

Greece - Volagencies Reports

Green - 6 p

UNITED NATIONS RELIEF & REHABILITATION ADMINISTRATION

GREECE MISSION
Headquarters

Athens, 17th October 1945.

United Nations Relief & Rehabilitation Administration,
11 Portland Place,
London, W 1

Subject: Report on work of Voluntary Agencies

In response to your telegram No. 991 of 9th October we submit the following report on the activities to date of all voluntary societies and private agencies operating in Greece.

A. British Voluntary Societies

1. Displaced Persons Division

The assembly centres and transit camps established for dealing with repatriated Greeks returning from abroad and other nationals waiting to leave Greece are operating under the Ministry of Repatriation of the Greek Government. It has, however, been necessary for UNRRA to lend considerable help in the shape of administrative staff for these camps, though the arrangement at different camps varies according to local needs.

In the north of Greece two camps at Florina and Kozani have been run by the Australian Red Cross MHFAU and RHU who have had entire charge. This involved the routine administration of the camp, registration of refugees, medical services, camp welfare and also a certain amount of individual case work. Similarly at Siderokastron the camp has been operated by No. 13 MHFAU of the P.J.C.R.A. The assembly centres in Salonica have, until recently, been operated by a scratch crew of Greeks with occasional help from individual members of teams. It has now been put in charge of five members of No. 15 RHU of R.H.S. who have already effected notable improvements.

In Athens the original assembly centre has been run for many months by No. 7 RHU of G.I.S. The other camps in Athens have hitherto been managed entirely by the Ministry of Repatriation; but this has not proved satisfactory and recently we have provided a small administrative staff for one of the large centres from four members of No. 13 RHU of I.V.S.P. who had been working in Crete but who were no longer required there. As it is apparent that additional refugee accommodation will be required in Athens through the winter, we have provisionally allotted No. 15 MHFAU of the South African Red Cross to increase our D.P. resources in this area. They have not yet all arrived and it may be a little time before them can be put into full operation.

In the Aegean Islands D.P. matters are managed by the remaining members of No. 15 RHU of F.R.S.

We should like to emphasise that the work of all these teams engaged in D.P. operations has been outstanding. The management of the camps involves a constant struggle against every sort of administrative difficulty, unsuitable supplies and shortage of equipment. However, wherever a voluntary society team has taken charge, the organisation has been excellent and the standards of cleanliness, hygiene and health remarkably high.

2. Health Division

In the early days of UNRRA operations the work of the health teams was of a truly emergency nature. They had to catch up with the arrears of five years' dislocation and deal with mass disinfestation, inoculations, scabies treatment, etc. They were also instrumental in starting to restore some order to the normal medical services of the country. In that stage the full MHFAU of about a dozen members was fully occupied with work to be done as well by the non-technical as by the technical personnel. As we have progressed, however, the task has come to be of a more normal clinical or public health nature. That is to say, instead of dealing with emergency situations it is now a matter of filling gaps in the pre-war structure of the medical services of the country, providing a framework round which the Greek doctors, nurse, clinics, etc. can rebuild and helping the latter generally by advice and demonstration. Under these circumstances the original MHFAU is too large. What is now wanted is a public health team consisting of doctor, nurse, nurse's aide and sanitarian. The teams which have been with us throughout the summer are in most cases automatically reducing to about the size through repatriations. Where this is not so, we have generally detached the non-technical members of the team to act as medical stores units in their regions and to give special help with the all important distribution of medical supplies.

At the moment the following is the allocation of medical teams.

- BRCS No. 5 MHFAU - Preveza Region
- No. 7 MHFAU - Salonika Region
- No. 10 MHFAU - Crete Region; though it is planned to move what will be left of this team after repatriations to Peloponnesus.
- No. 1 MMC - Athens Region
- No. 3 MMC - Kavalla Region
- No. 11 MHFAU has recently been disbanded and its few remaining members distributed amongst other teams
- No. 1 MSTU is divided between Volos, Patras, Salonica and Kavalla.

- S.C.F. No. 6 MHFAU - Patras Region

- F.A.U. No. 1 MHFAU - Preveza Region
- No. 2 GBU - Patras Region

- S.I.R.S. The MSTU is divided between Patras, Athens, Kalamata and Salonica.

- P.J.G.R.A. No. 12 MHFAU - Kalamata Region. It is planned, however, to transfer this team to Volos Region at their request in order that they may continue their general health work in an area where there are known to be many Jews repatriated from abroad.

- The Australian Red Cross MHFAU has until recently taken part in D.P. operations at Florina and Kozani. Due to a reduction in the flow of refugees it is now possible to release the MHFAU from this work and it has been allotted for general health work in Salonica Region.

- South African Red Cross - No. 4 MMC, No. 5 mmC and No. 16 MHFAU are all due to work in Salonica Region though some half a dozen members only have so far arrived.

It should be mentioned that in addition to general clinical and public health work, the teams have given considerable help with such special operations as children's clinics. In each region special needs appear, or it may be that the team concerned has some particular interest or qualification. There have at times been slight difficulties in adjusting the teams to our changed needs. They are all, however, giving services of the utmost value to this country and have shown the greatest keenness and energy in all their work; indeed it may truly be said that the only requests which we receive from them at this Headquarters are that they should be given still more to do.

3. Welfare Division

When UNRRA started working in Greece there was an acute shortage of staff in the Regions. It was soon apparent that we could not hope to do our job properly and watch the distribution of our goods and the application of our services as far as the final recipient, unless we had observers throughout the provinces. There was but one source of supply for such staff and that was the Voluntary Society teams. It is true that in certain cases it had been impossible, particularly in the ML days, to use the whole teams on such things as temporary refugee camps which were needed after the Civil War; but for the most part their most effective work could only be done by being split up as individuals. Naturally many of the members, having been specially formed into teams, did not take happily to this arrangement; and we had contemplated that as we got more field welfare officers we should be able to release Voluntary Society members from these tasks. It is interesting, however, to note that, now that this may be possible and the idea has been put to the teams, they are almost unanimous in wishing to remain in their present positions since they have got to know their districts intimately and have become deeply interested in their local problems.

In the initial stages the bulk of the work done by most of the teams was on the distribution of clothing donated by foreign charitable organisations, notably the Red Cross Societies and the Greek War Relief Association. It was of the utmost importance that these clothes, so urgently needed, should be distributed without delay but there was no Greek organisation sufficiently able or sufficiently trusted by the population, to ensure proper distribution. In this, therefore, the work of the Voluntary Societies was invaluable. As time went on and the clothing problem grew somewhat less absorbing, the team members became in effect general observers for UNRRA and in that capacity were concerned with watching the distribution of food, medical supplies and children's milk. Further, they were able not only to report to Headquarters the mistakes and omissions of local Greek officials but also to take effective action themselves in correcting such errors, in stimulating activities of local committees and acting themselves as members of such committees and in organising distribution of supplies, management of milk distribution, establishment of clinics and many other activities. Indeed, it would be almost impossible to give a comprehensive description which would cover the work of all the members of the Voluntary Societies in this field since it depends largely on local needs and more particularly on the temperaments, tastes and special skills of the individuals concerned.

It is now intended to leave teams working for the Welfare Division more or less where they are at present, with their members scattered amongst the towns of their regions. As the additional Welfare staff arrive, it will be possible, if the Societies so desire, to relieve the Voluntary Society members of their general responsibilities as observers for all UNRRA operations and thus set them free to concentrate on particular activities, especially child feeding and child welfare in general on which we are concentrating so much of our efforts and in which we shall need all the help that we can get. They have, however, rendered invaluable services to UNRRA's operations in their capacity as the UNRRA

representative in their particular province and have shown great determination and skill in dealing with many difficulties which we encountered. So useful have they been and so contented themselves in many cases with this type of work that we shall not disturb this relationship where it is working satisfactorily and where it is mutually satisfactory to the Societies concerned.

The present allocation of welfare teams is as follows:

B.N.C.S. No. 5 RRU - Salonica Region

S.C.F. No. 11 RRU - Kavalla Region
No. 14 RRU - Athens Region

F.A.U. No. 2 RRU - Preveza Region

I.V.S.P. No. 4 RRU - Volos Region

No. 13 RRU - three members are remaining temporarily in Crete to complete certain specific tasks. The remainder, as stated above, are working with D.P. Division in Athens.

Y.W.C.A. No. 6 RRU - Patras Region

In addition to teams there are a number of individual members of the various societies who are seconded to the Health of Welfare Divisions. In some cases they are in the Regions attached to the Regional staff; and indeed in one or two places they have acted as Regional Welfare Officers with great success. In other cases they are working with the staff of these two Divisions at this Headquarters on specialised jobs such as medical supplies and rehabilitation of the disable in the Health Division or in clothing with the Welfare Division. It should be particularly mentioned that the Reverent and Mrs. House of the World Student Relief are seconded to the Welfare Division on the special project of educational supplies though they also give considerable help with Welfare supplies in general.

B. American Private Agency Personnel Seconded to UNRRA

Attached, at Appendix A, is a list of individuals showing their Agency, where they are located and what position they are occupying.

Since each of these persons is doing a specialised job it would be impossible in a short space to give a precise account of their functions but we feel that the titles are sufficiently self-explanatory. We should like, however, to add a general comment. These seconded personnel have not only placed at our disposal their expert knowledge and experience on particular lines of operations but they have also filled essential budget line positions for which we have so far lacked salaried staff. These were key positions in our operating structure and had we not been able to call on the services of these individuals throughout these past months we would have been severely handicapped and unable to carry out many of our most important functions. This is a suitable opportunity to acknowledge the debt which the Greece Mission owes to the members of American Private Agencies who have given such enthusiastic and devoted service to the common cause.

C. Supplementary Projects

1. In action

A) Greek War Relief Association - The Association is at the moment operating three principal supplementary projects - Community Clinics, Mobile Medical Teams and Child Feeding.

One hundred and sixty-one Community Clinics, serving a rural population of almost 600,000, are now in operation, staffed by locally employed Greek Doctors whose salaries are paid by the Greek War Relief Association.

In its mobile medical team programme the Association works very closely with the Greek Red Cross and provides some imported personnel for supervision of the small mobile medical teams which are proving a most valuable addition to the medical resources of the country. At the moment six of these teams are in operation with another twelve planned for the near future. The work which they do is very similar to that of the Voluntary Society teams and need not be described again.

The child feeding programme is the most ambitious project yet started and has already been described to you in a separate report. Briefly it aims to provide a mid-day meal to all schools, or in other buildings if the school itself has been destroyed, and it is hoped to cover not only children of school age but those of pre school age. In fact it does not seem as though supplies and personnel will make it possible to feed more than a selected proportion of these children in the initial stages. The programme is operated jointly with the Patriotic Foundation of Greece, which has for many years been the principal organisation dealing with child welfare. The Association provides the salaries of provincial Greek supervisory staff of the Foundation, imports certain highly nutritional foods for the programme and also provides a considerable sum of money to purchase additional food locally.

b) Near East Foundation - The Foundation has several programmes in active operation. Fourteen special feeding centres for medically selected children in the Capital Area, which were operated during the occupation by the Foundation, are being continued. Special Summer Camps were established this year for the care of malnourished children in mountain areas. This programme will be continued during the winter as hostels for specially selected children if proper buildings are found. The work of the Foundation in rehabilitation of the disabled involves the establishment of rehabilitation centres for both adults and children in which they provide physiotherapy, occupational training of the blind and disable, the provision of appliances and surgical treatment. For their programme of artificial insemination to improve the breed of cattle, they have imported pedigree bulls and provided technical personnel to supervise the work.

2. Planned

In addition to the above there are a number of supplementary projects for which all the preliminary work has been done by UNRRA and the agency concerned and which only await formal approval in order to go into operation.

a) F.R.S. - The F.R.S. is planning to operate a girls training school at Salonica. The idea is to bring some fifty girls from outlying villages, of a type which would seem likely to benefit most by special training, to teach them simple domestic economy and agricultural management so that they may return to their villages after an eight months course as leaders in improved methods. This project is only now being approved although F.R.S. are already making progress with their preparations.

They have also planned to assist in the establishment of a Midwifery Training School in Salonica for which imported teaching personnel will be recruited.

b) Save the Children's Fund - They are making plans in conjunction with the Nursing Division of UNRRA and the Patriotic Foundation for a Post Graduate Public Health and Midwifery course for graduate midwives, to provide midwifery supervisory staff for the Patriotic Foundation pre-natal Clinics.

A programme of assistance to the Foundlings' Home in Athens has also been developed and two imported members will be provided for the staff of this institution.

c) J.D.C. - They plan to pay operating expenses for six months to establish a small tuberculosis sanatorium in Salonica - primarily for Jewish refugees returning from Europe, but also open to non-Jewish refugees with tuberculosis. The Government has agreed to assume this commitment at the end of the six months period.

D. Statistics

Attached are:

Appendix B. - Analysis of Agency personnel by Division and Society.

C. - Section D. of Form MRS - 1

It will be noted that the total shown an increase of eight over that given in the same form sent with the Mission monthly report for September. This is the result of a detailed analysis made in connection with this special report which showed that certain individuals had actually arrived and started work during the last few days of September though they had not been officially reported to Personnel Division.

D. - Analysis of imported personnel working on supplementary projects, by Societies.

Yours very truly,

Chief of Mission

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM



TO Charles Alspach, Acting Director, Welfare Division
FROM John Dula

SUBJECT Report of Conference with Greek War Relief Assn.

DATE 29 November 1945

I attach herewith a report of my conference with Mr. Kallmer and Dr. Broneer of the Greek War Relief Association concerning the child-feeding project now under way in Greece, and the proposed project for the care of orphaned and homeless Greek children.

I am sending copies of this report to Miss Branscombe and Mr. Henninger and to the Greece Mission.

John Dula

Attachment

26 November 1945
Washington, D. C.

REPORT OF CONFERENCE WITH GREEK WAR RELIEF ASSOCIATION
New York City, 19 November 1945

By John Dula, Deputy Director of Welfare, Greece Mission

I went to New York City on 19 November 1945 to confer with Mr. Kallmer, Foreign Director of the GWRA and with Dr. Broneer, Executive Director of GWRA, before Mr. Kallmer returned to Athens. (Before the conference I talked with Miss Branscombe, Chief of the Child Care Branch, UNRRA Welfare H.Q., and with Mr. Henninger, in charge of UNRRA relationships with private agencies).

Child Feeding

I brought Mr. Kallmer and Dr. Broneer up to date on developments in the child-feeding program, emphasizing that in the last month much headway has been made -- regional Greek supervisors have been appointed for most of the mainland regions and the program is off to as good a start as can be expected in the Epirus area. It was agreed that there were many difficulties confronting the initiation of the program; beside the uncertainty of food supplies and the lack of sufficient cooking and feeding equipment the organization of the Patriotic Foundation is very weakened as a result of the Occupation. However, Dr. Broneer was interested to hear me say that I considered the plan for child feeding to be fundamentally one of the soundest because it means working through the Greeks, and should leave a more lasting benefit than if it were to be independently run by the GWRA. He was also interested to hear the commendatory remarks re Mr. Papademitriou, President of the Patriotic Foundation (PIKPA), with which Mr. Kallmer concurred.

Dr. Broneer stated that he was distressed at not having statistics of how many children are being fed as a result of the program and indicated that he was going to cable Greece to send these at once, since they are of great value in publicity here. I told him that it can be considered that the number of children fed is very large inasmuch as the milk distribution stations and canteens formerly operated by the Swiss Red Cross Mission, but now under the supervision of PIKPA, should be included. I stressed that the activities of the ex-Swiss Red Cross Mission are being held together under the organization provided for in the child-feeding plan.

I told Dr. Broneer that food prospects looked somewhat brighter though there is still urgent need for protective foods, particularly condensed milk, canned meats and fish. He indicated that Greek War Relief might be able to send some foods immediately and stated, when I remarked that GWRA H.Q. would wish to act on instructions as to type of food from Greece itself, that there was little choice in the matter here. The GWRA had to take whatever it could get hold of. I also pointed out that there was some difficulty in assuring that the necessary cooking and feeding equipment would be sent forward by UNRRA and I would keep him apprised of developments.

Appreciation for GWRA Assistance to UNRRA

I thanked Dr. Broneer on behalf of the Welfare Division of the Mission for having made available the services of a number of workers on a seconded basis to UNRRA. He was pleased with these remarks and invited me to put them in writing to him. I also told

Dr. Broneer that I should be more than delighted to do anything I could to interpret the urgent need of the Greek People and to testify to the fine work of the GWRA.

Homeless Children

Dr. Broneer stated that he objected to the proposed project for spending the \$50,000 appropriated for the care of orphaned children, because it was not a straight GWRA activity but placed them in a subservient position to the Ministry of Welfare.

Dr. Broneer stated that the \$50,000 was intended to set up the organization in Greece through which orphaned and homeless children would be catalogued and "adopted" by various donors in America. I expressed surprise at this approach by GWRA, stating that I had thought the GWRA intended to appropriate a sum of money such as it has done for child feeding, which would be used not only for organizing a program, but also for covering some of the costs of care of orphaned and homeless Greek children. As far as I could gather the two million dollars which Mr. Kallmer had requested in this year's budget for homeless children had not even been presented to the National War Fund. Although I told Dr. Broneer that we had the impression that there were considerable funds in the National War Fund, Dr. Broneer stated that such funds did not exist and it would be impossible to make any appropriation for homeless and orphaned children unless Greek War Relief chose to divert funds appropriated for other projects, such as child-feeding, health.

I expressed my disappointment at this action, pointing out that it would be more difficult, though not impossible, to carry out a program for homeless and orphaned children solely under the adoption method of financing. Dr. Broneer assured me, however, that there were many Greeks wishing to contribute in the highly personal way which the adoptive method provides; he also stated that it was not the intention of GWRA to do the whole job for homeless children.

I explained to Dr. Broneer that the proposed project for expending the \$50,000 whereby fifty Greek child welfare workers would be financed and trained for a year by the GWRA was based: 1. On the fact that such funds were not assured for longer than a year, and 2. On the fact that any organization for the care of homeless children must be closely associated with the Greek State's machinery for child care. The Greek State, the same as countries anywhere, is responsible for orphaned children and for children in danger of becoming homeless. In Greece such children are cared for by the State within State orphanages, or in private orphanages subsidized and under the overall supervision of the State. Furthermore if a particular child were to be adopted by a person here there would have to be some assurance that such a child continued to be in need of this financial interest. I pointed out that the conditions of children and their families change so that although they may require help to begin with, in 2 or 3 months they may no longer require help. I also pointed out that for some children help would be required for as much as ten or fifteen years. Therefore it was very important that any work of the GWRA in care for homeless children should be so closely related to the basic responsibility of the State as to ensure continued supervision to ensure that when the Greek War Relief aid stops the care of the children would not stop but would continue through State auspices.

Dr. Broneer said that what he wanted done was for the Greek organization to start in one section, for example in the Peloponnese, find 100 children who need assistance, notify GWRA H.Q. which would find among the various Greek-American groups here persons who would put up a definite sum of money for the assistance of each child. He did not see any reason why this should have to wait for a nation-wide approach, although Mr. Kallmer and I felt the job of fund raising would be expedited were the project to start on a nation-wide basis.

Project Administration

I told Dr. Broneer that I could appreciate the desire of the GWRA to carry out projects in its own name in Greece. I expressed the opinion that the fund-raising advantages of this approach could be gained even though the administration of the project itself involved working through the Greek agencies themselves, whether private or governmental. For example, Mr. Papademitriou told me that he would be glad to pay tribute to the GWRA for sponsorship of the child-feeding program by putting an appropriate "credit line" on the letterhead and literature of the PIKPA.

I further stated that the interests of the donors in having their contribution effectively utilized could be protected by having a clearcut agreement or plan - such as that in the child-feeding program - between, or among the parties concerned. This would be more or less similar to the "conventions" signed between the Government and the Swiss Red Cross Mission. The conditions would be stipulated clearly. One condition would provide for the nature of supervision by the GWRA and the reports expected. When the administering agent - such as the Government or PIKPA or other body - violated the agreement and could not correct the violation, the GWRA could if necessary undertake to do the work more directly. Dr. Broneer was very interested in this approach. I emphasized that it seemed especially appropriate for the GWRA which has so many resources to conduct its activities on a large scale.

I told Dr. Broneer that the proposed project had been held up pending advice from GWRA H.Q.; he said, and Mr. Kallmer repeated, that the employment of these workers should proceed. When Mr. Kallmer asked me how long it was contemplated they would need to be trained I replied that at a minimum special workers should be briefed for at least a month in Athens. (I presume that Mr. Kallmer will construe Dr. Broneer's remarks as a go ahead for the project).

I proposed to Dr. Broneer in view of the limited time, and since this was our first meeting that I would be glad to put in writing my own views on a program for homeless and orphaned Greek children, send these views to him and then come back to New York City for a more thorough discussion of the subject. Dr. Broneer thought this an excellent idea as did Mr. Kallmer.