

## CwC Athens Meeting Minutes February 10th, 2016

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Attendance: UNHCR, MDM, Salvation Army, TWB, Anglican Church (Greece), Save the Children, Caritas Athens, Nostos, MetaAction, Network for Children's Rights

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- **Piraeus Port**

UNHCR: Athens has increasingly turned into a focal point - has been called the "the new Lesbos". Need more concerted efforts to coordinate information across the port area. CWC team has put up signage this week - protection info in E1 where most people were gathered for the long haul. UNHCR is also looking at the possibility of a "van on demand" - a van that can move around the gate ports as required. Possibility of having audio capability and/or coordination / partnership with other agencies.

MDM, Caritas and Save the Children are also looking at mobile units - looking at protection issues and information as well. Coordination should be done between all agencies to make sure coverage is well spread out. Action: UNHCR will investigate.

During the border closures, the ferries were broadcasting information (we only know of Arabic) about delays etc. so people came off the ferries with this knowledge. (Note: this should be explored and audio working group will follow up how this information was coordinated and with whom; Govt-police-maritime ministry-port authority?)

Save the Children - work in Piraeus is focused on child protection & vulnerable families. Report that due to buses not moving on Wednesday (3/2) the Port was very congested. (about 1000 - 1500 spread over E1, E2, E3, E4 & E7. POC's were worried about ticket expiry, alternative services, should they go into town? Pakistan/Bangladeshi communities were in need of protection information.

Caritas are still able to be involved at Piraeus, moving between E1/E2/E7 and are present with information. They have a Athens services brochure that they distribute. It's in Farsi, Arabic, English (side note: it's in the Dropbox). Also have interpreters and protection at the port on Monday, Wednesday, Friday at the times the boats come in (usually from 7am onwards for a couple of hours).

Greek Council of Refugees are at Piraeus with Arabic and Farsi interpreters on Thursday morning (which they say is the busiest arrival time) providing legal information across many areas.

MetaAction said there were supposed to be interpreters and community workers on the weekend of 6-7/2 but there was no one there. They were on call but no one called them, because the coordination was missing.

UNHCR said that they would increase community worker presence (who do information distribution) at the port and raised the possibility of Refugees Welcome taking more of a role.

(Refugees Welcome Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/157689337908512/>)

It was noted by UNHCR and Save the Children (and everyone) that the volunteers are really supporting the whole operation at Piraeus and we have to coordinate with them. UNHCR also noted that some volunteers were requesting information about asylum services, relocation, reunification, repatriation and have discussed a flip-book / folder of contact people, actors for reference, basic protection information as well as information on asylum, relocation (who qualifies, next steps). All agencies: please send information to Arwen Kidd - [kidd@unhcr.org](mailto:kidd@unhcr.org) (if you have an A4 information sheet - send it through).

Despite all this activity, the legal aspects of a continued presence in the port remains an issue. GRS said they work on the theory that they have a right to be there because they regard the port as public space. Other NGOs didn't feel quite as confident. Save the Children recommends starting with the Greek NGO Refugees Welcome due to legal issues at the Port. The government rejects any presence by NGOs due to these legal issues. The Piraeus Port authorities do not want foreign NGOs at the port UNHCR - Volunteers presence is largely due to personal relationships with the authorities.

Save the Children underlined that this situation is not going to go away - we need greater coordination, systematic info on numbers of arrivals, buses leaving for Elliniko and the border..... and the availability of places at Elliniko and Eleonas if they wish to leave the port.

PLEASE NOTE : Both Refugees Welcome and BRF were invited to join the CWC coordination meeting but neither group were able to attend.

**Ferries update:** MDM reported on their two medical teams on the ferries; they often provide a wide ranging lot of information to clients of the medical facility. They have dedicated space on the ferry, and let people know they are "open for referrals" through a microphone. They have Arabic and Farsi interpreters as well. Nisos Rodos, Nisos Mykonos - Hellenic Seaways. Open to having extra information of the ferries if needed.

Save the Children attended a meeting set up by the Salvation Army between Athens actors (5/2) and the Mayor. He expressed an interest in having audio on ferries, are developing an app based on services in Athens (Greek, Arabic, English, Farsi). VMM taking over coordination with the ferry companies. ICRC producing content if an arrangement can be made with the ferry companies. Focus on protection related information. Open to coordination with all actors eg. child protection, medical. **Action: audio working group, contact [moncrief@unhcr.org](mailto:moncrief@unhcr.org)**

#### **Athens wide services**

- ACAPS are modifying the Salvation Army VS leaflet for Athens.
- UNHCR - Could we modify and create something similar for the Port?
- Caritas - have produced a VS services leaflet.
- TWB - changing and updating documents that are quite dynamic is also quite easy. We can manage this.
- UNHCR - the blue dot information and service hubs are being rolled out across Greece and the Balkans. Logo neutral branding as an umbrella for various services/NGOs/Actors. The project will be presented to actors once the Blue Dot service is ready. Information is a key factor in Blue Dots.

- Anglican - the mapping process for VS brochure took a few weeks and the coordination was already in place.

#### **refugeeinfo.eu**

Still looking at constant updates. Action: Please provide all update details: [Barbara.Magid@rescue.org](mailto:Barbara.Magid@rescue.org)

#### **Athens Municipality**

- UNHCR reported that the Athens Municipality have announced they are launching a new app
- Anglican - Chief of Staff (Maria) announced that this information would also be put on the ferries.

#### **Weekly round-up & Announcements**

- Nostros
  - Continued presence in Eleonas. Emergency situation this week - everyone working double shifts.
- TWB
  - Running workshop 2nd week of March for Farsi and Arabic training. Common terminology, specifics of this crisis. Also being run in Lesbos.
- Caritas
  - Systematic mobile teams. Mixed groups - social workers, interpreters. Informing and identifying vulnerable cases.
  - People are getting robbed on the train between Piraeus and Elliniko. Professional pickpockets working in groups - witnessed by MDM staff. Possibly foreigners.
- Save the Children
  - Also developing a multidisciplinary mobile team.
- MDM
  - Us too - mobile team! Already have two.
- UNHCR
  - Mobile units need coordination of all the referral systems and mainstream existing government services.