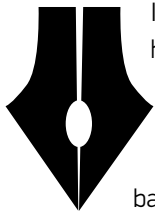




Re: ELPEN-reaches the most VIEW faraway corners of Greece

With Health as a compass!

In the remote regions of Greece, the love that we received from the people is even greater than the love we offered!



In 2015, ELPEN celebrates 50 years of caring for humans. We wanted to honor this milestone by 'listening to our heartbeats', as stated by the poet, Mr. Thanassis Anthimos inspired us to do. "Stay away from the sounds that do not echo back the beats of your hearts". So, in order to offer substantial, yet noiseless social activity, we set about to perform three "sacred requirements": to promote Health, to care for our children who represent our land's hope, and to approach remote areas of Greece, where inhabitants do not enjoy opportunities and stimuli, like the ones enjoyed by their fellow countrymen in major cities.

Having the Greek Red Cross and "Agoni Grammi Gonimi" as our fellow travelers, we set out for a "Journey to remote Greece, with Health as a Compass!". We launched our voyage, aiming to reach 7 islands of the Aegean, 10 villages in the Prefecture of Evros, and 8 villages in the Prefecture of Ioannina; we travelled from Psara to Kastanies, and from Rodotopi to Koufonissia. In all these regions, we were greeted with much enthusiasm by 370 students, aged 11 and 12, from 25 Primary Schools, all of which were ready to embark, along with us, on a fascinating journey of knowledge. The program, which was launched in March and ends in June, includes basic knowledge on First Aid and accident prevention; this educational endeavor is carried out by specialized nurses of the Red Cross. Guided by these experienced tutors, students learned to safely take care of traumas and external bleedings, to deal with burnings, nose bleedings, and fainting events, but also to release foreign particles from the larynx. All these constitute valuable knowledge, knowledge which can even save lives; it is also priceless, as it offers children the joy of participation and enhances their self-confidence and sense of responsibility!



At the end of each program, every school received a fully-equipped pharmacy kit, along with a First Aid booklet from the Red Cross Nursing Department; the booklet contains explanatory images, which can become a truly useful tool!

When we began this journey, our will was to offer love, care, and knowledge to our fellow Man in remote Greece without any expectations that such an act would prove to be so beneficial for our own souls. Yet, the love we received from these children, their teachers, and their parents was even greater than the love we gave.

In "The End", a song by the Beatles, Paul McCartney had said something similar: "And in the end, The love you take, Is equal to the love You make". I suppose we didn't pay enough attention to these words... At times when the entire country finds itself in a position of a standby feeling of suspense. (I wonder why?). I feel that such programs contribute and allow for many other things to 'blossom' inside our country's 'garden', other than the ever-present melancholy....

