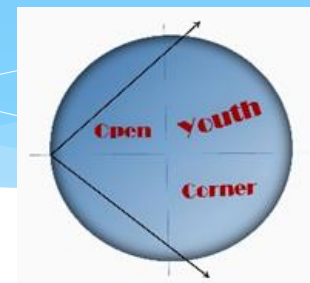


Youth Exchange : I don't see any borders, do you?

04. 11. - 13. 11. 2016; RAKIČAN, SLOVENIA

Volunteering support to refugees in Greece



Athens

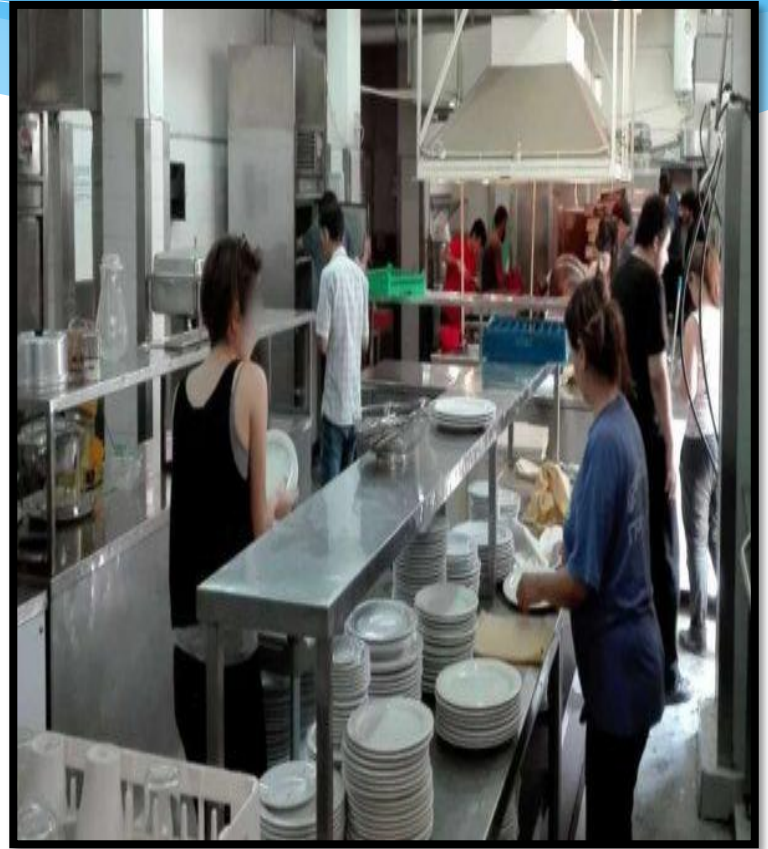
- Accommodation centers & Solidarity homes
- Elliniko (old international Athens airport)



- Elaionas



City Plaza



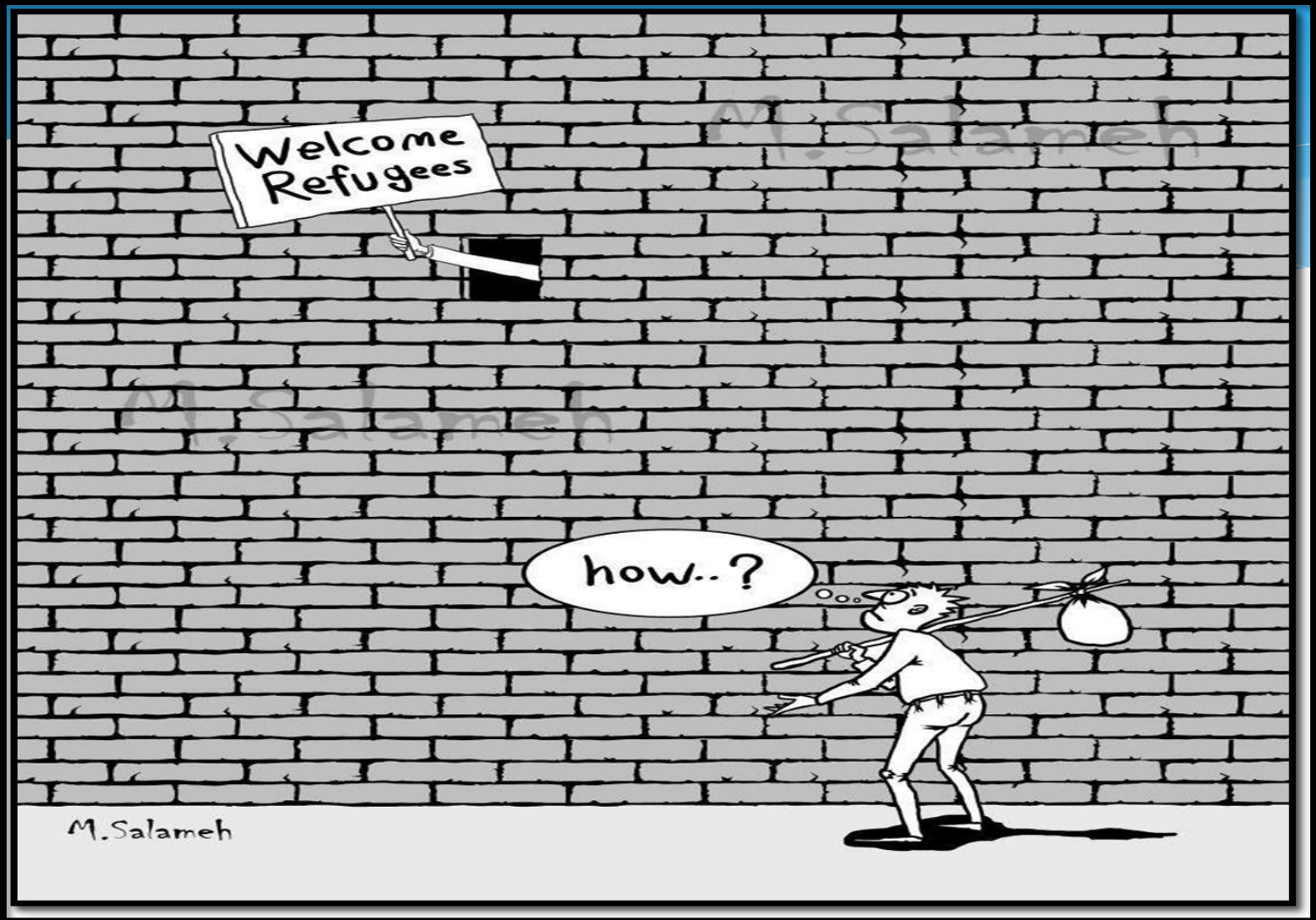
- Notara 26 & Liomena



Welcome
Refugees

how..?

M.Salameh



MOZA(Volos city)

- "MOZA A.E." was a former showroom, which is located at the 4th km Volos-Larissa.
- From April 2016 has become the main refugee accommodation in Volos. It is a 1,900 sq.m. roofed building surrounding with fenced 9.5 acres area.
- In the hospitality center stacked 150 refugees without designated areas for families to ensure rudimentary "personal space". The diet does not sufficiently cover the nutritional needs.
- For 150 people there are 10 chemical toilets and 10 showers which do not have hot water, resulting bathe with cold water. There is a great shortage of sanitary items such as soap, shampoo, detergents.
- Major difficulties faced by their movement within conurbation, for the supply of goods, and moving to the hospital. Medical services are rudimentary and there is urgent need for ophthalmic surgeries to two elderly.





Volunteering in Volos

- Most of the actions that have been made in the city of Volos, in the context of caring for refugees, have been organized, mostly, by volunteer groups despite from a local administrative body.
- University of Thessaly: Academics in cooperation with students (mostly from educational departments), have visited Moza plenty of times mostly during spring of 2016. Students entertained children refugees with activities such as drawing, dancing, singing and mathematic activities.
- Independent student team:
- In spring 2016 10 students from University of Thessaly had started collection and donation of essentials for refugees who remained in Moza. This was the PLAN A. However, the donation was huge, so was decided packages to be sent in other places of Greece (Lamia, Patra).
- Other actions:
- Almost every week artists, teachers, academics, doctors and students visit Moza and keep company, relive, educate and entertain refugees, mostly children.





<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volos>

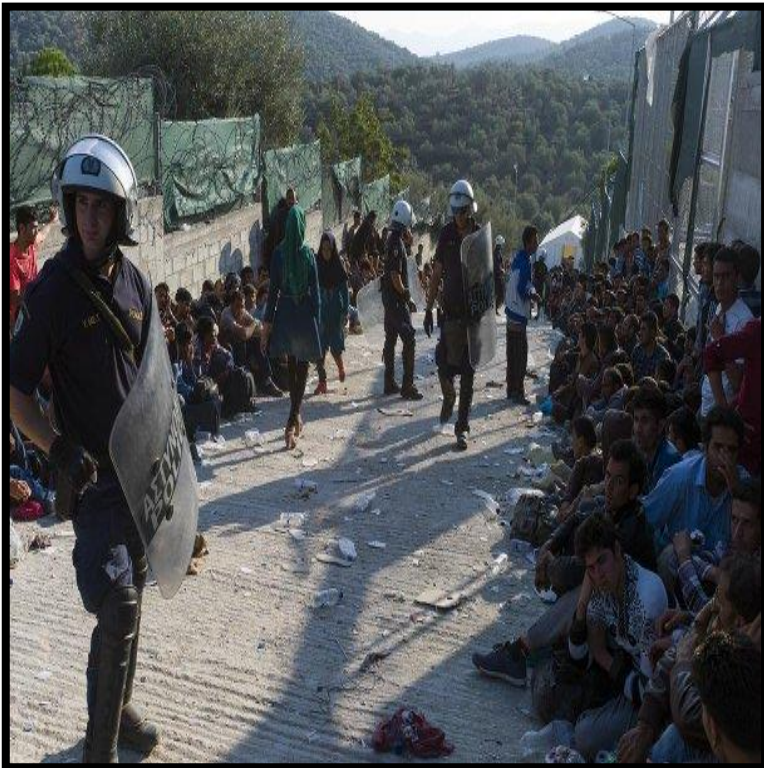
Ομάδα Υποστήριξης Προσφύγων Βόλου (facebook)

Lesvos

- The Greek island was the primary gateway into Europe for refugees.
- The summer of 2015 was very difficult and the city became a vast refugee campus with tents, protests and daily episodes.
- Local people had to adjust in a new situation.

Moria camp

- Moria is a transit camp and registration point for refugees arriving on the island of Lesbos from Turkey.





Thousands flee as blaze sweeps through Moria refugee camp in Greece. Greek government to dispatch two ferryboats to hold detainees after up to 4,000 people forced to leave Lesbos facility

Local community and refugees at Lesbos

- The majority of local people became respectable for their solidarity to the refugees.
- Volunteers, NGOs
- Residents help in various ways(food, clothes, accommodation in their own homes etc)



Local community and refugees at Lesbos

- There were people who exploited the ignorance and the need of refugees
- Some incidents with racist behaviors

Local community and refugees at Lesbos

- Due to the closed borders , high amount of the incoming refugees trapped in Lesbos ,waiting for the appropriate documents. As a result :
 - Increase of conflicts between refugees and also local authorities
 - Infringement of the human rights
 - Increase of diseases (e.g hepatitis)
 - a dramatic downturn in the tourism (almost -70% at summer of 2016)
 - destructions in the camps
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2eHm_XymvZs

Katsika Refugee camp

Ioannina city

March-April

2016

I was volunteering for two months at Katsikas refugee camp on mainland Greece. In Katsika, the current UNHCR population estimate is 1075, from Syria, Iraq, Kurdistan, and Afghanistan: 35% are women and 30% are children. The camp has 20 portable toilets and 12 showers for the entire population. The tents have no flooring, with many living on very rocky ground. The site is an old military airport, totally barren with no shade. The region is mountainous and the weather too humid. The rain causes the camp to flood constantly.



Personal experience

- * I've spent two months volunteering at Katsikas Refugee camp outside of Ioannina, Greece. I was there from the beginning, from the day that the first 500 people came. The camp wasn't capable to host any of them and there wasn't the workforce to manage the situation. There were only some soldiers from the Greek army that were the responsible for arrivals, some volunteers from NGO Olvidados, and four local people included me.
- We checked the documents of the refugees and the number of the person of each family.
- After that, we should give them some food (one croissant, one sandwich one juice, per person) and infant formula and cream from the babies.
- The third point was, that we give to them blankets and sleeping bags and a number of a tent.
- The last part included to help them carry their things to their tents.

- The tents aren't appropriate to host people under that circumstances. At the beginning there weren't any toilets, which came later. Regarding to the political situation, the local state was absent. Only were some soldiers from the army that they help the people with the tents and bring the food. The most helpful was the red cross, the people of NGO Olvidados and we, the local people.
- My work included everything, I went there early in the morning and leaving at night. I was organizing activities for the children, sharing the food of the army (that was awful for human beings), I compile a list of needs of each person if that was clothes, shoes, health problems, document problems.

- Passing the weeks I could say that we were more organized. More NGO's came for help, more local people bring more things. We organized a school for the children teaching them some Greek words but more English language, because we had communication problems. Most of them don't speak English so sometimes we couldn't help them because couldn't understand.

School project

- The main school had, for the first days, been a disaster. The chaos was caused by a combination of factors: Ramadan (the Muslim holy month of fasting); the long overdue deliverance of information on how long people would have to stay in Greece (much longer than they had expected); and some of the primary volunteer teachers/coordinators leaving.
- People were stealing benches from the school to break down and use for firewood. We built more, screwed them securely into the floor, and the next day they were gone. The tent walls had been torn up by children, and the lock boxes we have in the classroom tents that hold markers, boards, and other school supplies had been broken into and used as fire.

Finally a group from the community came to us wanting to meet. They saw the school wasn't working, they told us they knew how important education is, that they want it for their children, and that they wanted to take over the school as a community. Before, education had been a service we offered to the children, now it was a community expectation, the way it is outside of refugee camps. It's been incredible not only in terms of results, but also community empowerment, cross-cultural integration, and of course education.



Photo credits :Eftychia Rizou

Protest at Katsikas camp

- The conditions in the camp in Katsikas are terrible. People stated that the food that the army supplies is very bad and access to doctors sometimes is not given. In case of raining, the camp floods and after the rain snakes and scorpions crawl around the camp. Next to the highway, six buses have been parked. People refuse to leave the buses. They were brought here from the now closed Nea Karvali camp.
- People from the camp keep joining the protest. They are bringing blankets and sleeping bags, preparing to spend the night on the highway. The next day, the major came by and told the protestors that they have to leave the highway otherwise they will be removed by force. Riot police violently pushed people off the highway. The people were noticeably in distress, children were crying and people fled the violent riot police back to the camp. However, 27 people were arrested, among them also Greek and international solidarity protestors.







Photo credits :Eftychia Rizou



Photo credits :Eftychia Rizou



Photo credits :Eftychia Rizou



Photo credits :Eftychia Rizou



Photo credits :Eftychia Rizou