The field of Humanitarian Aid is inherently demanding, stressful and often emotionally draining. Many refugee aid workers are confronted with emotional stories and suffering of refugees, have to make critical decisions, manage numerous demands and challenging situations with refugees and their families. Through different projects we have observed that for the majority of refugee aid workers, the current COVID-19 pandemic has even exacerbated these challenges. Yet, only a
strong and resilient workforce can build the necessary basis for supporting refugees and forcibly displaced migrants as best as possible. Providing mental support is thereby key in alleviating stress among refugee aid workers and to build up resilience. This roundtable discussion seeks to raise awareness to this neglected, yet so important topic by convening individuals working across different sectors: public, private and academic in order to merge different perspectives and explore novel opportunities to support refugee aid workers. Panelists will discuss multi-sector and institutional solutions and collaborations needed to address these mental health support gaps. In addition, this panel will discuss recent experiences from the field, projects expanding educational and research partnerships and the development of tools and programs to promote mental health of refugee aid workers. Dr. Anne Jachmann from the Migration Medicine research division of the Emergency Department of the University of Bern will present results of a longitudinal, observational study investigating the psychological impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on refugee aid workers in Greece. Furthermore, as a result of an academic partnership, together with her colleague Dr. Evika Karamagioli, they will demonstrate current needs of refugee aid workers and how these can be met by training and activity offers, based on an online mental health week, as a model of good practice. Dr. Evika Karamagioli is a lecturer at the department of communication and media studies and a scientific collaborator at the faculty of medicine at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. She has experience with diverse refugee projects by scaling up the importance of digital media and creating new ways of communication. Additionally, Evgenia Thanou, the director of Médecins du monde Greece will provide insights to the fieldwork of interdisciplinary teams with different backgrounds and what is needed to best support them, as her organization is providing medical care to refugees all over Greece in different settings. Finally, Dr. Nikos Gionakis, psychiatrist and head of Babel Day Centre, which provides mental health services to migrants and Dr. Lilian Markaki, psychiatrist at the Athens Medical Association will share their experiences and challenges from the field and introduce their approach on how to empower psychosocial skills of refugee aid workers. A discussion with the audience will follow the panelists presentations.

Speakers/Panelists:

Evgenia Thanou
Director of Médecins du monde Greece, Athens, Greece

Nikos Gionakis
Babel Day Centre, Athens, Greece

Lilian Markaki
Athens Medical Association, Athens, Greece

Key messages:
- Raising awareness of the need to promote mental health among refugee aid workers.
- Demonstration of current needs of refugee aid workers and opportunities for cross-sectional collaborations to provide mental support.