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### **PRESS RELEASE**

#### **"Opening Access to Health and Medicines for All"**

The health crisis caused by Covid-19 highlights today more than anything else the need for unhindered access by all citizens to medical care. In the period of pandemics we realize that - regardless of country of origin and social class - we are all equal in the face of illness. Likewise, equal should be our treatment by the national health system for the public good.

Doctors of the World - Greek Delegation, GIVMED and the Press Project (TPP), started implementing the project on March 2020 "Opening Access to Health and Medicines for All» which is co-funded by the *Increased Support for Human Rights programme* of the Active citizens fund.

However, the downsizing of the NSS budget over the past few years has not favored everyone's unimpeded access to health care.

The aim of the project is to advocate for the access of all citizens and especially the most vulnerable (e.g. elderly, refugees, unemployed, chronic and psychiatric patients) to quality free health services and appropriate medication.

Objectives include highlighting practical issues that make it difficult for citizens to have unhindered access to healthcare, evaluating the pertinent legal framework and formulating policy proposals. We will strive to achieve these objectives with the development of the following actions:

Collection of patient testimonials on the difficulty of accessing medical and diagnostic examinations and conducting research

Study of the legal framework and qualitative research on drug donation - social pharmacies in Greece and abroad

Investigative Journalism - Supervision of the current health-medicine system

Proposal to streamline national policy on the basis of testimony, study, research

Advocacy via an information campaign for enhancing vulnerable citizens' voice – dissemination in the media

The Co-operation between Doctors of the World, GIVMED and TPP through planned actions contributing to the highlighting of problems in access to health care, the relevant legal framework and the advocacy actions are expected to support the universal human right to health.

*«The Active citizens fund in Greece is supported through a € 12m grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway as part of the EEA Grants 2014 - 2021. The program aims to develop the sustainability and capacity of the civil society sector in Greece, and to strengthen its role in promoting and safeguarding democratic procedures, active citizenship and human rights. The Fund Operator for the Active citizens fund in Greece is Bodossaki Foundation in consortium with Solidarity Now.»*



**Διαχειριστής Επιχορήγησης:**



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#### **About Médecins du Monde - Doctors of the World – Greece**

Médecins du Monde-Doctors of the World Greece was founded in 1990 and is part of the International network of MdM that consists of 16 Chapters in the world (Argentina, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Japan, Turkey, Luxemburg, Netherlands Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and U.S.A.) It remains, though, a Greek organization, taking its own path based on circumstances particular to Greece, while maintaining financial and administrative independence and transparency shared with the network. Completing 28 consecutive years of action in 2018, MdMGreece has been acknowledged as a credible and efficient organization that fosters the sense of solidarity within the Greek Community. Having conducted numerous humanitarian aid programs in Greece and in developing countries, Greek doctors, administration, medical staff and technical experts continue to offer their voluntary services. MdM-Greece with more than 600 volunteers since its foundation, in around 50 countries around the world, contributes to medical and humanitarian aid programs. Throughout the years, medical and humanitarian aid programs have been carried out in Iraq, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Serbia, Sudan, Palestine, Haiti, Gaza, Uganda, Tanzania, Algeria etc. Doctors of the World Greece works with other international Non-Governmental Organizations in order to more efficiently provide humanitarian aid to people in need.