

A close-up photograph of a woman with dark, wavy hair looking down at a young child she is holding. The child is looking off to the side. The woman is wearing a light-colored t-shirt. The child is wearing a grey t-shirt with a colorful graphic of a teapot and flowers. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a corrugated metal surface.

# MOAS

# MAGAZINE

2019

Venezuelans  
on foot

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MOAS has been operational since 2014 and is registered in Italy and Malta as well as having legal representation in Germany and the USA. MOAS is an International Humanitarian organization providing emergency relief to migrants risking their lives in search of safety.

MOAS Co-Founder & Director: Regina Egle Liotta Catrambone  
Photo credits: Chris McGrath (Getty), Dale Gillett, Darrin Zammit Lupi (Reuters), Giulio Piscitelli (Contrasto), Giuseppe Carotenuto (UNHCR), Jashim Salam, Jason Florio, Mathieu Willcocks, Rehman Sobhan, Saad Bin Hossain, Zane Dedlow

**MOAS**

## Letter from MOAS' Director

**In 2019 MOAS was proud to celebrate our fifth anniversary. From search and rescue in the Mediterranean and evacuation flights for refugees out of Libya to research missions in the Andaman and healthcare provision in Bangladesh, MOAS has done so much in its relatively short years. 2019 was no exception for us, and we were busy from the outset, with programming and operations targetted at reaching the most vulnerable and in need.**

In Bangladesh, in response to high numbers of water related deaths in the monsoon and Cyclone seasons, we have launched Cox's Bazar's first extensive Water and Flood Safety training programme targetted at Rohingya refugees and the Bangladeshi host community. In addition to regular training, MOAS also give trainer training where selected course participants are trained to transfer their knowledge to the rest of the community, in the name of sustainability and increased impact. The inclusion of Rohingya women in our training was vital in equipping women with skills to better prepare themselves and their families for possible water-related emergencies. This training was put into practical use earlier this year, when in the Teknaf camp a young boy who was about to drown was saved by the MOAS trained volunteers - this is a true testament to the difference our programming is making in the community.

This year, we have also been very excited about our new operations in Yemen, where we were able to distribute over 50 tons of nutritional aid and 120,000 euros worth of medical supplies thanks to a collaboration with our local and international partners. The country is experiencing a bloody civil war that is having devastating consequences for the local population and a large proportion of Yemenis are in desperate need of humanitarian assistance. The destruction of infrastructure has also contributed to reduced aid deliveries and restricted access to schools and hospitals. The devastation caused by this ongoing conflict, together with the lack of medical care, has led to the spread of diseases such as cholera and diphtheria, which MOAS has been working to tackle.

MOAS' Search and Resuce (SAR) missions from 2014 to 2017 in the Mediterranean and the Aegean saved more than 40,000 people who were desperately fleeing war, persecution and extreme poverty. The long and silent massacre in the Mediterranean continues to have no respite. With the launch of the #SafeandLegalRoutes campaign we are calling on national, European and International institutions to create and improve safe and legal mechanisms of family reunification, sponsorship, subsidised work and study visas, humanitarian corridors and many other instruments that still exist but are not used to allow the most vulnerable people to safely reach the countries of destination.

I hope you enjoy this year's edition of the MOAS Magazine and are inspired to find ways to use your resources and talents to benefit globally communities affected by crisis.





# MOAS in BANGLADESH

Myanmar's continued failure to recognise the Rohingya as citizens has created countless obstacles for them in accessing healthcare, education, employment opportunities or freedom of movement within the country.

Following a brutal crackdown in Myanmar in 2017 hundreds of thousands of Rohingya fled their homes to Bangladesh amidst widespread reports of killings, rape, torture and horrendous abuse. Detailed reports made by survivors to the UN led them to describe the situation as a 'textbook example of ethnic cleansing'.

Since the middle of 2017, nearly one million Rohingya have moved to the crowded camps in Cox's Bazar. They join the nearly 300,000 Rohingya already living there, having been previously displaced from Myanmar in prior decades. Almost 60% of the refugees in the camps are children.

Kutapalong Camp in Cox's Bazar is the largest refugee camp in the world, with a population of over 600,000 Rohingya. Many of the camps in the area are prone to flooding, landslides and tidal surges with around 200,000 people living in 'high risk areas'.

## Our Response

In response to this humanitarian emergency, MOAS has been on the ground in Cox's Bazar since September 2017, initially delivering 40 tonnes of humanitarian aid to those who had just arrived in the country. Then, in October 2017, we began setting up two primary healthcare centres in Shamlapur and Unchiprang camps, offering emergency medical care, as well as life-saving reproductive, maternal, neonatal and paediatric support to camp residents and local community members alike. These centres had treated over 90,000 people by the end of 2018. Early this year, responding to a call from the Inter Sector Coordination Group, highlighting that 'emergency life-saving response remains an urgent priority' within Rohingya refugee camps, and in recognition of the dangers related to flooding and monsoon storms in the region, MOAS began delivering a Flood and Water Safety Training course. The course builds community capacity, training Rohingya or host community volunteers to be able to act as first responders in the event of a water related emergency and to manage the aftereffects of flooding.

Selected volunteers are also chosen for 'train the trainer' courses and receive additional instruction allowing them to be able to deliver the course to new groups of volunteers in the future. Such an approach ensures the sustainability of the project and knowledge retention within communities. Our flood training programme has also provided valuable skills to women in the Rohingya community, some of whom have even been able to pass their skills on through the train-a-trainer program. The Rohingya community in Bangladesh is predominantly made up of women and children and the training is both empowering and capacity building in equal measure.

MOAS also supplies volunteers with high quality rescue equipment in the form of throw bags and bottle rings (made from recycled plastic bottles), so that the water safety volunteers are able to utilise their skills effectively. This year we have overseen the production of 800 throw-bags, which have already been put to good use! This equipment is made locally by Bangladeshi manufacturers, which keeps transportation costs down and provides a valuable source of income to local businesses.

In 2019 MOAS trained a total of 1,402 safety volunteers, meaning that water related dangers in the camps are reduced in places where skilled volunteers are on hand to monitor open water sources and provide assistance in emergency flooding events.





# VENEZUELAN ON FOOT

In July 2019, Xchange reported on the experience of Venezuelan migrants on the move, through in-depth interviews with participants who had made the journey from Venezuela and were currently staying in Colombia.

There have been three major waves of migration from Venezuela since 2002 but it is the most recent and largest wave that Xchange focused on in this year's report. This third wave is predominantly composed of more vulnerable groups in society – families, women with children, older people, the disabled and chronically ill, indigenous populations and poor/lower middle-income families. As such, it has led to the rise of the 'Venezuelan Walkers', Venezuelans who are having to make the journey to a better life on foot due to limited financial resources. The report highlights the main reasons that Venezuelan migrants gave for leaving their homes, the challenges that they faced on their journey and what their life is like now in Colombia.

## Causes of migration

The cause of migration from Venezuela is unusual in that it is not violent conflict that is forcing people to leave their homes, but protracted socioeconomic disaster, on a scale never before seen in Latin America. The highest inflation levels in the world, food and medicine shortages, power cuts and

stagnating employment prospects have led over 4 million people to leave Venezuela since 2015. Xchange's research found that the principle factor behind people's decision to leave Venezuela was food insecurity due to inflation in the region.

*"After getting my [monthly] salary, the most I would be able to buy would be 2 kilos of rice and 1 kilo of cornmeal."*

”

Another major reason for migration was identified as being the lack of medical care and treatment available. When people fall ill, most are unable to afford treatment or medicines – and even if they can, chronic supply shortages have seen the majority of hospitals and clinics in the country running out of basic supplies and medications. All of the participants interviewed by Xchange stated that Venezuelans were dying due to a lack of medicine and available medical care.

## Challenges during the journey

Throughout interviews, it was revealed that the journey to Colombia brought with it many challenges: such as the harsh weather conditions when crossing los Paramos, a highland area in the Colombian Andes. All participants interviewed by Xchange had either heard of, or themselves witnessed, people who had succumbed to hypothermia in the mountains.

*"I have seen fellow Venezuelans that have had to be taken down [from Los Paramos] suffering from... frozen to death... because the night caught up to them and they wanted to continue walking."*

”

Another major danger identified en-route in the interviews was that of the Inchas, criminal gangs who prey on groups of migrants, stealing valuables, threatening people and even raping women. The majority of people interviewed by Xchange had had interactions with these groups at some point on their journey.

## Life in Colombia

Despite the hardships of the journey no respondents regretted their decision to come to Colombia – largely due to the availability of food and medical care in the country, and all participants said that they had received help from fellow Venezuelans and Colombians, both during the journey and on arrival in Colombia.

However, all participants also stated that they felt as though they had fewer rights in Colombia as compared to Venezuela, as they still faced hardship and discrimination. Every interviewee recounted at least one occasion where they had been verbally or physically abused in Colombia. With no end in sight for the economic crisis in Venezuela, the challenges for Venezuelan citizens will continue. Keeping migrant voices at the centre of research is of paramount importance in raising awareness, identifying gaps and advocating for better policy creation.



**XCHANGE**  
RESEARCH ON MIGRATION



# ALAN KURDI RELIEF mission

On Tuesday the 9th of April 2019, MOAS launched a relief mission delivering supplies to the Alan Kurdi rescue vessel, belonging to the German NGO Sea Eye. The ship had been stranded for over a week after it was refused safe harbour in which to disembark the rescued migrants on board. They were in need of food, water, medicine and other supplies.



The Alan Kurdi rescued 64 migrants, including women and children, off the coast of Libya a week prior, having been unable to contact the Libyan authorities. On the morning of Tuesday 9th April a 24-year-old woman on board had to be evacuated to Malta for medical attention, following loss of consciousness. Soon after this a pregnant woman was also evacuated on Wednesday evening following a seizure.

MOAS believes in the right to safe harbour for vulnerable migrants fleeing from poverty, persecution and conflict. Therefore, on hearing the statement from Sea-Eye, which announced the shortage of supplies onboard, and in accordance with MOAS' guiding principles, we felt compelled to act. Consequently, on the Tuesday evening we delivered emergency food, water, medicines, dry clothing and blankets to the remaining 63 migrants onboard the Alan Kurdi, in order to provide some support until a more long-term solution was found.

Most of those onboard had already experienced unimaginable atrocities in Libya and we were therefore deeply saddened that the ship had been stranded for so long, especially when those onboard included an infant and a young child, and given that the vessel was facing adverse weather conditions.

When the MOAS crew handed over the delivery, our Director and medical volunteer entered the clinic to deliver the medical supplies. There, all the women and children were taking shelter from the rough seas in a small treatment room with limited space, in which the single doctor and nurse were also having to examine and treat the sick – with each additional day at sea putting increased pressure on the team and those rescued.

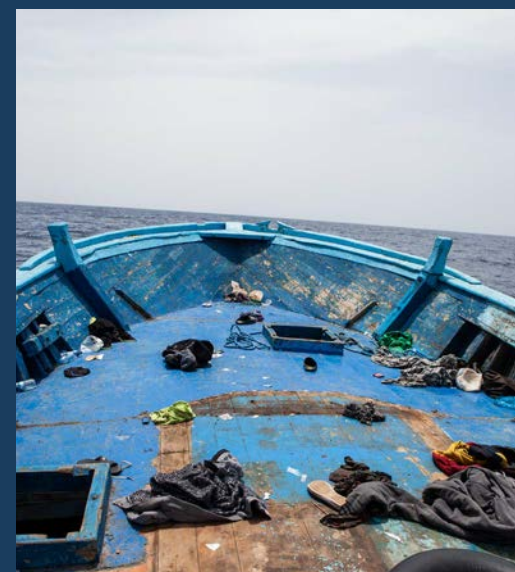
MOAS refuses to ignore the plight and suffering of those on Europe's doorstep and it seems the escalating violence in Libya only enhances the need for the creation of safe and legal routes for vulnerable people in desperate need of protection.

MOAS hopes that, in light of the continuation of Mediterranean crossings, the international community will focus on showing solidarity and compassion in their response to SAR vessels like the Alan Kurdi, who should be granted safe harbour in Europe in a timely manner.



*"MOAS is an international NGO that is focused on mitigating human suffering. Our aim is to serve communities in crisis, such as those onboard the Alan Kurdi ship, by providing immediate aid and assistance. We are an apolitical organization motivated only to help those in need".*

**Regina Catrambone,**  
MOAS director





# Providing company & compassion: migrant hospital visits

Following our Alan Kurdi mission in April, the MOAS team visited two of the women who had been medically evacuated to Malta, providing support as they adjusted to new surroundings and company whilst they were alone in hospital.

#KeepHopeAlive

Since then, we have launched a new project of hospital visits to migrants who have been medevacked due to emergency medical conditions, from Search and Rescue (SAR) vessels in the Mediterranean to Mater Dei hospital in Malta. Our aim with this new project has been to have more of an active inland presence on the island and, as MOAS does not have access to the centres here in Malta, where many migrants reside, we wanted to ensure we were continuing to show support and fill gaps where we could.

Having operated numerous SAR missions in the Mediterranean, MOAS has heard first-hand the often traumatic stories journeys individuals have been forced to take as a result of unrest, poverty or conflict in their home countries. We are therefore very conscious of the distress and uncertainty most migrants feel upon their arrival in an unfamiliar country with a new language and culture, and felt it was vital that a supportive and friendly welcome was

provided to these individuals to show empathy and reinforce the message that we care.

Since April, our team have been visiting new arrivals and bringing them a change of

clothes, basic essentials and offering a listening ear during this challenging time. Over the year we've worked with a dozen cases in the hospital, from sole survivors to families with children. Recently MOAS was present offering support and supplies when one woman gave birth to a healthy baby, having been airlifted from a SAR vessel off the coast off Malta just hours before. We were able to provide various items to help this new family land on its feet in a foreign land with their new-born baby boy.

Most of those we have visited have been unsure of their future in Malta, and Europe, and have often been separated from loved ones due to their medical condition. For many, this separation has lasted weeks or even months, as was the case with one family we regularly visited this year. In this case a young girl who was in a critical medical condition, largely due to the hardships of her journey, was taken to hospital with her mother whilst the rest of the children and the husband were taken to a local detention centre.

It was saddening to witness the impact of this separation on the family and to see them forced to remain in the hospital for so long due to the severity of the daughter's medical condition. The situation would undoubtedly be depressing for anyone and was especially difficult for this family who had already crossed the dangerous Mediterranean to reach safety.

Nonetheless, our hope with this new project is to provide some small comfort and support to these migrants to help during this initial integration period, which can be extremely challenging to digest, and to ultimately show solidarity and compassion to those who have already endured so much to reach safety.





A Reflection From MOAS' Director

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**International  
Women's  
Day:**

# To women and their bravery!

Over the years, International Women's Day has taken on a different meaning for me. In the past, it used to be a day to meet friends that I hadn't met for a long time or to relax, but recently I have developed a very different feeling about it. After witnessing forced migration first-hand, everything changed, including the meaning of some celebrations.





Since MOAS' first mission at sea, topics like gender equality, violence against women, human trafficking and sexual slavery stopped being theoretical reflections and became devastating experiences captured by women's testimonials. **I can't deny that I could see myself in the many women rescued by MOAS' vessels.**

In every girl, I could see my adolescent self or my daughter – dirty and terrified- on a dinghy in distress after months of abuse. And the contrast in my imagination couldn't be more dramatic. On the one hand, my daughter and I were shaping our future and experiencing our first love affairs in a safe place -surrounded and protected by the love of our families. On the other hand, **countless women escaped unimaginable realities and experienced fear and abuse but still maintained a determination to follow their dreams.**

However, it was in mothers' hugs that I could see myself the most. Their hugs embodied a perfect circle to contain infinite love, as well as a desire for protection and their hope for a peaceful future. But, when I hug my daughter to support her during her personal development, the situation is totally different, because I don't have to pretend to be safe and confident in spite of fearful feelings. **How can you explain to your daughter that everything will be fine, after having been raped and tortured in a Libyan prison, in a country at the mercy of armed criminals?**

After the Rohingya exodus to Bangladesh, people were grateful for being treated at the MOAS Aid Stations. Women, men and children waited in line to receive medical assistance, and this was an extraordinary event for those who had fled Myanmar after spending their lives amid persecution and

marginalisation. While listening to Jharu whose husband was slaughtered in front of her, I could only imagine out how difficult it had to be to take care of her family alone. "How can I protect my daughters in an overcrowded camp, where anyone can kidnap them?", she asked me. And I bitterly recalled the many times when I was worried about my daughter while she was playing in our safe courtyard.

**In Yemen, children are the first victims of a never-ending conflict that constantly violates International Law, by bombing schools, targeting hospitals, burning silos and preventing the distribution of medical and food aid.** We all remember Amal, the Yemeni girl who died from starvation. We were briefly moved after seeing her picture, before turning our attention to something else. We all remember her skin, her bones, her eyes filled with incredulity and surprise, as well as her unfair death. But, who remembers her family? Who remembers all the girls deprived of school or forced into child marriage?



Who thinks about all the parents who experience daily the unnecessary deaths of their children due to war or extreme poverty? Who thinks about those who struggle every day to eat, to be in a warm place or to receive medical care? Who can imagine how it feels to hold in your arms a malnourished child who has no strength to play, whilst elsewhere else food is wasted?

Today it's difficult even to help those in need. Fake news and hate speech poison our daily routine with rampant indifference and resentment. We live in our small, private world. If the people I love and I

are safe, who cares about the others? If someone wants to help, there must be hidden interests behind their choice. The fact is that we have lost the mercy and the feelings of brotherhood that unite us as members of the same human family. It's so easy to stop reading an article, switch our mobile off, turn the page of a newspaper and forget what happens in other regions of the world. Above all, it's so easy to think that it's not our fault. This has nothing to do with us.

But, it's false. **For many years, MOAS has been highlighting that it's pure illusion to think that migration doesn't affect us all.** It's so stupid to think that humanitarian crises or emergencies don't affect humankind as a whole, especially when they target our own future by attacking children. This is why I hope that women will be more and more involved in peace talks and negotiations to solve humanitarian crises and will obtain high-level roles both at institutional and business level. My wish is that women's networking ability will overcome divisions and barriers, and female diplomacy will take action to build a new world. In light of this, on International Women's Day 2019, I want to celebrate every woman and girl met during MOAS' missions at sea and on land. I also celebrate the women working at MOAS who are committed to supporting our activities, as well as every little girl in a remote camp who dreams to study. Please be aware that you are not alone, but other women and girls support you every day.



**To women and to their bravery!**



# YEMEN

## OPERATIONS

Since the end of 2014 Yemen has been experiencing a bloody civil war across the country, which has had a devastating impact on the local population. Thousands of civilians have been killed and injured amidst the fighting and around 24 million people, over 80% of the population, are in desperate need of humanitarian assistance.

Four years on since the start of this conflict, Yemen continues to be referred to as the world's worst humanitarian crisis due to the impact the war has had on its civilians with over 20 million people lacking sufficient food.

The destruction of vital infrastructure across the country has made access to basic facilities such as schools and hospitals all the more challenging. This destruction, along with the lack of access to medical care has resulted in the rise in diseases such as cholera and diphtheria, with over 10,000 suspected cases of cholera being reported every week in five of the most affected governorates in the region.





Since 2015, ongoing violence in the region has forced 3.65 million to leave their homes in search of safety elsewhere in Yemen and a further 326,620 have been internally displaced since January this year. For these families the destruction of infrastructure has been all the more disastrous, leaving thousands vulnerable to water-borne infections as a result of poor sewage facilities and malnutrition due to economic instability and lack of access to healthcare assistance and adequate nutrition.

## MOAS in Yemen

At the end of 2018, in response to this ongoing crisis in Yemen, MOAS extended our operations to this region in an attempt to provide aid to the Yemeni communities caught in the crossfire of ongoing conflict and political unrest.

It is notoriously challenging to get aid into Yemen due to political tensions and restrictions, but thanks to the support of our in-country partners, ADRA, we were able to successfully deliver more than 50 tonnes of nutritional aid and €120,000 worth of medical supplies to the port of Aden this year. ADRA have since coordinated the distribution of these deliveries across local governates

*“With the prevalence of diseases and malnutrition in Yemen, providing good quality medicine and nutritional foods is even more vital nowadays. When MOAS agreed to partner with ADRA and support our health and nutrition activities, we were ecstatic because we knew that this strategic partnership would mean we could elevate the quality of our services for the communities that we serve.”*

”

Don Magbanua  
from ADRA, Yemen



supplements were also distributed to help meet the needs of some seven million Yemenis suffering from iron-deficiency anaemia as a result of malnutrition. In the first five months of this year alone, Yemen experienced more suspected cases of Cholera than the whole of 2018 out together and consequently intervention treatments have also been distributed as part of this operation to local Yemeni communities to help tackle the country’s worst cholera outbreak on record.

These supplies were distributed by our partners through the established health cluster and nutrition pipeline and this delivery would not have been possible without the generosity of action medeor, Aktion Pro Humanität and the foundation of family Seibt, whom we thank for helping MOAS to keep hope alive where it is needed the most. Ute Hoffmann, from Action Medeor, is responsible for coordinating medical shipments to Yemen and said of the operation:

The nutritional supplies were provided by our partner Edesia, a US-based nutrition company which manufactures calorie-dense sachets specifically formulated for paediatric malnutrition refeeding programmes. We are also grateful to long-time MOAS supporters Ed and Barbara Shapiro, and the Ruth and Hal Lauenders Charitable Trust for sponsoring this shipment.

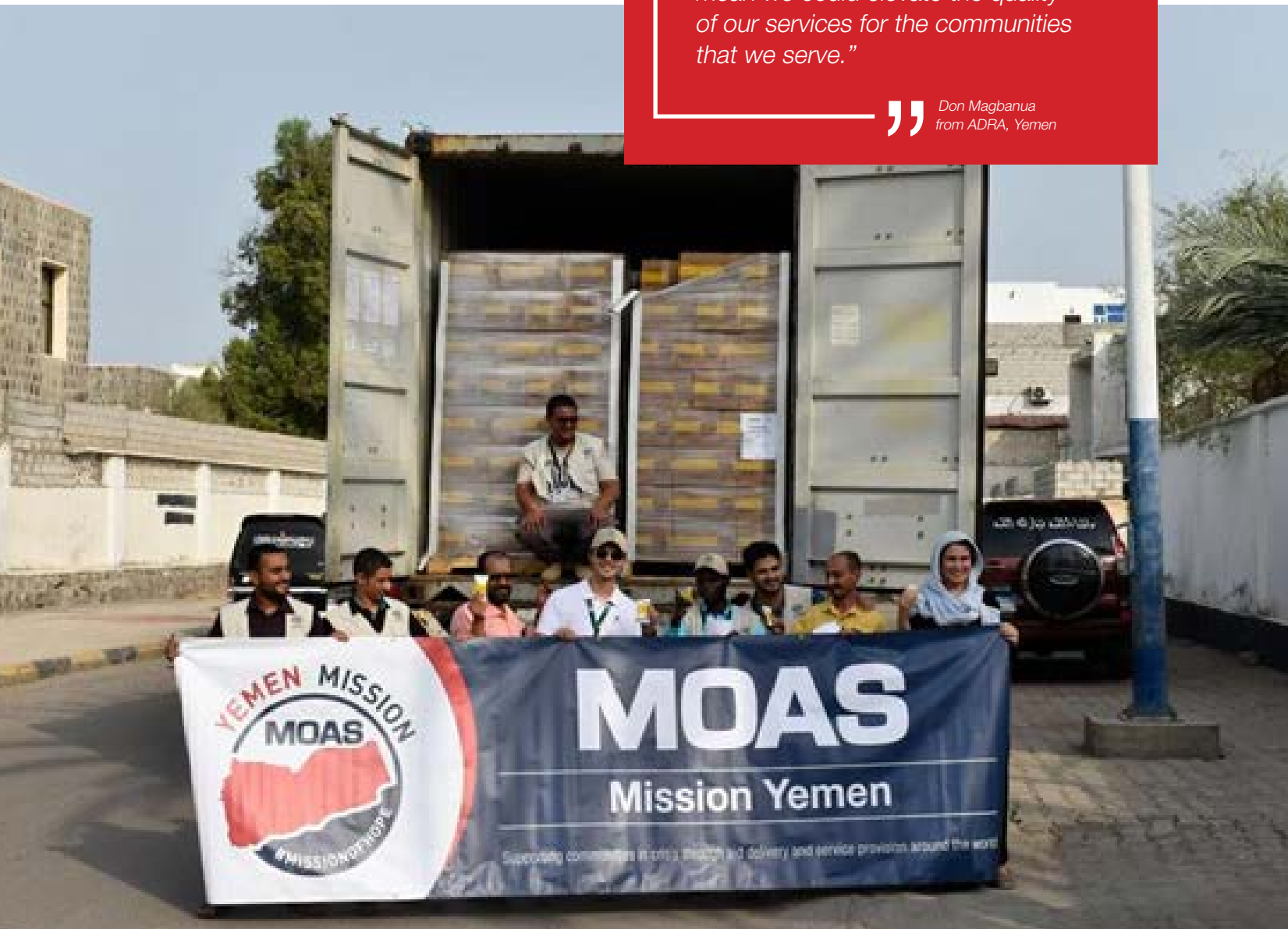
The preventative nutrient supplements provided by Edesia were Plumpy Doz and Plumpy Sup, which are specifically created for children at risk of, or suffering from, acute malnutrition as preventatives and treatments that can be given through the nutrition pipelines in times of food insecurity. This nutritional support will help promote healthy development in children whilst allowing parents to support their children’s rehabilitation at home, rather than in hospitals or clinics which are increasingly difficult to access.

The second shipment, meanwhile, contained medication and equipment to combat infant and maternal deaths, as Yemen currently holds alarmingly high maternal mortality rates, at 385 deaths per 100,000 live births. Iron and vitamin

*“Talking to our partner organisations in Yemen constantly reminds us how important it is to keep supporting the local population. Together with NGOs who are on-site such as MOAS we are able to bring and distribute the much-needed medicines to those in need. We are very grateful for the cooperation with MOAS, because our mutual goal is to help the needy with urgently needed medicines and medical equipment.”*

”

**MOAS is delighted at the success of these deliveries this year and looks forward to continuing to work collaboratively with these partners to deliver more aid and medical assistance to vulnerable Yemeni communities in this war-torn region in 2020.**





# Our SUPER Supporters



***“For our 16th Birthday, we wanted to do something that would contribute to the pressing, universal issue, that is the refugee crisis. MOAS stood out for us because of their personal and inspiring story that has led to their help in aiding refugees and migrants all around the world; including Bangladesh, the Mediterranean and Yemen. We were truly touched and motivated to help an organization that was doing such incredible things for people worldwide. We knew that fundraising for MOAS would make a direct impact on the safety and displacement of refugees worldwide.”***

MOAS continues to generate the majority of its donations from private individuals, foundations and companies and it's our incredible community that keeps us strong. Although there are hundreds of wonderful donors and supporters we owe our thanks to, we wanted to highlight this year's 'Super Supporters' in our yearly magazine:

This year we have been blown away by the hard work and dedication of South African twins Aliya and Samiya who, for their 16th Birthday decided to launch an ambitious fundraising campaign for MOAS. The goal? To raise 1600 euros in their 16th year!



We have loved following every step of the twins' journey which has involved creative bake sales and passionate awareness raising about the issues facing displaced communities around the world today. Such enthusiastic activism is an important reminder of the power of this young generation's voice in making change.

Now with just 5% of their target left to reach – we wish the twins all the best in their final fundraising efforts!





# MOAS

## EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS & MOAS VOLUNTEERS

MOAS is always grateful for the dedication of those who volunteer their time to support our mission, whether it be in the office or in the field and, with a busy year ahead, we look forward to welcoming more volunteers in the coming year. In particular, we want to highlight our ESC programme.

This year MOAS hosted another group of European Solidarity Corps (ESC) volunteers for a twelve-month placement at our central office in Valletta, Malta. The EVS experience is a unique and valuable opportunity for young adults between 18 and 30 years-old looking to gain international experience working for a cause they are passionate about.

For the four volunteers MOAS welcomed in 2019, the year was an opportunity to gain professional experience working for an International NGO whilst experiencing a new country and culture here in Malta. Working in MOAS' small team based in Malta's capital city, the volunteers have been able to gain a real insight into the day-to-day operations of a humanitarian organisation, to develop new skillsets and to learn directly from our team of professionals working hard to deliver aid and assistance to vulnerable communities worldwide.

The **Xchange** Foundation is MOAS' partner organisation, focusing on migration data and research.

**XCHANGE**  
RESEARCH ON MIGRATION



## X Change: *Last* CHILDHOODS

In April this year, Xchange investigated Rohingya parent-child separation in Bangladesh following our Rohingya Survey, where 9 in 10 respondents said they believed there were families in the refugee camps who had had a child go missing. The video report explored experiences of Rohingya parents whose children were no longer living with them due to adoption, child labour or due to a disappearance.

### Reasons behind separation

Given the challenges faced by Rohingya families in Bangladesh child labour and irregular adoptions have become more and more frequent for those living in refugee camps. Many Rohingya have challenging family situations – due to the loss of loved ones, often men who are traditionally the breadwinners of Rohingya households, and whose wives now find themselves as single parents responsible for multiple children with limited or no income and are therefore unable to

support themselves and their family.

This financial instability is further worsened by the restrictions placed on employment for Rohingya refugees leading many to make drastic decisions to keep their families alive:

Parents interviewed by Xchange were also motivated by the hope that their children would have more opportunities available to them outside their own family:

*“If I were financially able, I would have not sent my child to work. Only people who are lacking money send their children to work. Would anyone wish to give their child for work?”*

” Jamila

*“I thought that she would suffer with me and that she might be happy if I gave her to childless parents, so I did. [...] I thought that she would get a better life than here...”*

” Baanu



## Contact after separation

The promise of regular communication with their children was a key incentive for many Rohingya parents when agreeing to separation. However, no parents interviewed had any knowledge of the adoptive parents beforehand or of their child's current whereabouts and had not had any contact with their children since the adoption despite these promises.

*"When they came to my house to take my child, they said we will communicate like relatives but after they left my house, they didn't make any communication."*

” Sameera

Around 500,000 children currently live in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazaar and child labour continues to be a major issue for locals and Rohingya refugees alike. The parents of children who were involved in child labour were aware of their location and believed their children were involved predominantly in manual labour although the conditions of each case varied. However, although the frequency of communication with their children differed between families, 6 out of the 8 child labour cases received a salary of some kind which was said to have an overall positive impact on their families' situation. Financial gain for those parents whose children were given up for adoption was not reported to be a necessary driver for the separation but sadly, even those who were promised some financial support following the adoption were not supported in the way they were promised.

## Rethinking the decision

All respondents in Xchange's interviews were understandably emotional when recounting the separation from their children with many expressing

The **Xchange** Foundation is MOAS' partner organisation, focusing on migration data and research.

# X Change: Last CHILDHOODS



feelings of regret despite the desperate situation they were in as a result of fleeing Myanmar:

*"If I see children the same age as my child then I miss him very much. When I remember [the day] I feel like crying and can't eat"*

” Rumana

Many Rohingya called for the urgent need for greater external support to prevent the occurrence of such drastic measures in the future as clearly no parent should ever have to be in such a tragically desperate position.



**XCHANGE**  
RESEARCH ON MIGRATION





# NAYAPARA RESCUE

Nayapara Registered Refugee Camp, like all the camps in Cox's Bazar, was inundated by monsoon storms throughout July this year.

Heavy rains cause the water levels to rise dramatically in the streams, pools and reservoirs in the camps and children are particularly at risk, given the almost total absence of safe places to play, and the irresistible attraction of pools in the hot, humid weather.

The flood and water safety training that has been delivered by the MOAS team to Rohingya participants from many of the camps throughout the year, has built a strong network of community safety volunteer teams, able to act as emergency first responders in the event of a flood or water related emergency. Given that children are constantly playing in the water and that the majority of them are not able to swim, it was suggested by MOAS that a pro-active approach to water safety be taken, with community safety volunteers patrolling popular open water areas.

On Saturday 6th July after a period of exceptionally heavy rainfall, a safety volunteer team led by Oar Faruk and composed of Mojibur Rahman, Hossain Mubarak, Mohammed Rofique, Zahid Uddin and Emdad Ullah, headed out to patrol the Mosonir Di reservoir in Nayapara camp.

They had not been there long when Mohammed Rofique noticed a boy about 25 meters out, away from the other children shouting and playing in the shallows. He appeared to be in distress and was having trouble keeping his head above the water. Rofique raised the alarm and with the help of fellow volunteers, they deployed a MOAS throw bag, which reached the boy on the first try and using the throw bag and a makeshift floatation device, the team were able to quickly pull him to safety.

The boy that the team rescued, 14-year-old

Mohammed Nur, had been playing football with his friends and had jumped into the pool to wash off the mud from the game. However, the water was deeper than he had thought and he was quickly out of his depth. Unable to swim, Mohammed had been on the verge of drowning, before the community safety team saved him. Once safe on the bank, the team helped him to cough up water before handing him over to his mother, who took him straight to a medical centre for a check up

The skills that the water safety training has given Rohingya volunteers made the difference between life and death that day. Without the presence of the safety team, there would have been another tragedy in the camps, another preventable death. We are extremely grateful to all the Rohingya Safety Volunteers, as well as their host community counterparts, for their commitment in supporting the local communities and ensuring their safety during the monsoon season.





# National Voluntary Award 2019

MOAS was honoured to be nominated for the National Voluntary Organisation of 2019 Award in Malta.



**MOAS** was delighted to be named the winning organisation for 2019, and we are extremely grateful for all the unwavering support and generosity from our donors and followers, as well as our pool of tireless volunteers, who enable us to continue working towards our mission to provide aid and assistance to some of the world's most vulnerable communities.

The award is a recognition of a Voluntary Organisation which has been outstanding in the sector in which it operates, being both innovative in its approach and services within the community as well as in its way of recruiting and supporting volunteers.

The aim of the award is to give recognition to the contributions made by outstanding individual volunteers and organisations, as well as increase awareness of the exemplary work done by various voluntary organisations in Malta.







# Protracted Crises

Refugee crises are often treated as humanitarian emergencies, yet in reality these “crises” can extend over decades. In fact, UNHCR estimates suggest around two-thirds of the 25.9 million registered refugees worldwide are in a situation of protracted displacement, with most of the major protracted situations now lasting an average of an astounding 20 years.

Protracted displacement is therefore on the rise and solutions to these crises are more urgently needed than ever.

UNHCR defines Protracted Refugee Situations (PRS) as a ‘long-lasting and intractable state of limbo’ where refugees have been in exile for ‘5

years or more after their initial displacement, without immediate prospects for implementation of durable solutions’ (UNHCR 2009).

When refugee crises become prolonged, additional obstacles arise often to the detriment of these communities’ basic human rights. Most refugees, around 80%, are hosted in the global South, where host-countries already have their own internal issues to manage from poverty to lack of employment – making the experience of those in protracted displacement all the more problematic.

The experience of living in typically poor living conditions within a refugee camp for an extended period of time brings a host of challenges including lack of access to local healthcare, the free labour market and educational services. In Bangladesh, the Rohingya’s lack of access to the local school system is gradually creating a generation of young Rohingya who lack any basic education or skills training. Similarly, the lack of access to the free labour market among refugee adults over time also results in wasted skills and livelihoods and must be addressed with the support of the international community, and not left to be the responsibility of the host nation alone.



This long-term lack of educational and employment opportunities has made many communities in displacement all the more reliant on external assistance, preventing refugee self-reliance. This is particularly troublesome for refugees displaced for decades where international attention often wavers, leaving the communities with diminishing external assistance, and subsequently their situation becomes all the more challenging to navigate. The vulnerability of refugees is also typically heightened in protracted situations due to the long-term lack of protection which comes with displacement. This is often visible in the increase in cases of physical and sexual violence, exploitation and human trafficking which tragically are too often invisible or seriously underreported due to these communities' lack of concrete documentation or citizenship.

The lack of freedom of movement over an extended period of time, which restricts refugees to the constraints of a refugee camp, again further stunts any professional, educational, personal or creative development.

Protracted refugee situations bring with them the added issue of second or third generation refugees. In 2018, an average of 60 Rohingya children per day were born into Bangladeshi refugee camps without legal citizenship. Born into displacement with few opportunities available, almost 400,000 children do not have access to formal education as at end Dec 2019, it seems their development and future will be limited from the offset as a result of their parent's displacement and statelessness.



Perhaps the greatest risk for protracted refugee situations is that they become side-lined by emerging humanitarian crises, fail to meet many development specific program criteria and fall between the cracks in the international community's attention. It is therefore crucial that media attention continues to bring these situations to light, to share the experiences of those living as refugees for decades and to demand that more sustainable, long-term solutions are found.

The experience of children born into life as refugees certainly reminds us how the arbitrary fact of our birthplace can influence the opportunities available to us but we must not allow this not dictate the future of an entire new generation of Rohingya. Like those who came before them, Rohingya children have hopes and aspirations of a life of freedom and dignity, which we must help them to realise.





# NABATA'S STORY

***This is Nabata, aged 2 years old. Despite making every effort, Nabata's mother was unable to maintain her weight and she had become listless and lethargic.***

Lack of access to regular nutrition and ongoing bouts of illness had left Nabata with no interest in play or those around her.

At a nearby clinic Nabata was identified as being at high risk for Severe Acute Malnutrition and treated immediately. She was given two sachets per day of the famine relief supplies donated by MOAS through local partner, ADRA.

Thanks to the treatment she received, within one-month Nabata had gained weight and was already back to her playful, mischievous self.



## #GIVINGTUESDAY

**For this year's Giving Tuesday campaign MOAS set out to raise funds to continue our operations delivering nutritional aid to children like Nabata in Yemen.**

MOAS has been taking part in Giving Tuesday's annual campaign for five years now and we are always extremely grateful for the public's generosity during this period.

This year we were, again, blown away by everyone's support.

Thanks to your help and the donations received we were able to send another delivery of nutritional aid to Yemen just before Christmas.

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE  
*from our Director*



With the arrival of Christmas and the festive season we honour the birth of the child Jesus and renew

a message of love, hope, brotherhood and acceptance that reaches out to all humanity. A child born in a makeshift shelter because he was not welcomed in any home. History repeats itself today in every child forced to flee their own land, in every child who is not welcomed, in every child saved at sea, in every child who suffers from hunger because of war, in every child who lives among the barracks of a refugee camp, in every child invisible because they are stateless.

The Christmas message reminds us not to lose hope and seeks to awaken dormant humanity, leads me to ask all of you to take action and make it Christmas for all, even for those who are less fortunate. In thanking the donors, the MOAS team and all those who helped us and gave support to our missions in the world,

I WISH YOU ALL A MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

*Regina Catrão*



# The Launch of our **Safe and Legal Routes** Campaign

By **Regina Catrambone**, MOAS Director

In recent years the news of deadly shipwrecks and rescues in the Mediterranean Sea has flooded our screens. Sadly, we have become numb to hearing of such tragic incidents. Instead, these stories have fuelled the rhetoric of manufactured emergency, the narrative of fear and the cynicism of certain policies.

**Safe and legal routes are a concrete solution to put an end to these massacres.**

Since the first MOAS (Migrant Offshore Aid Station) mission, the NGO founded by my family in 2014 and the first non-governmental organization to run Search and Rescue operations in the Mediterranean, we have become direct witnesses to the lives lost at sea.

However, although we knew that our contribution could not be considered the only solution to such a complex problem, **we felt it was our duty to do our part** to help alleviate the suffering in the Mediterranean and provide a lifeline for those seeking safety.

Between August 2014 and 2017 over **40,000 people** were rescued during our SAR missions in the Central Mediterranean and the Aegean. It was an honour to be integral to the rescue of people who had risked everything to escape war, persecution and extreme poverty.

**This ongoing massacre in the Mediterranean must be stopped**, it is necessary to give desperate people the chance to reach safety in Europe, and elsewhere, in a safe and regular manner.

In August 2017, after the European **agreements with Libya**, we stopped our missions as we did not wish to become implicated in this indirect refoulement mechanism to a country that was not and continues **not be a safe place for returning migrants**.

Five years on since our inception we believe that we cannot continue to entrust the entire management of

the emergency in the Mediterranean to Search and Rescue NGOs, especially now, when compared to 2013, we know so much more about this migration flow: where they start, what they risk, what routes they cross and where they are detained.

**It's time for concrete answers!**

We must create a mechanism to remove the most vulnerable from the ruthless hands of human smugglers, to allow them to avoid the dangerous migration journeys, to respect international obligations on the right to asylum and to manage migration flows in order to ensure security for the countries of resettlement. This is the response we need from the international community. Implementing the **"flights of hope"** in several European states would be a sign of humanity and political responsibility. As this is an appropriate model to ensure that people **arrive in Europe from countries of transit safely** and receive adequate psychological support, necessary legal assistance and a valid integration system. The same can be said for the popular initiative "Ero straniero – l'umanità che fa bene", which has been put forward to the Italian Parliament.

Global migration is one of the **major challenges of this century**, a difficult and controversial phenomenon that can only be managed by thinking outside the confines of the current system. **Let's not turn our backs on humanity.**

You can use the hashtag #SafeAndLegalRoutes and sign our online appeal via **[www.moas.eu/safeandlegalroutes](http://www.moas.eu/safeandlegalroutes)** to join the conversation calling for alternative migration routes for vulnerable migrants.

Proceeds from every purchase on our online store also go towards our push for safe and legal routes and our operational efforts in Yemen and Bangladesh!

**[www.worthwearing.org](http://www.worthwearing.org)**





# A summary OF THIS YEAR

2019 has been a year of exciting starts with the expansion of our operations to Yemen and new training programs in Bangladesh. Read our end-of-year summary to hear more about what we have been up to this year.

## BANGLADESH



This year MOAS has continued its work supporting Rohingya refugees living in Cox's Bazar, as we have engaged in Flood and Water Safety Training in 18 camps as well as within host communities throughout the region. The sprawling refugee camps and low-lying host community villages are at major risk of cyclones, flooding and storm surges – especially during the monsoon season – and drowning and water-related accidents have been identified as a major risk.

The training delivered to 1,400 individuals this year was designed to build capacity and help communities become more resilient by providing water safety training to Rohingya volunteer groups, meaning that they can act as first responders in the event of a water-related or flooding emergency. The participants have been trained in identifying specific

areas at risk from flooding, how to move safely within flooded environments, how to perform land-based rescues and how to use 'throw bags' to pull people in distress from the water.

MOAS continues to respond to the needs of the Rohingya population in protracted displacement and are delighted to be continuing these innovative and crucial training programs with our partners in the new year.



## YEMEN



As the conflict in Yemen nears its fifth year and the civilian population continues to suffer immense hardships, MOAS has responded by providing vital medical supplies and emergency nutritional aid to support those most in need. Despite political tensions and restrictions across the region we were able to deliver over 50 tonnes of the nutritional aid, and €120,000 worth of medical supplies to the port of Aden, thanks to the support of Edesia ADRA – our brilliant partners.

ADRA have since coordinated the distribution of these deliveries across local governorates. Famine conditions in Yemen have claimed the lives of at least 85,000 children in the last three years – the nutritional supplements delivered by MOAS are formulated specifically to reduce risks or treat malnutrition in children and it has been delivered to some of the worst affected areas in Yemen offering life-saving treatment to vulnerable children.

The medical supplies were sent in collaboration with partners MEDEOR and Aktion Pro Humanität and the foundation of family Seibt. These supplies were desperately needed and the list was designed to target the most vulnerable and worst affected by the crisis, as well as to combat the prevalence of communicable disease.



These deliveries have reached thousands of Yemenis in need of assistance. In fact, by October this year, over 12,000 children were reached with the supplies. In 2020 we look forward to continuing to work towards providing more vital pharmaceutical and nutritional aid to Yemen.

## AT SEA

In April this year, MOAS launched a relief mission to support the Alan Kurdi rescue vessel, belonging to the German NGO Sea Eye, which had been stranded for over a week in Mediterranean international waters after it was refused safe harbour. MOAS responded to the Alan Kurdi's message that they were running out of supplies and delivered emergency food, water, medicines, dry clothing and blankets, ensuring that people were able to maintain their dignity and have at least basic comfort whilst they waited for disembarkation instructions.

## MALTA



This year also saw the launch of our hospital program, where we visit migrants evacuated from search and rescue vessels to the Malta hospital for emergency care. Through this program we provide supplies, information and social support to those who arrive unexpectedly on the island and have yet to be processed by the local asylum system. Through this initiative we engaged with over a dozen families this year and were honoured to be present at births, supported families through chronic illness, visited sole survivors of vessels who met with tragedy on the world's deadliest migration route- the Mediterranean.





## BANGLADESH

1400

Rohingya & host community  
trained in Water Safety &  
Flood/ Cyclone preparedness  
training

1400

throw bags manufactured



## YEMEN

50

tonnes of nutritional  
aid delivered

€120.000

worth of medical  
supplies delivered

# MOAS AROUND THE WORLD

## ALAN KURDI

Emergency food, water,  
medicines, dry clothing &  
blankets delivered to

63

migrants onboard Alan Kurdi



## HOSPITAL VISITS

Worked with a *dozen*  
cases visiting & bringing  
essentials to migrants who have  
been medevacked to Malta's  
hospital from SAR vessels





# Your Donation Saves Lives

If you would like support our humanitarian efforts, you can donate online at [moas.eu/donate](https://moas.eu/donate) or affect a bank transfer.

## MOAS

### EU

Beneficiary Name: **Migrant Offshore Aid Station**  
Bank Name: **Lombard Bank Malta plc**  
IBAN: MT15LBMA05000000000001180113787  
SWIFT Code: LBMAMTMT

### GERMANY

Kontoinhaber: **M.O.A.S.**  
Bank: **Hamburger Sparkasse**  
IBAN: DE48 2005 0550 1002 2118 01  
Kontonr. 1002 2118 01 BIC: HASPDEHHXXX

### ITALIA

Beneficiario: **MIGRANT OFFSHORE AID STATION ITALIA** Onlus  
Banca: **BNL S.p.A.**  
IBAN: IT02P0100503337000000003138  
SWIFT Code: BNLIITRRXXX

### USA

Beneficiary Name: **Global Impact – MOAS Fund**  
Bank Name: **Bank of America**  
Account Number: 435023384035  
SWIFT Code: BOFAUS3N

### UK

Beneficiary Name: **Migrant Offshore Aid Station (MOAS) UK**  
Bank Name: **Lloyds Bank**  
Account Number: 39002760  
Sort Code: 30-90-89  
IBAN: GB33LOYD30908939002760