Lesvos, Greece

- Northeastern Aegean island that is a primary entry point into the EU from Turkey for refugees and migrants from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Africa
- Home of the notorious Moria refugee camp; currently 22,000 refugees and migrants awaiting asylum claims and living in unsanitary and unsafe conditions
- In response to recent provocation from Turkey, Greece has decided to suspend the asylum process until April 2020, leaving all stranded

Mandala Child Space

- Constructed by NGO Refugee4Refugees in spring 2019, adjacent to Moria camp
- Informal space for children in camp to play, learn English, and engage in PSS activities

PSS in Education in Emergencies (EiE)

- PSS refers to the processes and actions that promote the holistic wellbeing of people in their social world, including support provided by family and friends
- Psychosocial wellbeing is a significant precursor to learning and is essential for academic achievement
- Intentional investment in education-based PSS has proven to protect children against the negative effects of disasters by creating stable routines, providing opportunities for friendship and play, and reducing stress, among others

Research Question

How are child psychosocial support (PSS) interventions designed, implemented, and monitored in informal education spaces on Lesvos, and how can local NGOs improve the outcomes of their programs?

Challenges

- Declared state of emergency on Lesvos beginning March 2020 given Greek-Turkish hostilities
- Dismantling of Mandala Space in March 2020 due to severe camp overcrowding
- Prioritization of emergency response over education programming, especially during COVID-19 crisis
- Temporary status of children on island
- Lack of funding for PSS programming
- Lack of instruction for use of INEE guidelines to design, implement, and monitor PSS programs

References

1. UNHCR. "Act Now to Alleviate Suffering at reception centers on Greek islands." February 2020.