



“Empowering
Community Resilience:
Emergency Smile at
Nea Kavala Reception
Centre”

***International Conference Culture &
Mental Health***

November 27-29, 2024

Emergency Smile Programme

Emergency Smile (ES) is a programme implemented by Red Noses International (RNI) in different crisis settings that aims to **enable joy and promote the emotional well-being and resilience of people affected by crisis.**

The Emergency Smile programme was founded in 2013

This programme is implemented internationally in the form of missions, during which an international team of clown artists lead by a Head of Mission implements activities in a different country.





ES mission in
Nea Kavala/Long
term reception
centre in Greece

October 2021



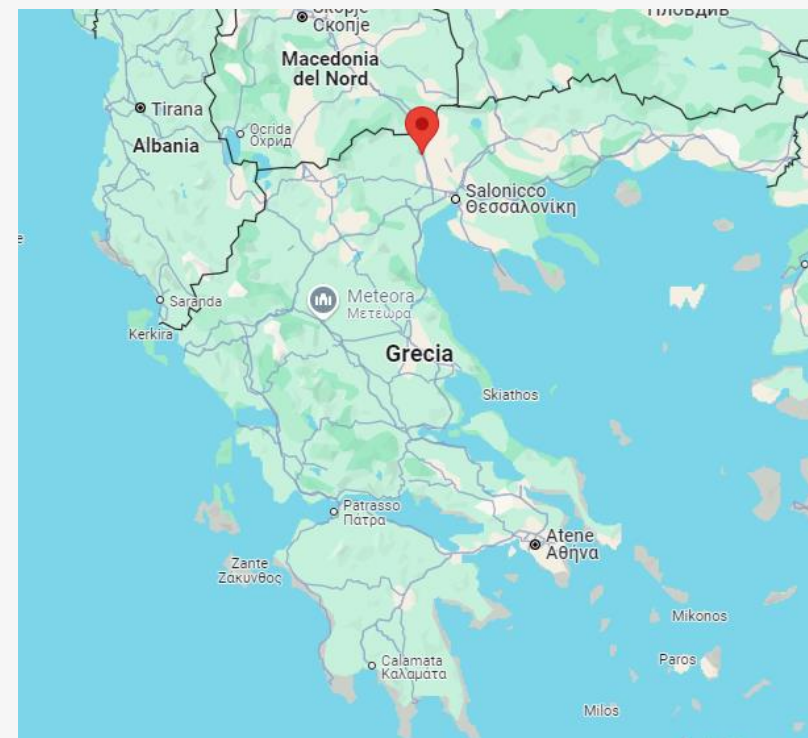
Nea Kavala/Long term reception centre in Greece



The Nea Kavala refugee camp was initially established on February 28, 2016.

In 2018 a new camp was built to provide more security and better housing conditions.

In 2021:
1277 residents
500 were children



Community vs Reception Centre

A community typically has a shared history, rituals and long-term bonds

Nea Kavala is a temporary and diverse gathering of people from different backgrounds and lacks a long-term shared history and established rituals

Despite these differences, residents of the Nea Kavala centre have shared experiences of displacement and about the journey to the camp. Some community based organisations provided support among camp residents and they all shared common issues concerning health, education, work opportunities and uncertainties about the future.



Goals of the mission

Through the creation of moments of connection based in a human to human, horizontal relationship, we



aimed to:



Create an opportunity for everyone to participate in cultural and artistic activities – including children with disabilities, unaccompanied men, people from difference ethnicities, women and older people.

Support the work of the aid workers from community based and international organisations.

Increase the sense of community which can provide emotional stability and a sense of belonging.

And overall increase of resilience: communal bonds can help residents cope with the challenges of displacement.

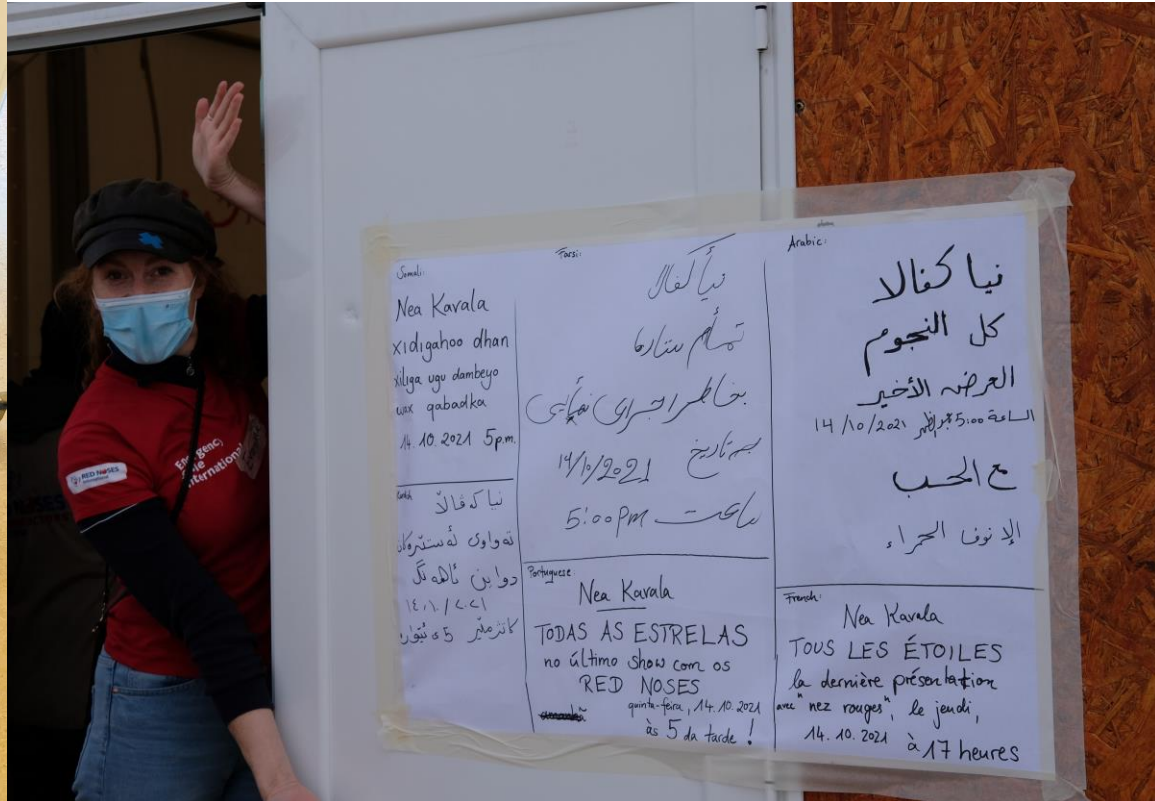
Cycle of engagement







Final celebration





*“When I participated in the workshop, I felt happy, I experienced fun, and I learnt new things. **That gave me hope**” (Sarah - minor resident of Nea Kavala/Greece Long Term Accommodation Centre)*

*“I am so happy that RN is here with us. I want my grandmother to meet you. I live with her here. My parents are in Iran. As a girl, **I do not want to think about boys. I want to study and learn. I am happy that I could learn something new today with you**” (Neherin - minor resident of Nea Kavala/Greece Long Term Accommodation Centre)*

More information available
here:

@emergencysmile

#InLaughterThereIsHope



Thank you very much!