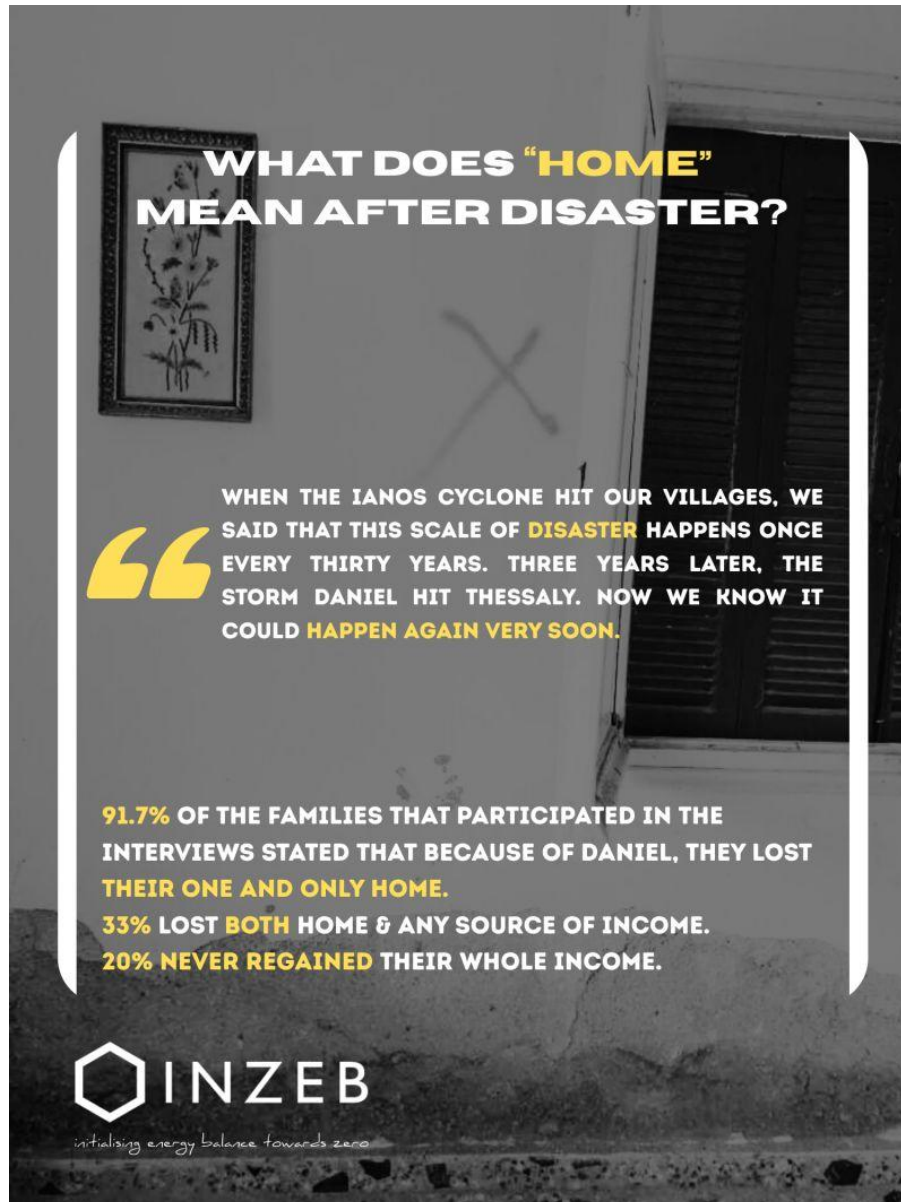


HELPING HOMES BECOME RESILIENT IN CLIMATE-AFFECTED GREECE



**WHAT DOES “HOME”
MEAN AFTER DISASTER?**

“ WHEN THE IANOS CYCLONE HIT OUR VILLAGES, WE SAID THAT THIS SCALE OF **DISASTER** HAPPENS ONCE EVERY THIRTY YEARS. THREE YEARS LATER, THE STORM DANIEL HIT THESSALY. NOW WE KNOW IT COULD **HAPPEN AGAIN VERY SOON.** ”

91.7% OF THE FAMILIES THAT PARTICIPATED IN THE INTERVIEWS STATED THAT BECAUSE OF DANIEL, THEY LOST THEIR ONE AND ONLY HOME.

33% LOST BOTH HOME & ANY SOURCE OF INCOME.

20% NEVER REGAINED THEIR WHOLE INCOME.

INZEB
initialising energy balance towards zero

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Helping Homes Become Resilient in Climate-Affected Greece is a project implemented by INZEB that focuses on the social, emotional, and material dimensions of housing in the context of climate-induced disasters.

INZEB is a non-profit organisation based in Greece, working on energy efficiency, climate and sustainability, with a strong focus on citizen-centred approaches and policy engagement.

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“

When Ianos happened, we said that something like this would occur again in thirty years. That is what the older generations told us: that such floods happen every thirty years. And then, just three years later, Daniel happened. Now we know it can happen again very soon.

”

The field research of the project “**Helping Homes Become Resilient in Climate-Affected Greece**”, implemented by INZEB, has been completed in two of the areas most affected by extreme climate events in Greece, Thessaly and Crete. The project focuses on those affected by Storm Daniel in the Mouzaki area of Karditsa in the Region of Thessaly, and by the earthquake that struck Arkalochori, in the Municipality of Minoa Pediada in the Region of Crete.

Large-scale disasters caused by increasingly frequent extreme natural phenomena, as well as a growing number of scientific studies, confirm that climate change threatens multiple dimensions of human life and living conditions, including but also beyond material and psychological aspects. This creates an increasing and, above all, pressing need to redefine several concepts and long-standing frameworks, with perhaps the most fundamental among them being the dual notion of “**home**”. The home as a space of life, development and growth, as a space that hosts human emotions, but also housing as materiality, as part of identity and as a factor shaping a sense of belonging.

Three and five years after the large-scale disasters in Thessaly and Crete, respectively, the project centres on the exploration of the material, emotional, and social dimensions of the dual concept of “**home-dwelling**”. It seeks to investigate this fundamental concept for human life and societies through the experience of destruction caused by extreme climate events, with the aim of contributing to the design of a more resilient Europe for all.

More specifically, the project aims to explore the redefinition of the concept of “home-dwelling” through the lens of the growing impacts of climate change and extreme natural phenomena, emphasising their connections to human rights, identity, community cohesion, and development. It also aims to assess the perceptions and attitudes of affected populations towards the restoration or complete reconstruction of their damaged homes, under conditions of sustainability and resilience, such as energy efficiency, smart materials, or green construction.

In addition, it **explores the relationship between housing, psychological well-being, and material security in the context shaped by the impacts of the climate crisis, such as climate trauma, climate anxiety**, and loss. These parameters are particularly significant given that Greece is part of Europe’s climate hotspot and has already been severely affected.

“

At night, when it rains, we do not sleep. We listen to the rain, we stay awake, and every so often we go outside and measure the water level...

”

Selected findings from the field research reveal the current situation in the two regions. For 91.7% of respondents in the population affected by Storm Daniel (in the area under study), the dwelling that was destroyed was their only home. 20% have either never recovered their income, have recovered only a small part of it, or are currently living with very limited income. The findings concern the participants in the field research.

“

***I have developed a fear of buildings.
Wherever I am, I instinctively look for the exit.***

”

In Arkalochori, Crete, a portion of the population whose homes were destroyed by the earthquake, the majority of whom are older people, still live in containers to this day. The findings concern the participants in the field research. This is also the case in Thessaly, although to a lesser extent.

“

I have no hope or optimism. I have no expectations given how the state operates.

”

For the field research component of the project, a mixed, multi-layered methodological approach was employed. Quantitative data were collected through questionnaires, and qualitative data were collected through interviews with affected individuals, representatives of local community-based organisations that were active in the year following the event and continue to operate in the field, larger non-local organisations that were active at the time of the event, and members of local authorities, including community leaders, mayors and regional representatives.

The research questions covered the entire timeline, including references to the past (at the time of the event), the present, and the future, examining expectations and perceptions.

Regarding the methodology for developing the questionnaire, various methodological tools were combined to ensure the collection of highly accurate data, a more comprehensive and in-depth approach, and richer conclusions, while human-centred and community-centred approaches formed the core of the methodological direction. For the next phase, which includes validation of the research findings, focus group meetings have already been designed and scheduled in the two regions, with respondents' participation.

The concept of housing is closely linked to Human Rights and the Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities; Goal 11.1: Access to Adequate Housing; Goal 11.5: Disaster Resilience; Goal 11.7: Green and Public Spaces; Goal 7: Energy Efficiency).

It is also closely linked to two key pillars of European policy and strategic planning: the Green Transition and resilience and well-being. For these reasons, the transfer of the voices of people who have experienced the devastating impacts of climate change to national and European decision-making centres becomes particularly important.

Within this framework, **the project positions itself dynamically within the current and upcoming stage of the European Green Transition agenda, focusing specifically on these two strategic pillars, human and social resilience and well-being, and strengthening their role as driving forces for sustainable reconstruction, social cohesion and development.** At the same time, it aims to contribute to the development of a more inclusive Europe by integrating community-based perspectives, prevention and recovery strategies, and long-term planning.

The results of the project will be consolidated into two Policy Briefs, which will be presented at the national and European levels and preceded by roundtables and discussions with policy centres and experts relevant to the topics explored.