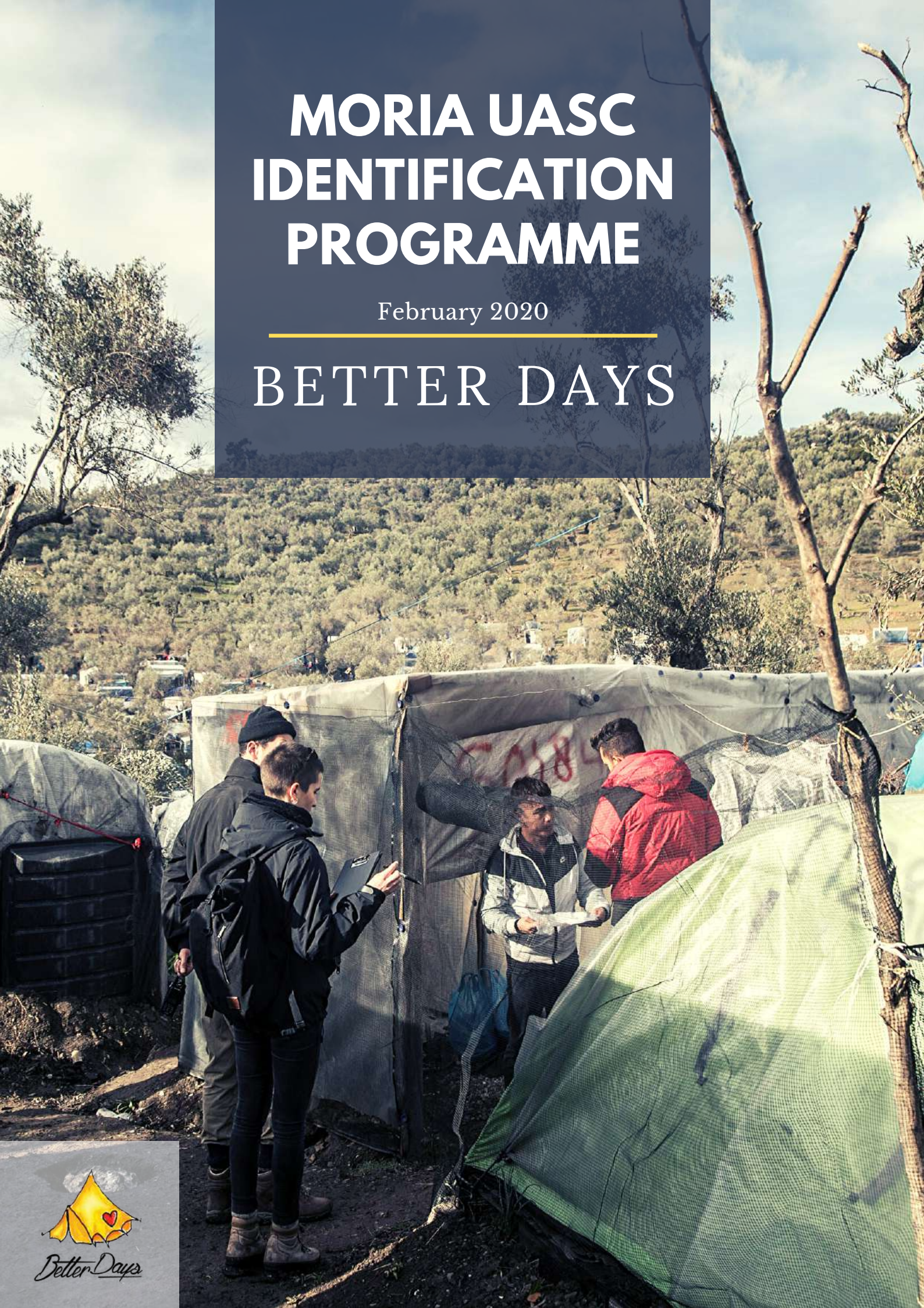


# MORIA UASC IDENTIFICATION PROGRAMME

February 2020

## BETTER DAYS





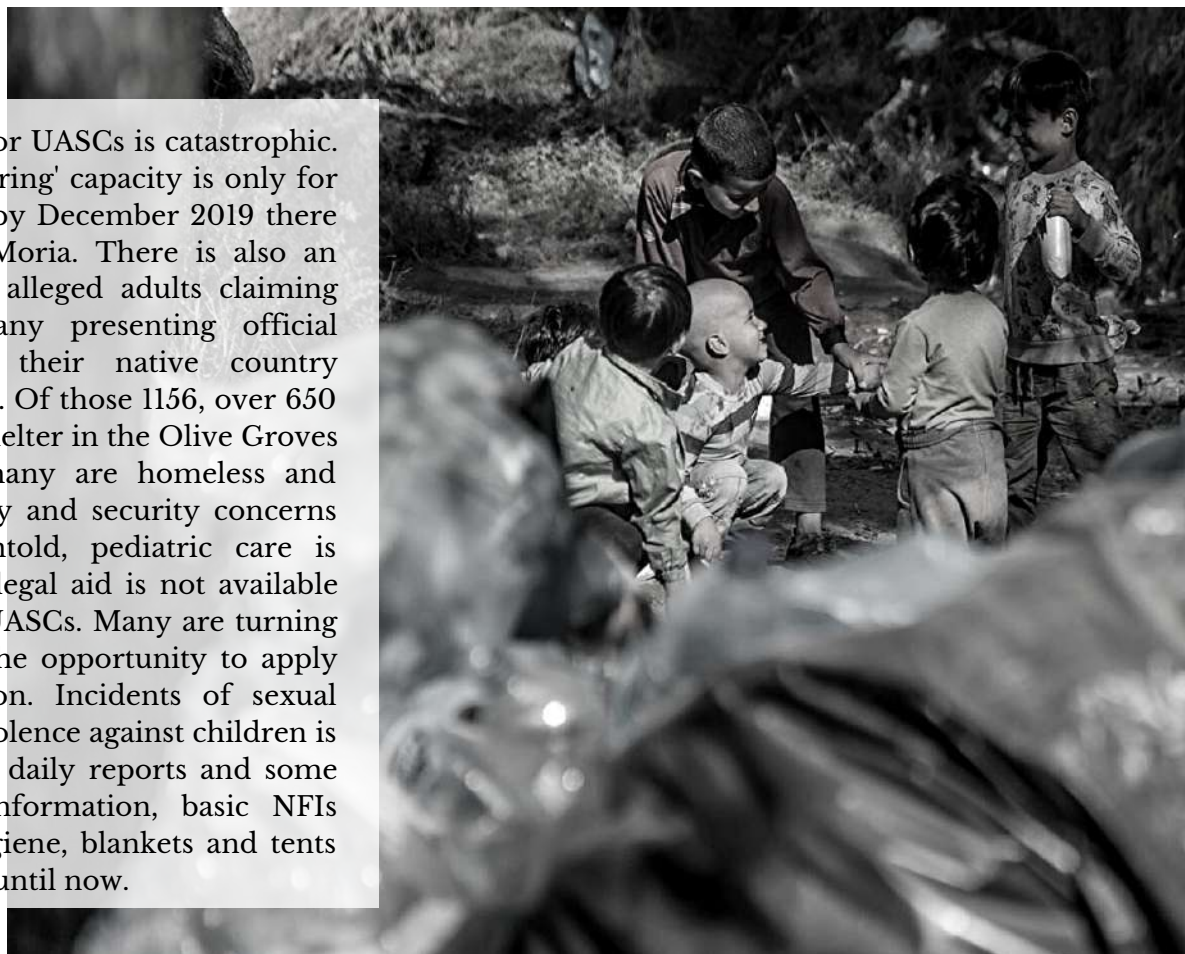
# THE SITUATION

---



During the second half of 2019, the number of refugees arriving on the shores of Lesbos increased at such a rate that the population of Moria camp reached over 20,000 people – higher than ever before, including during the summer and autumn of 2015. Such an explosion in population size has meant that the usual services available to refugees and asylum seekers are completely overstretched, and backlogs have been created. This is particularly significant for unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASCs), who have made the journey all the way to the safety of Europe, alone. Despite the fact that there are safe spaces within Moria camp reserved for UASCs–these spaces have been proven unsafe, and have been full for months. The children that have subsequently arrived, have been absorbed with the other 20,000 people living in Moria and its surrounding Olive Groves.

The current situation for UASCs is catastrophic. The official 'safe sheltering' capacity is only for 300 UASCs, however, by December 2019 there were 1156 UASCs in Moria. There is also an increasing number of alleged adults claiming they are minors, many presenting official documentation from their native country supporting their claims. Of those 1156, over 650 are currently finding shelter in the Olive Groves surrounding Moria, many are homeless and sleep rough. The safety and security concerns facing minors are untold, pediatric care is inaccessible, access to legal aid is not available for a majority of the UASCs. Many are turning 18 and have not had the opportunity to apply for family reunification. Incidents of sexual abuse, self harm and violence against children is increasing with almost daily reports and some fatalities. Access to information, basic NFIs including clothing, hygiene, blankets and tents has not been available, until now.





# OUR PROGRAMME

---

**MAPPING,  
IDENTIFICATION &  
REGISTRATION OF UASC  
(OUTREACH)**

**THEMIDA LEGAL  
INTERVENTION PROGRAM  
FOR REUNIFICATION CASES**

**DISTRIBUTION  
OF  
EMERGENCY  
AID, CLOTHING  
AND HYGIENE  
ITEMS**

**GEKKO KIDS -  
PERSONALIZED EDUCATION  
AND PSYCHOSOCIAL  
SUPPORT TO 100% OF THE  
STUDENT BODY**



# OUTREACH

---

Better Days has been coordinating a collaborative effort with EASO, UNHCR, Metadrasi and the Moria RIS' Minors' Office in order to identify, locate and re-register all of the UASCs in Moria, so that these highly vulnerable children are reinstated on a system, have access to the services they require and are able to access legal support. This is particularly significant if they are applicable for family reunification with family members living in other European countries, or if they have other family members in Moria (who are not their parents) who could claim custody of their guardianship here in Greece.

The outreach and data capturing programme was of a time-sensitive nature due to the classification of UASCs who have not been present for asylum appointments, being declared as missing, which means that their asylum claim would be archived. Outreach and data capturing was carried out simultaneously, so that the administrative duties of ensuring that the UASCs were re-identified within the system

happened immediately after they were identified in their respective zones around camp.

The outreach was performed by pairs or small teams of volunteers; led by Better Days and in collaboration with Refugee 4 Refugees (R4R) and Movement on the Ground (MotG). The outreach was conducted zone by zone with prior field visits and walkthroughs defining how each zone would be managed. Each team had an interpreter and a team lead in order to facilitate the conversations, and to supervise volunteer safety and security, and communicate with other teams respectively. A ticketing system was utilised, to allow the identified UASCs permission to enter the RIC area, where the registration was taking place, and as a method of recording important details: Tent numbers (if available), structure type, zone and geolocation were also recorded when possible, so that each UASC could be reidentified or found at a later date.



# KEY FIGURES

FROM OUTREACH

678

## MINORS REGISTERED

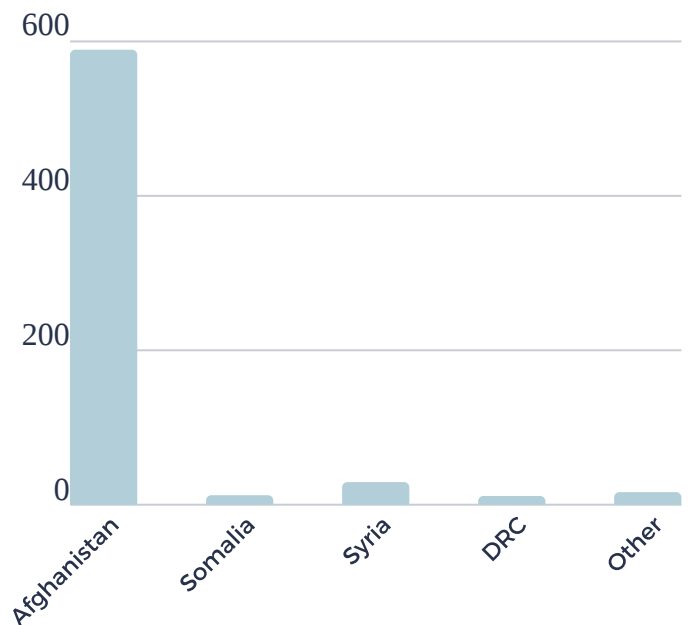
Through the first phase of the Outreach programme, from the 21st of January to the 10th of February 2020.

97%

## OF REGISTRATIONS

ARE MALE

## NATIONALITIES



6

## YEARS OLD

The age of the youngest child identified through the Outreach programme.





## THEMIDA


For some of the UASC population living in Moria, there is an alternative life waiting for them through legal routes such as family reunification. In order to support these specific children, Better Days launched its ‘Themida’ legal intervention programme, in collaboration with DCI and with the financial support of Help Refugees.

An important aspect of the project has been the ability to build a safe environment and relationship of trust with each participant. By using the space at Better Days HQ in Mytilene, we were able to facilitate the first interview and information sessions. These sessions are designed to, not only, provide each child with all of the information surrounding the legal procedure; such as the required documentation and what kind of legal action would be carried out, but equally to give the children a platform in which to voice any concerns, speak about their case and the relative with whom they will be reunited, as well as an opportunity to decompress their feelings with a social worker.

To ensure that the 70 children who participated in the Themida programme received support in a holistic nature, we also enrolled them into the Better Days school, Gekko Kids, provided them with ‘NFI emergency winter packs’ and access to snacks and hot food throughout the duration of the interviews, and at school daily.

Since 2015, Better Days has worked hard to build a network of expertise in order to be able to operate in Moria’s Olive Groves, and to be able to support the Minors Office to identify and address some of the severe services gaps for UASCs. We hope to continue to address this desperate need throughout 2020, through the extension and creation of medium to long-term programmes, which includes more legal and medical interventions for UASCs and the continuous identification of, and support for, this population.

Support and services for UASCs are urgently needed, as currently no NGO or authority has the capacity to provide for UASCs living in Moria.



# KEY FIGURES

FROM THEMIDA

# 70

## CASES

---

Total number of cases during phase one of Themida.

# 3

## SPECIALISED LAWYERS

---

Legal aid is provided by our partners Defence for Children International. Between the partners, a total of 10 people are currently working on Themida cases.

The deadlines are critical and the necessary administrative workload is huge.

Under Dublin Regulation III if an unaccompanied minor has a member of their family (parent, brother/sister, uncle/aunt, grandfather/grandmother) that is legally present in a “Dublin III” country, this country is responsible for the examination of their international protection application.

In practice, family reunification procedure can be a very difficult procedure for a child, especially for the child that is not placed in a safe facility, therefore not having the help of a lawyer or social worker.

The child must gather all the necessary documents required for the application such as; identification documents, copies of their family member's current documents from the other Dublin country, like their asylum seeker card, residence permit, refugee passport or any other documents, documents that can prove their family relationship and the written consent of their family member.





# DISTRIBUTION

We started our distribution project simultaneously with the Themida programme. As the initial phase of this programme commenced in December 2019. A lot of our students and legal cases were reporting living in deplorable conditions on the Olive Groves of Moria. Emergency winter packs were prepared and distributed immediately in partnership with Attika Human Support.


Together we have since continued the distribution of winter packs, in order to support the needs of UASC. Additionally all students attending Gekko Kids received winter packs. Additionally, all of the UASCs we have encountered so far within our Outreach programme received clothing, shoes and hygiene packs. These clothes are desperately needed during the colder winter months and particularly during these times of such overcrowding in Moria, as there is only limited access to water points to wash clothes and shower, which is even more extreme in the Olive Groves.

Each Emergency Winter NFI Pack contains:

- Rucksack / backpack
- Underwear
- Socks
- Hat, scarf and gloves
- Long johns / leggings
- T-shirt
- Sweatshirt
- Trousers
- Hygiene pack
- Blanket







# KEY FIGURES FROM DISTRIBUTION

## 201 WINTER PACKS

---

Total number of winter packs distributed throughout January & February 2020

## 20 BD TEAM

---

Involved in the sorting, packing and distribution process since December.

## 750 UASC

---

The number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children who had access to our services



# TESTIMONIES

THE DATA AND REPORTING DEMONSTRATES OUR PROGRAMME TO A CERTAIN DEGREE, HOWEVER THE VOICES OF OUR PARTNERS, FRIENDS AND VOLUNTEERS, TELL THE TRUE STORY OF THE DIFFERENCE THAT OUR FOCUS ON THIS PROGRAMME REALLY MAKES.

*Aris, 'Attika Human Support':*

"On Lesbos we have over a thousand unaccompanied children who are living in extremely dangerous conditions around Moria, as well inside the sections of Moria.

It's dangerous because of the weather and the lack of shelter they have. It's dangerous because they cannot go to the safety of their home and their families. It's dangerous because of the shortage of trained personnel to keep them safe.

We have joint forces together with Better Days and other partners and quietly, over the past three weeks, we have worked hard to provide these children with clean clothes, shoes, hygiene items, blankets and sleeping bags.

Our effort is more than to provide aid. Our effort is to make them feel more secure and less abandoned. We will continue this project as long as needed and as long as we can."

*Dan, 'Better Days':*

"The work we are carrying out through the UASC programme with Better Days, is something we can be really proud of. We are providing a 360 degree support programme for unaccompanied minors, that begins with identification and location and follows on right through to legal, medical referrals, as well as access to education."





# TESTIMONIES

---

*Lisa from Better Days:*

"In Mytilene, I took the task to hand out emergency packages to unaccompanied minors. I handed out over 170 emergency backpacks, with one pair of trousers, a t-shirt, a long sleeved top, a jumper, socks, gloves, scarf, underpants, hygiene kit, bra, jacket, and a blanket. . If the kids arrived without any shoes, they got a pair, too.

"No white shoes, please, otherwise AliBaba" (the Moria slang for getting robbed).

It's hard to choose sometimes when you only have two blankets left; one good, and one not... and you know you have to give that bad blanket to a child, to sleep in a summer tent through the frozen nights.

The teenagers are still teenagers, so style matters: The fashion is black, tight jeans. The backpack; not too big. It's one of the few moments they are allowed to be a teen again. But sometimes there is no black... Just blue or red."





# CHALLENGES & EVALUATION OF PROGRAMME

---

Despite the challenges of a large-scale programme such as this, it has run relatively smoothly throughout. Challenges include processing such a large quantity of registrations in a short space of time, and in particular safety and security concerns, given the mounting tensions on Lesbos island. However, there has been good communication between the relevant actors and the entire UASC programme has been carried out with no major issues or incidents.

The programme has been a fantastic demonstration of what can be achieved when teams work together towards a common goal. Most importantly, this project is working to provide a vital lifeline for children who are otherwise alone in facing the hardships of living in such a challenging environment like Moria, which puts their safety and security at extreme risk on a daily basis. This collaborative effort between actors is a fundamental and urgently needed process, during such a critical time and situation.

