



October 31st, 2016

Report on the Situation in the Reception & Identification Center of Moria Lesvos

The situation in the Reception and Identification Centre (RIC) of Moria in Lesvos remains, in general, stable during the last period, and so is the number of TCNs residing in it.

An exception to this situation is the procedure for readmission in Turkey for the TCNs that mainly a) have received a negative response to their asylum petition, b) have not expressed the will to be granted the status of international protection.

The possibility of readmission, especially for persons who come from countries with a low rate of recognition of the refugee status, is an extra factor causing fear, despair and tension.

To the above factors we could attribute the incidents caused on 24/10, at the site where the EASO interviews are taking place, which resulted to the burning of 8 containers, equipment as well as a number of files with petitions under examination for international protection.

Taking into consideration the above and focusing on the presentation and analysis of the situation in the RIC in Moria, for October 2016, the following conclusions can be reached:

GENERAL OVERVIEW

The timely and accurate information of the TCNs from the authorities, concerning the procedures for securing international protection, remains all these months (March-October), according to the TCNs themselves, the most important need/gap.

Also, an important parameter in the general overview of the situation are the consequences of the incidents, of a smaller or larger scale, that have taken place from April until today inside the RIC, and include both psychological and functional consequences.

The psychological consequences are linked to the increasing insecurity whereas the functional ones with the extended damage and/or destruction of part of the infrastructure, especially of that covering housing needs. A brief update on the various sectors follows:

ACCOMMODATION

Coming back to the living conditions, the overconcentration of people inside the RIC creates a huge tension in the existing structures and infrastructure. The fact that the majority of TCNs lives in tents or temporary structures, as a consequence of the extended incidents of the 19th of September, when a large number of the infrastructure was destroyed, is at this moment, the biggest challenge, as far as securing dignified and safe living (privacy, protection from weather conditions etc). The already presented proposal for replacement of the tents with containers, taking into consideration the deterioration of weather conditions becomes of capital importance.

WASH

The overall picture concerning shelter and hygiene do not secure public health. However, the continuous effort for maintaining but also improving the hygiene infrastructures undertaken by the Organizations, as well as by the Municipality that function under the supervision of the Administration of the Center is deemed especially useful, but not capable of deterring problems such as water supply disruptions, malfunctioning of the sewage system, limited provision of hot water and disproportionate relationship between services and population (toilets, taps, showers etc.) The cleaning in public spaces, especially in relation with the population that resides in the Center, remains at a satisfactory level.

SITE PLANNING

The biggest challenges that arise as far as spatial planning is concerned are mainly: a) the technical preparation that needs to be made in order for the containers to be placed (dimensions 6metres x 3metres) that will replace the tents, if of course the relevant proposal is put into action and b) the technical work that need to be done immediately at the subsoil so as to safely manage rainwater in order to avoid flooding danger, which might put at risk the safety of the tents and shelters.

Another parameter that needs to be taken into consideration and is connected with the above is the power supply of the shelters, which up to now is done in an improvised way by the TCNs themselves, which of course raises security issues.

FOOD

As food is concerned, the Army, through a private catering company, continues to cover the biggest part of dietary needs, another part of which is covered by NGOs. We must underline that the distribution time of food, thanks to a new system put in place, does not exceed 40 minutes. Efforts continue to be made to provide for people with special dietary requirements, when necessary, without this being possible yet.

A reminder that: a) there is no provision for the storage and preservation of food and drink at 'home' and b) infant milk powder (for infants not breast-feeding) is provided only by Mdm in collaboration with the International Organisation "Save The Children".

NFI's – NON FOOD ITEMS

Currently, the priority for NGOs involved in the NFIs distribution is the provision of winter items for clothing and footwear as well as other necessary accessories. For a more effective provision of services to the TCNs, rearrangements of distribution points are being planned. There is a constant effort for better coordination in order to avoid duplication as well as to fill in the existing gaps.

The cash program that is being implemented at a national level and by extension in Lesvos contributes significantly to the satisfaction of basic needs.

PROTECTION

The prevention and suppression of violent incidents are the most significant challenges at the moment when it comes to the safety of TCNs, as the frequent episodes put them in constant danger, especially those who are more vulnerable.

Equally important is the access to legal aid, since the result of the petition to be granted with the status for international protection is the most significant step when it comes to the way-out the TCNs seek.

All these months the cases of self-harm and extreme behavior from the part of the TCNs, as a means of expression of the insecurity and despair caused by the situation of uncertainty, remain at the same levels. These include cases where prior experiences in the countries of

origin or transit, in combination with the current conditions continue to provoke suicidal tendencies and behaviors.

For the vulnerable groups (such as newborns, persons with disabilities et. al.) residing in the Center the specialized infrastructure and services remain unfortunately- almost nonexistent.

The extremely vulnerable group of unaccompanied minors, these remain in conditions limited freedom for prolonged periods. The creation of additional hosting facilities in the island and in the mainland has helped to decongest the hosting area for unaccompanied minors. The creation of a relevant hosting facility by MDM in Attica has contributed significantly and decisively to the same direction. Yet, despite the reduction of the number of persons residing in the Centre, the regular exit of the minors from the Centre during afternoon hours, the scheduled educational and recreational activities, the prolonged stay in the Center continues to have negative consequences. Indicative of the anxiety and tension they experience -besides the general population the unaccompanied minors as well- is the suicide attempt of a minor that took place at the beginning of October.

MENTAL HEALTH & PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT (MHPSS)

The MdM Medical Center in Lesvos continues to bear the brunt of the responsibility to cover Target-Groups in regards to first aid medical treatment and psychosocial support.

Additionally, in the context of their cooperation with the First Reception and Identification Service, for all the new arrivals, MdM perform medical and psychosocial assessments, as provided by the service responsible. The primary aim of the MdM team following this procedure is to identify and determine vulnerability, according to the current legislation as well as referring cases for better responding to their needs. In this case, the collaboration with Public Services, Institutions and Actors, as well as NGOs is of capital importance.

The medical part of the team continues to provide primary healthcare seven days (7) a week, addressing the total of the population and referring them to Secondary Health Structures, when deemed necessary. The role of the medical section remains crucial as far as the prevention and/or dealing with infectious diseases, safeguarding in this way public health. However, this task is aggravated due to the consequences of the overconcentration of population and the diseases that can appear in the current period. It must be noted that the creation of a national vaccination plan of the refugee/migrant population, including the TCNs residing currently at Lesvos, remains pending.

The psychosocial section of the team covers on a daily basis the biggest number of beneficiaries, giving emphasis on the especially vulnerable group of unaccompanied minors. Apart from the identification of vulnerable cases among the population of the TCNs, a specially complex procedure which is being done under conditions of great pressure, this section not only offers the necessary support where needed, but also refers cases, as far as practicable, for specialized treatment/ handling. It must be noted that the problem of understaffing of the local hospital, especially as far as the functioning of the Psychiatric clinic is concerned, still remains.

ADVOCACY

The MdM team remains loyal to the dual commitment of the Organization:

- a) to remain in the refugee center of Moria, despite its transformation into a Detention Center (due to the implementation of the joint EU–Turkey statement) in order to provide medical and psychosocial support to refugees whose health was at direct risk and
- b) to report, monitor and document any incident affecting directly or indirectly the human rights of refugees,

This commitment has resulted in contributing in the issuing of 2 detailed reports addressed to the Authorities in October, underlining factors that push TCNs to extreme behaviors.

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