



**RED NOSES**  
EMERGENCY SMILE



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# Emergency Smile

**RED NOSES** Clowndoctors International

# Why we created Emergency Smile

We believe that people affected by crisis or facing acute emergency situations need special care. Our beneficiaries receive the immediate aid to survive, but often in the long run emotional well-being no longer exists for the target group. **We envision that essential feelings like joy, optimism and happiness are a necessary part of humanitarian aid** and crisis relief work; not only for the people affected but also for the staff working in such challenging circumstances. We are convinced that the power of humour and laughter, despite adversity and trauma, makes people more resilient. Therefore, **we bring the gift of laughter and human connection to places of acute hardship.**

## What we do

**Emergency Smile is the international outreach programme of RED NOSES International (RNI)**, allowing RNI to reach beyond the borders of its 10 RED NOSES partner countries **to provide joy and stress relief to people affected by crisis and disasters.** This programme was developed in 2013 to send specially trained healthcare clown teams into areas of acute and chronic crisis in cooperation with international aid organisations. The tailor-made Emergency Smile activities provide a sense of normality in abnormal situations through humorous and self-expressing activities, which can help alleviate fear and distress and thus promote well-being.

**We reconnect people affected by crisis and trauma with joyful emotions** in order to rekindle hope, transform their focus by concentrating on positive aspects of life and show them that it still has happiness in store for them. **We create an enabling environment and long-lasting memories of joy**, that are a source of hope and optimism, by engaging the beneficiaries in active playful interactions.



A typical mission team consists of four healthcare clowns and one administrative leader. The standard duration is one week of preparation and three weeks on the ground. Both the number of members of the team and the length of the mission can be increased or decreased according to the needs on the field. RED NOSES' Emergency Smile missions have until now been carried out in Belarus, Cameroun, Greece, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Sierra Leone and Ukraine and it is our plan to keep enlarging our outlook in order to reach target groups on a global level. At its core, **Emergency Smile brings a profound message of humanity that everyone, no matter the age or gender, can relate to and take nourishment from.**



# How we work



## Formats used

Through the well-educated use of humour and empathy, the various formats aim to improve the emotional well-being of the target group (children, adults or elderly people), removing anxiety and stress while bringing a sense of lightness and smiles. As an icebreaker, a show and/or parade is often used initially when working with a new target group. The beneficiaries are then familiar with the work of RED NOSES, and their presence in the location is announced to prepare for further interventions by the clown team. **The formats are all intended to distance the target group from their difficult life situation and reconnect them again with fun and joyful elements of their childhood.**

### The formats used include:

- Humorous shows (can be a general introduction or a show on a specific topic)
- Musical clown parades
- Circus Smile workshop and performance (multi-day training with a final show)
- Caravan Orchestra (a special show for children with disabilities)
- 'Classic' clown interventions in duos, trios or quartets in hospital settings.  
The clown duo is the basic 'working unit' in RED NOSES' work.
- Humour workshops for humanitarian aid workers and medical staff

## Working with humanitarian aid organisations

In order for us to carry out a mission on the ground and work effectively, we need the support of aid organisations already engaged in the area of a given crisis. By working with these organisations, we can fit in their framework, build on the lessons they have learned regarding the situation of the target group, and also contribute to their work by providing humour workshops for their staff.

## Assisting humanitarian aid organisations

Our humour workshops are a special part of a mission and directed at the staff of the carrier organisations we work with. These workshops can be tailor-made to suit the given target group, whether they are aid workers or medical staff. With humour workshops, **we bring knowledge about how humour** can be easily applied to relieve stress and anxiety in their daily work, **leaving something tangible and sustainable behind when the mission is over.**





# Why clowns

The figure of the clown greatly contributes to the empowerment of vulnerable groups. People can easily relate to and connect with the clown, a light-hearted and emotional character who constantly faces personal and emotional challenges.

The real power of the clown, however, lies in the ability to successfully deal with failures and turn them into personal victories. By reversing weak aspects into strong ones, healthcare clowning offers essential tools to aid in problem solving, acceptance and adaptation – all vital elements needed to empower people and help them manage their challenging circumstances.



***“The clowns from RED NOSES International brought laughter to patients and MSF staff alike. The value of this kind of visit for people’s wellbeing can’t be underestimated.”***

Edda Bambach, Human Resources Coordinator in Sierra Leone,  
Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders (MSF).





# Emergency Smile missions spreading joy

- ..... Countries of **Emergency Smile missions**
- ..... Number of beneficiaries reached
- ..... Number of missions
- ..... year of missions

## Belarus

..... 450  
..... 1  
..... 2018

## Ukraine

..... 6500  
..... 8  
..... 2015-2018

## Greece

..... 10.500  
..... 9  
..... 2015-2016, 2018

## Kyrgyzstan

..... 400  
..... 1  
..... 2018

## Jordan

..... 4000  
..... 2  
..... 2014

## Sierra Leone

..... 950  
..... 1  
..... 2017

## Cameroun

..... 250  
..... 1  
..... 2013



*"The work you do is just as important for the target group as the work we do on the ground. Just one performance has a huge impact on refugees and migrants. It changes something, intangible but still real."*

Dr. Jeya Kulasingam, Health and Care delegate – Migration response, International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.





# RED NOSES International who we are

RED NOSES Clowndoctors was founded in 1994 in Austria as a **non-profit organisation, bringing humour and laughter to people in need of joy**. In 2003 the charitable non-profit foundation RED NOSES Clowndoctors International (RNI), also based in Austria, was established as headquarters of the RED NOSES group. Its tasks are to build up, monitor and support international RED NOSES partner organisations. In doing so, RED NOSES International simultaneously develops and maintains high ethical and artistic quality standards in all its clown programmes within the group.

Today, **RED NOSES Clowndoctors is one of the largest clown doctor groups in the world with partner organisations in 10 countries**. In 2018, our international team of 380 clowns brought joy and laughter to 600,000 people – and that in more than 800 medical and social institutions. The RED NOSES group has developed a wide range of specific formats within its programmes for all major beneficiaries: sick children, senior patients, multiply disabled children and rehabilitation patients, as well as people in vulnerable situations.



*“Your assistance is an invaluable contribution to the development of psychosocial activities by the Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS) and certainly tangible support in the dissemination of information about methods and forms of psychosocial support.”*

Mrs. Liliia Bilous, Director General, Ukrainian Red Cross Society/National Committee.





[www.rednoses.eu](http://www.rednoses.eu)



**RED NOSES** Clowndoctors International

Wattgasse 48, 1170 Vienna, Austria

T: +43 1 318 03 13 – 66

F: +43 1 318 03 13 – 20

E: [smile@rednoses.eu](mailto:smile@rednoses.eu)

