



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Together:

In 2020, this very difficult year, we raised
\$121,253.26

We received a \$20,000 grant
Plus granted airfare for 5 round trip tickets to Greece

Thanks to **you, our donors** we continued our programs despite the corona virus pandemic.

January- Our team provided medical care in Matamoros, Mexico to migrants seeking asylum in the USA.

February - March our team provided medical and dental care at the Moria Refugee Camp, Lesvos Greece. Our service was cut short due to the closure of the EU during the first wave of COVID

June - our annual medical clinic to ZANSKAR, INDIA was sadly cancelled due to COVID. We sent funds for needed medication.

August - Telehealth project in collaboration with Vienna Medical University implemented in Samos, Greece Camp

September - after the devastating Moria Camp fire which left over 22,000 refugees without shelter Hands On Global sent funds for immediate needs such as water, food, blankets, medical supplies and medications. **Thank you to YOU our DONORS for such a heartfelt and immediate response** to this crisis.

November -December - A Hands On Global team delivered medical care in the new camp on Lesvos for 6 weeks. Members of the team continue work on the ground until Jan 31 both in medical and basic needs distribution. Telehealth collaboration project implemented in Lesvos Camp.

Your donations enabled us to help so many in need.

They thank you, we thank you!



February - March Moria Camp, Unaccompanied Minors medical clinic



September 8, Moria Camp Burns to the ground



November 2020 new Kara Tepe Camp

2020 Saga ...

As told by Executive Director Valerie Hellermann

AHH 2021 at last! Now that 2020 is over and the planets are aligned in positive energy I can come out from under my blanket to tell you Hands On Global's 2020 story. It was a rough year for so many of us and a terrible year for the refugees.

There was not much in the news media about their story.

In February Hands On Global team including a dentist and an OR nurse headed for Moria Refugee Camp in Greece. There was talk

of the novel corona virus, mostly it was happening in China. At the last minute I brought a suitcase of extra masks, isolation gowns and gloves, just in case. We arrived a week after a fascist uprising on Lesbos Island. NGO's cars were chased, windshields broken with bats and the UNHCR Stage 2 reception camp intentionally burned to the ground. We were there only 3 days when the One Happy Family Community Center outside the Moria Camp was another intentionally set fire. We and the other NGO's kept a very low profile. Many NGO workers left the island.

There were over 22,000 refugees in the Moria camp, many living in the 2 overflow areas, the Olive Grove and the Jungle. Conditions were beyond dismal. Raw sewage flowing freely down the narrow paths between makeshift shelters, not enough food delivery everyday and daily violence as people fought to have their needs met. It was dangerous and we were thankful to have Scott, our security guy with us. We settled into providing medical and dental care despite the chaos.

Then we found ourselves in the vortex of the EU covid crisis. The numbers all over the EU were going up, the mortality rate shocking. The medical ngo's held meetings trying to figure out how to handle this in a grossly overcrowded chaotic refugee camp. There was virtually a suitcase of PPE's. Hand sanitizer was gold.

The EU was going into lockdown. The camp itself went into lockdown. Refugees were unable to leave the camp nor had free movement inside. Services and programs were cancelled causing even more stress to the refugees.

There were urgent calls from family and the Hands On Global board advising us to return home. Should we stay or should we go? It was an hour by hour discussion.

There were 22,000 refugees there needing medical care. What to do? The US Embassy in Athens advised us to leave now or be there indefinitely. Flights all over were being cancelled. Reluctantly we caught one of the last flights out of Athens, each of us flying a different route home, taking whatever flight we could find.



UNHCR Stage 2 Reception camp....burned



Moria Camp home to 22,000+ refugees



Fascist attack on NGO car

Those brave compassionate dedicated NGO's that stayed on the ground did an amazing job. They came together, collaborating on a central triage, shared supplies and Refuge4refugees built an isolation center in a weeks time. They divided the camp into segments, moved sanitary facilities to each segment and food was delivered to each. No central gathering.

Lesvos Island did really well during the first wave of the pandemic. There were few cases and very few in the camp. Greece began to open up late June early July as did the camps restrictions. By August the second wave was hitting and the numbers were going up exponentially. The camp went back into lockdown early September. Because there were so few cases in the camp the refugees began to think the covid crisis was a hoax and a means to keep them imprisoned inside the camp. Of 22,000 refugees there were only 39 active cases in the camp and they were in isolation.

Tensions were rising and a fire broke out the night of Sept 8th. High winds drove the flames quickly throughout the camp and the entire camp burned. It was devastating. Now there were 22,000 people stranded on the road, in the jungle with no shelter, no food no water and having lost all their possessions, again. The military arrived and kept all the refugees barricaded in the roadway for almost 3 weeks. There was no food and water for days.

My colleagues on the ground told us of how everyone scrambled to provide basics like sleeping bags , blankets, medical care for the injured, medicines for the chronically ill, food, water, hygiene items. The medical NGOs also had lost everything in the fire, medical equipment, medicines, bandages. It was another humanitarian disaster. It took almost a month for a "new camp" to be set up.

This new camp called "Kara Tepe 2" was set up on an abandoned firing range of the Greek Army. It is a rocky piece of land next to the Aegean. The UNHCR brought thousands of large white summer tents that were set up on gravel ground with no floor. The wind and rain goes right through these tents. The camp immediately flooded the first rain storm. The refugees were reluctant to move into this new camp. They were not given a choice and were forced in by the military. What they want is ASYLUM, not another camp. Some member states of the EU did step up and the unaccompanied minors were all immediately removed from the island. Many are still in Greece waiting to start a new life in the EU. Some medically vulnerable refugees were also granted asylum in the EU. Most refugees remain.



Hands On Global team responded to this crisis and committed to come to Lesbos as soon as we could all cast our votes for the presidential election. Our team supported by other NGO's; Blessings International, MAP International. Brothers Brother Foundation quickly amassed a huge cache of medicines and medical supplies. We were vetted by the EODY(the Greek Ministry of Health) given humanitarian visa permits and jumped through the hoops to get into Greece. **AIRLINK**, a US based NGO arranged for our air tickets and United Airlines comped us 14 bags of supplies.

We arrived in Lesbos Nov 4th. Work started Nov 6th.

This new camp is closed, a limited number of refugees are only permitted out of the camp for 4 hours every 10 days. There is a huge police presence, metal detectors, searches, a very oppressive atmosphere. The tents have no electricity. When we arrived there were no showers. People had not showered since Sept 8. Several huge water bladders were set up while we were there for cold showers. There were not adequate toilet facilities and NO PROGRAMS. Refuge4refugees was in the process of putting pallets down as floors in the tents and digging trenches to avert the flooding. The refugees seemed very subdued, depressed, defeated and many said they preferred Moria Camp to this.

The medical tent was a huge UNHCR structure with prefab clinic spaces inside. There was a constant thunderous sound of the tent walls flapping in the wind. Triage was outside, lovely when the sun shined, miserably cold and windy in the evening and impossible in the rain. A WHO lab was inside the tent where rapid COVID tests were done and a truly dismal covid isolation unit behind the medical tent.

Hands On Global was working with CMA (Crisis Management Association) formed by 2 colleagues we had worked with before, Dr Ousman Wefa and Dr Rodwan Faashtol. They formed this ngo to address the emergency need for health care in this new crisis. It is based on a true collaborative model and worked well. There is a central triage, central pharmacy, primary, emergency, chronic care, wound care and a scabies clinic. The EODY is providing the chronic care and International volunteers doing emergency, primary, wound care and scabies. There were hitches of course, the biggest one being mental health care. One psychiatrist and one psychologists is grossly inadequate. There are daily panic attacks, suicide attempts and self harming. One can only imagine the PTSD and continued trauma these refugees have experienced.

On average the clinic treats approx 1,000 refugees per week.



Refugees stranded on the road after the fire



When the rain falls in the new camp



We worked side by side with refugee translators. They are all refugees themselves. None of us could have done our jobs without them. They are kind, compassionate men and women dedicated to assisting the medical teams in providing the best of care. They showed up always on time, always stayed late if you needed them and always willing to take time to translate well. They are the people you bond with for life and would welcome into your community if given the opportunity.

Our team worked well together doing medical. On the weekends we volunteered with Refuge4refugees doing distributions of clothing, tarps, diapers and whatever was needed. Many people still did not have winter coats or shoes. Some of our team worked with Home for All doing food distribution. Part of our daily routines were to stop in the various storage units and organize donated supplies and get them where needed. There is so much need, so much work to be done. It was difficult to leave after 6 weeks. Two of our team have stayed for another 6 weeks. Other Hands On Global team members will return soon.

These refugees have fled endless wars, political, religious, gender persecution, environmental disasters and economic hardships. They are seeking safety and an opportunity for a fruitful life. Nobody I met wanted to leave their homeland, their families or their communities. They were desperate. They all embarked on perilous journeys losing people and possessions on the way to the "promised land". They find themselves herded into dismal inhumane refugee camps for years as the world looks the other way. We need to change this. All of us have equal value and deserve the same basic human rights. We must work for change. We must recognize we are all in this together. And YES, the work is overwhelming, the grief enormous. The support of all YOU, our DONORS made our contributions and our work possible. Whenever I have the opportunity I tell the refugees "Hands On Global is here with these medications because people in America care about them." This always makes them smile they ask me to tell you THANK YOU.

Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief.

Do justly, now.

Love mercy, now.

Walk humbly, now.

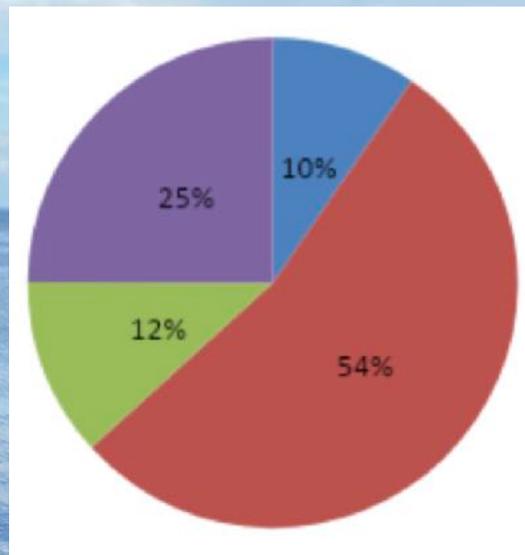
You are not obliged to complete the work,
but neither are you free to abandon it.



Translators
Arabic, Farsi, Lingala, French, Dari, Somali



Home For All volunteer cooking food for distribution to medically vulnerable refugees.



	Administration \$9,135.00
	Refugees, Direct Crisis Response \$51,112.00
	Moria Camp Medical Service \$11,243.00
	Kara Tepe Camp Medical Service \$24,764.00



Thank you
Please continue
to follow our work ...
join us in our work ...
and DONATE to our work
handsonglobal.org

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