



CRETE FOR LIFE  
Η ΚΡΗΤΗ ΔΙΝΕΙ ΖΩΗ

**2022**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

A CHARITY COMMITTED TO CHILDREN,  
WORKING FROM CRETE

# 2022 AT A GLANCE



- **Over 85 children** attended day summer camps in Crete during the summer of 2022
- **Twelve young volunteers**, who were previously refugees in Greece and now live in northern Europe, took care of all the activities at the camps and participated in several events.
- **Over 400 Kg** of fresh "imperfect" vegetables were sent to families in need in mainland Greece
- **We regularly distribute** clothes, hygiene products, long-life food, medicine, children's and school kits and more.
- **Six students** were supported in their studies with online or in-person lessons.
- **Two art exhibitions** by children and adult refugees living in Greece were held in Crete. 100% of the profits from the sales of the artworks were paid to the artists.
- **Two hand-made** decorative wall **mosaics** were installed at a hospital and a school in Lasithi, Crete
- **Four Ukrainian** refugee families supported by in-kind donations
- Several **Syrian students** were sponsored to attend school, vocational and university courses in Aleppo, Syria.

## ABOUT US

Committed to children in need, working from Crete. Crete for Life is a youth-centred charity that works on practical projects to make an immediate and lasting impact on children's lives.

- Since 2005, our primary project has been an annual restorative summer camp for disadvantaged children coping with poverty, war, violence and life-threatening diseases from Greece, Belarus, Syria, Iraq and other parts of the world.

# DEAR FRIENDS,

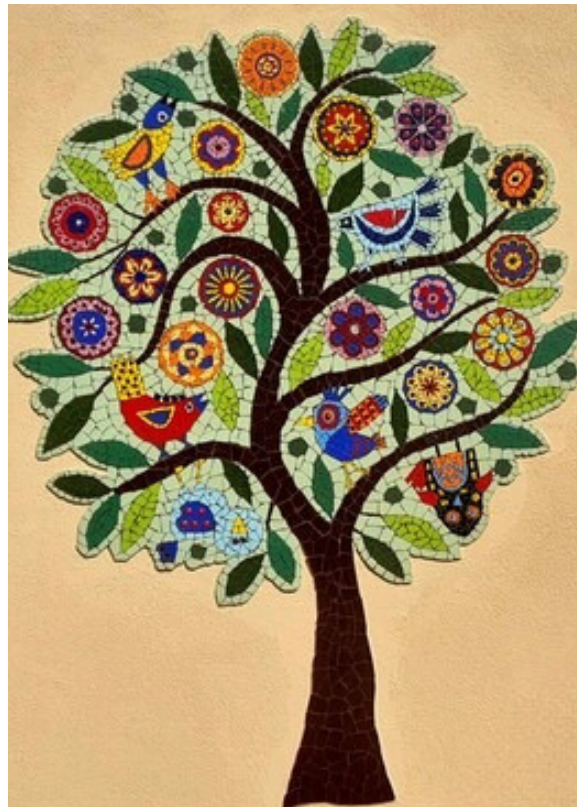
Just as the end of the Covid-19 pandemic appeared closer, the Russian invasion of Ukraine created new suffering and uncertainty. Conflict and violence are raging worldwide, and there's no end in sight. The war on children continues.

Through the years, we have hosted hundreds of Belarusian children affected by the Chernobyl catastrophe here in Crete. We have forged strong and loving relationships with many people from this unfortunate country, now sucked in this bitter conflict.

Meanwhile, refugees continue to arrive on our shores. They are in the news only when tragedy strikes, and in Europe find less support and structures prepared to help them. Children are on the frontline of an unprecedented global humanitarian crisis; their right to survival, protection, and education is under immediate threat.

**They need our help today more than ever, and you have responded by supporting our programs; thank you!**

We have brought together many children and youths at our summer camp. Giving them a safe place to be themselves means that children and young people have every opportunity to participate, have their voices heard, see real change and have much fun – this is what they told us.



Our needs-based projects are evolving and adapting to the demands and possibilities of these fast-changing times.

Together they have learned leadership, confidence, kindness, and how to give back to their host community even when it looks different from what they know. We couldn't have done this and all our other projects without you, and we are so thankful for your support.

With gratitude from the team and myself,

*Olimpia Theodofi*

Founder and Board President



# OUR DONORS & SUPPORTERS

thank you

An anonymous foundation  
Daniel Unger and Claudius Ochsner  
The Evangelical Church in Crete  
Janet Jones  
Daniela Rivetti  
Mario and Benedetta Parma  
Valeria Cozza Caposavi  
Giovanna e Roberto Costanzo  
The members of the Inco Association  
Anne Bouras  
Annamaria Rocca  
Jules Garnel  
Manolis Petrakis & Babis Paterakis  
Dr Eni Michailidou  
Lucy Bujnoch  
Jong Cheng Huang  
George K. Antoniadis  
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Thomas Milionis  
Alex Dalentzas  
Alessandro Di Ianni  
Evangelos Papadopoulos  
Marlene de Wilde  
Tamara Kawar  
Konstantinos Nikolaou  
Hakim and his crew at Kimzu, Agios Nikolaos  
Many owners of greenhouses in Ierapetra  
and all our anonymous supporters, donors  
and friends

We want to thank all our supporters, who give their time and donations to make more children safe and happy.



# SUMMER CAMP 2022

As with past summer camps at Crete For Life, we wanted to offer a safe space for young people at different stages of their lives to grow and have positive connections and experiences.

This year's volunteers were twelve boys and girls aged 18 to 22 from Iraq and Syria. They were previously refugees in Greece and have since settled in northern Europe.

We aimed to link children and teenagers waiting for their documents here in Greece with those who had moved on to their new lives to share their dreams, expectations and realities of life in their new countries of residence.

Our volunteers are in a unique position to understand the needs of the children as they have been in the same situation.

For them, it was a way to express kindness and empathy and to consider how much they have changed and adapted since their arrival in Greece as refugees.

## GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

Our volunteers organised multiple day camps and events involving over 85 young refugees and their families.

In addition to sports, seaside activities and arts and crafts, there were many moments of personal connection and exchange in groups and pairs, guided by team leaders.

Our young volunteers at the camp have an immediate and natural connection to children and cherish their entrusted responsibility. Children, on the other hand, look up to those slightly older and respond to their example. Both parties benefitted greatly from the exchange.

While in Crete, our volunteers were also involved in distributing food to families and individuals in need and in other projects.





## DISTRIBUTION



We distributed essential goods, but also children's books and toys, arts and crafts, home chattel, beds and furniture, blankets and towels to...



vulnerable individuals, families in need, refugee camps, homeless people, local schools, hospitals, the local prison, old people's home

## REFUGEES ART EXHIBITIONS



Together with our partner, Love without Borders, we organized two art exhibitions in Ierapetra and Agios Nikolaos of paintings by children and adults refugees.



100% of the profit from the sale of the paintings went to the artists and their families. Above is one example of the art we presented.



# OUR LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY



Safe Place is our partner organization that promotes and supports LGBTQIA+ refugees all over the world.



Together with Challenge Day, an American organization committed to building empathy and compassion, we shared the skill building programs and The Dream Academy course.

# TOMATO EXPRESS



Tomato Express is an ongoing program bringing vegetables from the greenhouses of Ierapetra, Crete, to the tables of those in need in Athens. The vegetables are donated by the local farmers who are happy their products are not wasted.



Every year tons of tomatoes and other vegetables are thrown away because they are the wrong size or shape. For many families, fresh produce are too expensive, and their children miss out on the essential nutrients of a balanced, healthy diet.



For some years our program has been distributing “non-perfect” vegetables to the tables of those in need. The distribution of the vegetables is shared with other organisations in Greece. Your donations cover costs towards collection and shipping.



# WHAT OUR AMAZING VOLUNTEERS SAY

RayanSalim, Volunteer

Crete for life is one of the most beautiful experience that i have done in my life. I have been in Crete with Crete for life for 3 times! 3 summer camps! Every time was amazing and full of fun, play, joy, love, support, and respect! With Crete for life u don't only help people but u also having fun and you make friends! In Crete for life u can make friends and meet great people, full of energy and positive power. Thats why i'm always thankful that i am part of this family.

Ismail, Volunteer

My name is Ismael, I'm 20 years old and I'm from Iraq. I lived in Greece, in different camps for 15 months and during almost all of this time I worked as a volunteer. First time I got in touch with Crete for life was back in 2017. Ever since then we have done great things together. With the help of other volunteers who also left countries for better lives, we volunteer for Crete for life to help children with harsh conditions and backgrounds, children who have had hard lives living in war zones. We help the kids have a nice time on the island of Crete. We play different games with, take them to the beach and much more

Rivan, Volunteer

I have volunteered for Crete for Life in 2 summers now. It's amazing to see how much this organisation can do with so little and such simplicity. Helping people in need and making them happy is priceless. Crete for life bonds people from all around the world and creates a family where people can be themselves, can laugh, dance, have good times, and make new friends. I'm so proud to be part of this amazing family.

The passion and commitment of volunteers are essential to all our programs.

Without them, we couldn't have supported as many people, raised as much awareness and money, and made as much impact.

# OUR IMPACT

**Recognising the intricacies of assessing impact is complex, even for the largest non-profit organisations. We use a simple framework by asking ourselves four questions:**

## What do we want to achieve?

We want to give children and young people the tools to build resilience following hardship. By helping with basic needs (food, health, education, etc.) and offering positive experiences for growth (summer camp, workshops, art exhibitions, etc.)

## Who are we targeting?

Refugee children and unaccompanied youths, children who are victims of violence and poverty, and those growing up with chronic diseases or battling trauma and mental health issues.

## What problem are we solving?

Children are the primary victims of war, natural and man-made disasters. 260 million children are out of school. The pandemic has traumatised many vulnerable children. Poverty, violence, neglect, abuse, loneliness, and lack of possibilities affect many children, even those close to us.

## Who are we influencing?

We involve young volunteers (18 to 25 yo) in our projects as a proven key to impacting positively the children we serve. Together with volunteers, the local community and partner organisations, they are indispensable to our work, and their feedbacks are part of measuring our impact.

## The benefits of our Summer camp

1. Building friendships and social skills
2. Developing resiliency and confidence
3. Becoming and staying physical
4. Being in Nature - Effects of the Sea
5. Learning the values of leadership
6. Learning new things during the summer
7. Having time for active play and sport
8. Positive conversations about mental health and emotional well-being with peers and adults give children and young people the tools to build resilience following the pandemic and hardship.
9. Kids want to have fun—and they need more of it
10. Being away from social media



## KINARI & THE FUTURE

Kinari arrived in Crete just before lockdown, alone and with her small child. She had a very hard time during Covid, not being able to work and provide for herself and her baby. Crete For Life assisted her with intensive online Greek lessons and support during the hardest times. She then surprised us all by gaining a place to study biotechnology at the University of Crete. Dreams, plans and desires seem far fetched until they happen.

# ACCOUNTS 2022

FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31st December 2022			
Joint Income 2022	Banca Prossima	Pay Pal	Balance
Foundations	40.000,00	0,00	40.000,00
Donations by Bank	5.513,03	3.819,09	9.332,12
Donations in Cash	0,00	0,00	0,00
5 x 1000	1.586,68	0,00	1.586,68
Interest	0,00	0,00	0,00
<b>Joint Income 2022</b>	<b>47.099,71</b>	<b>3.819,09</b>	<b>50.918,80</b>

FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31st December 2022			
Cost of Programs 2022	Banca Prossima	Pay Pal	Balance
Summer Camp 2022	29.631,66	3.490,61	33.122,27
Other Programs	12.752,34	0,00	12.752,34
<b>Total cost of programs 2022</b>	<b>42.384,00</b>	<b>3.490,61</b>	<b>45.874,61</b>

FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31st December 2022			
Other expenses	Banca Prossima	Pay Pal	Balance
Rent & Utilities	2.790,43	0,00	2.790,43
Admin, Fundraising, Transport	2.112,70	998,20	3.110,90
Bank Charges	194,80	139,13	333,93
<b>Other Expenses Total</b>	<b>5.097,93</b>	<b>1.137,33</b>	<b>6.235,26</b>

47.481,93      4.627,94      52.109,87

Everyone at Crete For Life volunteers, and no one is paid a salary or refunded expenses.

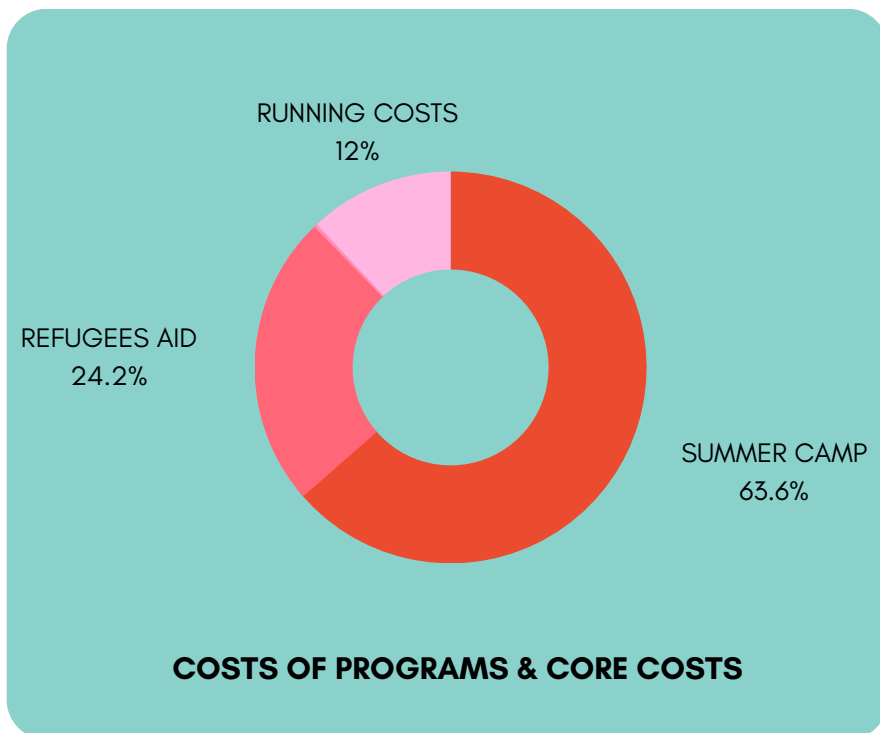
Proper due diligence and selection criteria are involved in selecting beneficiaries and partner organisations we work with.

Clear accountability is an essential part of how we run our organisation. Even if not requested by current legislation, our accounts are independently certified. Assessments and external audits are conducted to ensure the proper utilisation of funds for those most in need.

**If you are interested in receiving a copy of the Independent Auditor's Report, ask us at [info@creteforlife.org](mailto:info@creteforlife.org).**

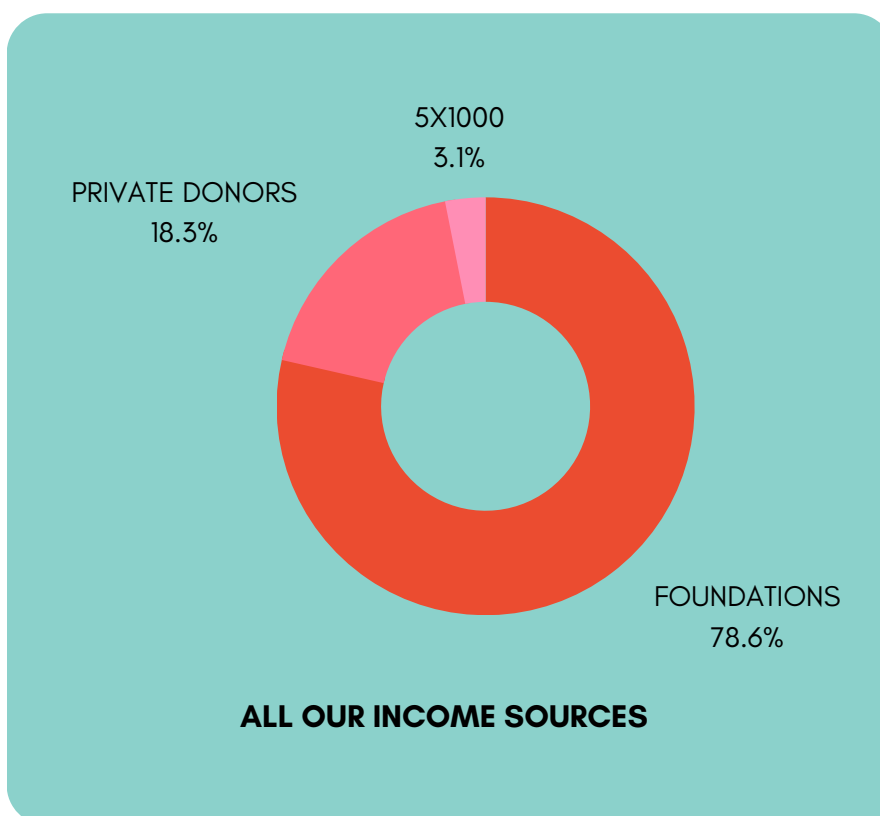
We made this Annual Report using [www.Canva.com](http://www.Canva.com) at zero cost. Please forgive the mistakes!

## WHERE OUR FUNDS GO



Our running costs include fundraising costs, allowing us to generate further income for our programs, and the independent certification of our accounts. It also includes the rental of our premises where we can collect and receive goods in kind and vegetables from our "Tomato Express" program. In 2022 the steep increase of living costs has also affected the costs of our programs

## WHERE OUR FUNDS COME FROM



Every year we apply to several national and international foundations.

We run several fundraising events in the local community, and throughout the year, we raise funds online through digital campaigns and the GlobalGiving platform.

The 5x1000 is a share of the personal income tax that the Italian State distribute to NGOs and other non-profit organisations involved in social projects, voluntary work, and research.

# FUTURE PLANS AND RECENT UPDATES

## OUR VISION FOR THE NEXT YEARS IS TO REACH MORE CHILDREN

See that those suffering from violence, war, poverty, inequalities and discrimination in Ukraine, Syria, Iraq and all around us are being supported and helped to regain hope. Helping children and young people to build resilience, find the inner strength to overcome their difficulties, and never forget to aim for a better future. Taking care of our environment through programs like Tomato Express

## OUR AIMS ARE

- To listen to the people who are reaching out to us
- To keep our actions simple and sustainable
- Treat each person as an individual and never as data
- To keep our actions flexible and respond to real needs
- Not to forget that just a word or a conversation can be a solution
- To look for ways to connect with those who can't



Last October, I travelled to Syria. Years of war and suffering have destroyed this country, where millions of children don't attend school. All of us can make a change and invest in high-quality education. Read more on [www.aleppoforlife.org](http://www.aleppoforlife.org)  
Thank you, Olimpia



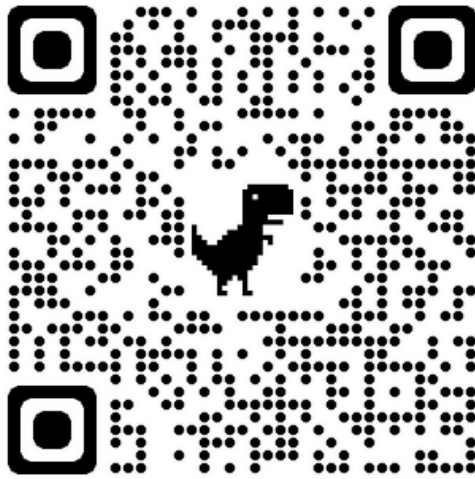
# GET INVOLVED

Visit our website and social channels pages  
to find out more about the work we do  
and how you can support us

[www.creteforlife.com](http://www.creteforlife.com)







**DONATE**



# CONTACT US

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