services they offer. > Ensure that asylum seekers and refugees have meaningful access to the services offered. > Provide refugees with updated and relevant information through www.Refugee.Info > Advocate for changes in legislation where necessary, and for expanded and improved services offered. > On the islands, provide direct mental health care and gender-based violence services. Support and/or coordinate with legal aid actors where possible. > Advocate for improved conditions in RICs.
Economic Well-Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > People generate income and assets. > Gender Equality Outcome: Women and girls are equal to men and boys in the extent to which their basic needs are met, they are food secure, and they use, generate, and control income and assets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Together with partners, assist asylum seekers, refugees, and other vulnerable groups to secure employment. Train and provide small grants to potential entrepreneurs and link them to experienced mentors. > Sensitize potential employers on hiring asylum seekers and refugees and the benefits of a diverse workforce. > Share best practice with institutions engaged in labor-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees.

COMMITMENTS FOR IMPACT

In order to maximize impact and achieve priority outcomes, the IRC in Greece is making new investments to improve program effectiveness, use resources more efficiently, expand program coverage, react more quickly when crisis strikes, and be more responsive to beneficiaries. The IRC made the following commitments to strengthen programming and improve the lives of the people it serves in Greece:

Figure 2: Commitments to Ensure Impact



Effectiveness

- > Continue strengthening M&E through both systematic collection of data (including at outcome level, clients' and partners' feedback, quantitative and qualitative) and regular analysis of data that results in tangible program improvements.
- > Conduct lessons learnt reviews at least every 9 months which include context analyses, partners' views, IRC staff views, and cost-per-beneficiary calculations and incorporate learnings into future program design.
- > Include a literature review of the evidence base for all new program designs.
- > Consider conducting more extensive studies for advocacy purposes.



Best Use of Resources

- > Analyze cost-per-beneficiary during each program design and monitor it throughout program implementation.
- > Explore employing interns and effective use of volunteers within the IRC and for its partners, drawing on IRC's experience in US Programs.



Scale & Reach

- > In new program design, first explore implementation arrangements with local partners, and consider direct service delivery only exceptionally.
- > Share best-practice approaches widely and influence national programs.



Speed and Timeliness

- > Develop a core group of local partners by the end of 2018.
- > Update IRC Greece's Emergency Preparedness Plan on a biannual basis and ensure its implementation if necessary.



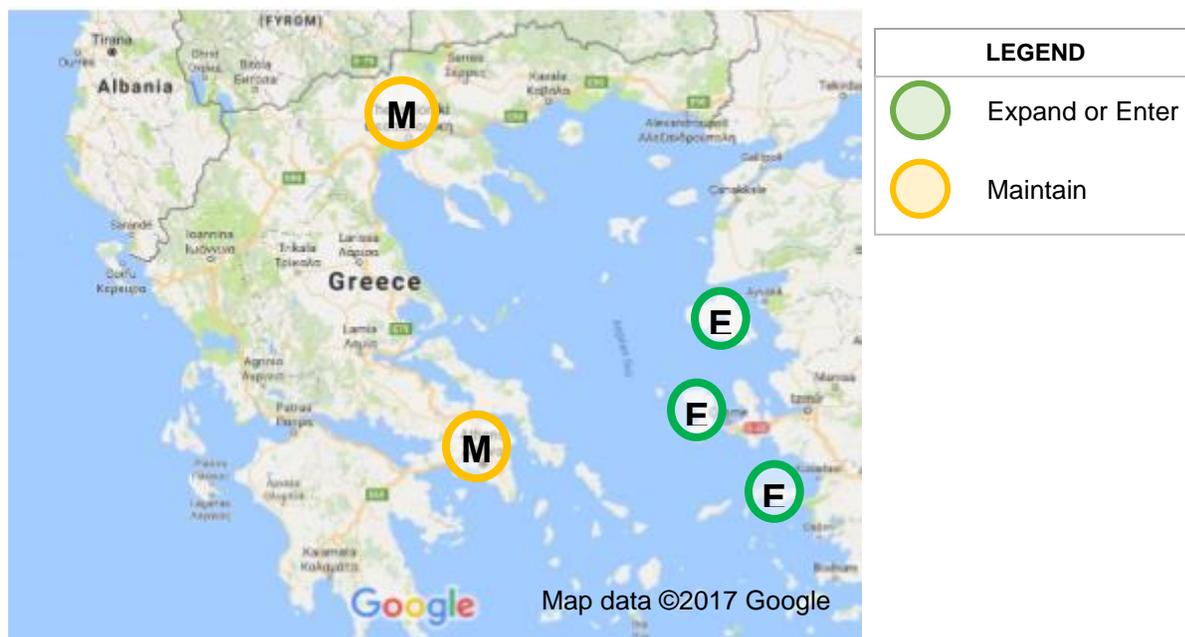
Responsiveness

- > Collect clients' and partners' feedback on services at least annually and adapt programs as necessary.
- > Collect partners' input for program design before any new proposal is developed.
- > For all partnerships, clearly articulate IRC's value added and ensure staff have the necessary hard and soft skills to contribute to the partnership.

IRC'S STRATEGIC PRESENCE

Through the end of 2020, the IRC will maintain, enter and expand its presence across Greece based on an analysis of where the greatest need is and where the IRC can create the greatest impact.

Figure 3: The IRC's Geographic Transitions in Greece



Location	Geographic Transition
<p> Lesvos, Chios, Samos</p>	<p>Enter/Expand due to the significant needs of refugees in RICs on the islands as compared to the mainland. In Lesvos, the IRC will seek to remain a protection and environmental health actor, delivering services in Kara Tepe and deepen protection and mental health engagement to residents of Moria, providing services off-site. The IRC will also monitor needs and potentially expand to Chios and Samos, where the mental health and protection needs of refugees are significant. Direct implementation is an option.</p>
<p> Attica, Thessaloniki</p>	<p>Maintain presence in urban areas on the mainland. The IRC will scale down direct service provision and engage with Greek NGOs and strategically placed public institutions to ensure that the needs of UASC are met and that refugees are able to access services and benefits, as well as actively participate in Greek society. The IRC and its partners will predominately work in urban areas and scale down its presence in sites.</p>



Domenico Di Nuzzo, Senior Safe Zone Officer, bids farewell to an unaccompanied child leaving for Germany to be reunified with his uncle.

The IRC in Greece



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