



EVALUATION OF IFRC POPULATION MOVEMENT EMERGENCY APPEAL GREECE

The Emergency Appeal funded operation

Over the past decade, Greece has faced continuous pressure on its national asylum and reception systems because of its geographic proximity to key migratory routes. In 2015, the country experienced a major increase in the number of migrants arriving on its shores, as thousands of people tried to reach Northern and Western Europe. As a result, an Emergency Appeal was launched by IFRC in September 2015, which continued until December 2018, with a total funding ask of **CHF 50.5 million**. The Emergency Appeal during this period assisted **338,673 people**.

The number of migrants continued to increase in the years that followed. On 27 February 2020, the Turkish government announced that it would no longer stop refugees from attempting to cross by land or by sea into Europe. Following this announcement, an estimated **10,000-15,000 migrants** gathered at the land border between Türkiye and Greece. Consequently, on 13 March 2020, IFRC launched its second Emergency Appeal in Greece (MDR65003)¹ seeking **CHF 20 million** to support the Hellenic Red Cross and the Turkish Red Crescent in delivering assistance and support to some **120,000 people**, focussing on: shelter, livelihoods, water and sanitation, health, and migration. The Appeal's initial overall objective was to support

the National Societies' preparedness and response activities to meet the humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable migrants crossing to Türkiye, and further moving onward to Greece, Bulgaria, Albania, Cyprus, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Aegean, Adriatic and Mediterranean Seas, in alignment with Red Cross principles, procedures and commitments.

The Emergency Appeal's operation duration was eventually extended from 9 to 30 months and its emergency plan of action was reviewed on three occasions to adapt to emerging needs and increasingly protracted needs of the affected population. First, to respond to the increasing needs, with a sudden increase in arrivals. Secondly, to respond to the specific needs of the population of Moria migrant site on Lesbos Island following the devastating fire of September 2020. And, thirdly, with the phase out and closure of the Türkiye operations. As the operation progressed, it increasingly focussed on response activities on the Greek islands and mainland, as well as support of the livelihoods of low-income households in the host community on Lesbos Island.

¹ - MDR65003 Emergency appeal Türkiye-Greece and other countries: Population Movement

Evaluation of the Operation

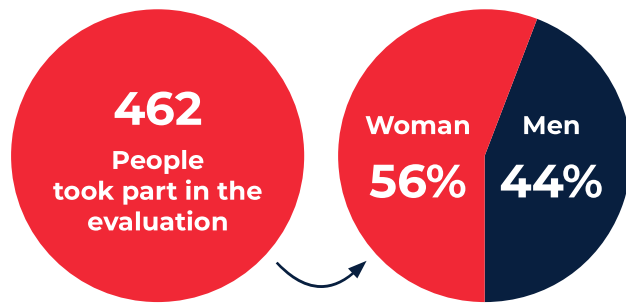
Objectives & Evaluation Criteria

Objectives

- Assess overall achievements
- Assess HRC and IFRC collaboration
- Assess whether the EA reinforced the NS's capacity in the area of migration

Criteria

- Relevance & Appropriateness
- Efficiency
- Effectiveness
- Impact
- Coverage
- Sustainability & Connectedness



Partners Involved in the Evaluation Process:

IFRC - ICRC - Hellenic RC

Partner National Societies: British RC, German RC, Italian RC, Netherlands RC

Non-RCRC (Red Cross Red Crescent) partners

Evaluation Process Overview

Population Movement Emergency Appeal I Greece



An evaluation of the project was undertaken following the closure of the Emergency Appeal in September 2022. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness (including any clear impact) and sustainability of the activities, systems, management, and coordination of this IFRC funded operation.

Data collection for the evaluation was carried out through 61 Key Informant Interviews, 425 responses to 2 surveys (one addressed to staff related to the operation (45 responses) and the second to assisted population (380 responses)) and a 9-day field trip to Greece where project sites were visited in Athens, Thessaloniki and Ritsona.

A unique context

The context of IFRC Population Movement Emergency Appeal Greece was very unusual and it is unlikely that a similar set of circumstances will occur again. It encompassed:

- A worldwide pandemic – the first Greece lockdown was announced 10 days after the appeal was launched
- The Hellenic Red Cross (HRC) re-joining the International Federation following its suspension
- Migration fatigue from donors – this was the second Greece Population Movement appeal this decade
- A joint Emergency Appeal with Turkish Red Crescent, which complicated the development of indicators and the reporting requirements due to differing operational contexts

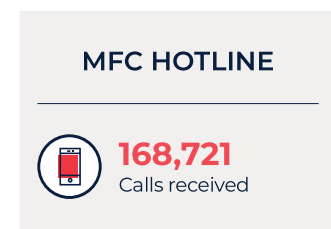
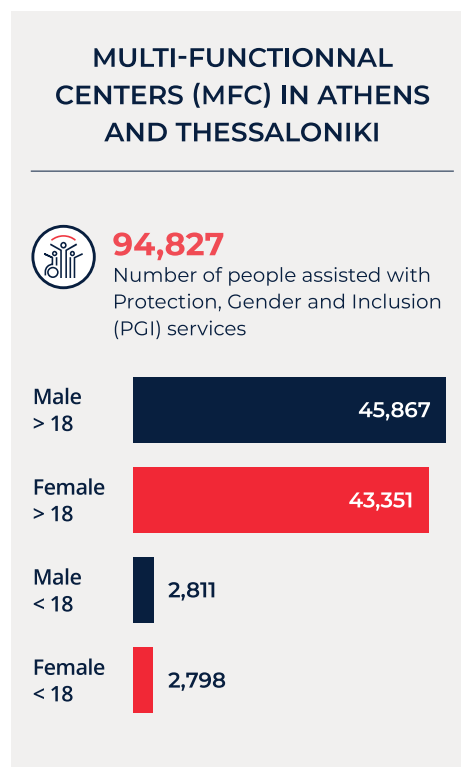
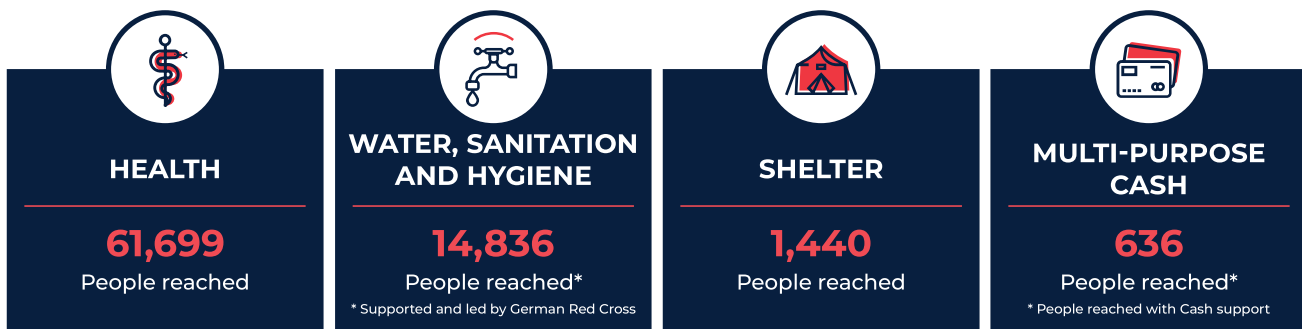
Key findings

Based on the findings of the evaluation, the HRC has key strengths in its migration programme in the areas of Health, Social Welfare (including Community Engagement and Accountability, Psychosocial Support) and Re-establishing Family Links.

The operation was found to be aligned with the HRC's strategic priorities, the governmental authorities' requirements and complementary to national and international humanitarian actors such as IOM (International Organization for Migration), Médecins Sans Frontières, Greek Council for Refugees and the National Public Health Organization (EODY) present in the accommodation sites.

Both the Red Cross and external key informants were very positive about the good quality services the national society provided and it was clear that in Greece, Red Cross services are key to providing support to the migrant and refugee population. This was backed up by the affected population survey results which show that the quality of the assistance provided has been highly appreciated.

People reached through Greece I Population Movement Operation



92% of survey respondents were happy with the service they had received from the Red Cross and 84% would recommend the service to other people.

It is furthermore important to highlight the impact that this Operation has had on over 100,000 people who, among other services, received health, translation, or referral services. All assisted persons who participated in focal group discussions assign the highest level of satisfaction to the Red Cross.

It was also widely felt that because of this appeal, the HRC is strengthened and is now better prepared to respond to migration in Greece. Good Red Cross Red Crescent Movement coordination and collaboration, including between IFRC and the national society, was also demonstrated in the appeal.

The Appeal has moreover helped strengthen dialogue with the Greek Government, an area which however should be developed further according to the evaluation. As well as continuing to improve Red Cross' standing at a national level, this would also support advocacy work and resource mobilisation.

Overall conclusion

The evaluation team considers the IFRC Greek Population Movement Operation to have been relevant and appropriate in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable refugees, asylum seekers and migrants.



Recommendations

- + Recommendations included the need for **improvement of data collection systems** for better accuracy and improved reporting on results and impact. The Evaluation recommends that the HRC undertakes a digital assessment to help inform the development of a digitalisation strategy and investment plan for the HRC's digital transformation, including key investments in human resources to help advance this agenda. The Evaluation notes that digital transformation would also support the HRC's resource mobilisation efforts, as information would be readily available for donors.
- + It was furthermore recommended that in order to increase the level of effectiveness, carrying out **internal or external mid-term reviews** of projects are needed.
- + Greater **unity across divisions and further cross-division collaboration and planning** are also crucial and needed to further enhance the national society's capacities in migration. The Evaluation encouraged the HRC to undertake preparedness planning at local branches (as a minimum Lesbos and Thessaloniki and other branches along the migration routes).
- + It was also recommended that investing in **fundraising and donor stewardship** at central level is needed in order to enhance financial sustainability of the HRC's migration programmes.
- + Lastly as part of the auxiliary role of the HRC, it was recommended to continue **strengthening dialogue with the Government**. While services and programmes can be expanded and strengthened, it is equally important to strengthen dialogue with other stakeholders, including with the Government of Greece to ensure complementarity, allow space for the HRC activities and to make sure that observations at the operational level on the impacts of policy choices are channeled back to the government.

Sustainability

The Population Movement Operation is continuing, despite the IFRC Emergency Appeal being closed in September 2022, with IFRC financial support to the HRC from other pledges and appeals.