



Cash Working Group meeting

Meeting Details	
Date	20 July 2023
Time	09.30 – 10.30
Co-Chair	Yigit Anil Gurer, CBI Officer, UNHCR
Reporting	Natalia Postaru, Associate Programme CBI Officer
Email	mdachcbi@unhcr.org
Agenda	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening remarks Presentation of the Market-Assessment preliminary findings 	
Information collection and relevant links	
UNHCR Operational Data Portal Moldova - https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/MDA Moldova Cash Working Group - https://data.unhcr.org/en/working-group/318?sv=0&geo=680	
Participants:	
Doina Craciun – CCR Oleatovschi Nataliia Ion Gradinari – Helvetas Iana Semionova – Magenta Consulting Ilinka Leger – Heks-eper Prepelita Violeta – CRS Morozan Olga – Pestalozzi Andrei Hincu – Sera Tatiana Ciumas GIM Aizhan MAMATBEKOVA – WFP Plugaru Aliona	Ahmed MOUSSA – WFP BODRUG Alina – IOM Dilnoza Niculescu – Caritas Moldova Mariana Mariuta – Jugend Eine Welt Irina Guban – UN Daniele Pedretti – Helpage Orfan Shahada – ACF Spain Artiom Sici – UNICEF Celine Brixander – UNFPA Eirini Aletra – CRS Fadel Daud – WFP



Summary of discussions and agreements/action points

Agenda	Discussion
<p>Agenda Point</p> <p>Presentation of the Market-Assessment preliminary findings</p>	<p>The meeting commenced with a presentation of the preliminary findings of the retailer and customer surveys conducted by Magenta Consulting company. The provided information constitutes a comprehensive overview of the initial outcomes collected during the survey. A detailed analysis of all indicators and findings will be presented in the final report, which will include various aggregations based on urban criteria, regional criteria, and, in some cases, gender considerations for customers.</p> <p>The purpose of the study is to inform the Cash Working Group (CWG) partners and other humanitarian actors of evolutions in prices (including inflation at micro and macro level), availability of goods and market functionality, and provide evidence base information for the organization of MPCA in Moldova as a response to the humanitarian crisis in the country.</p> <p>The objectives of the market assessment and monitoring are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and track prices, availability, and accessibility of basic commodities in the market on quarterly basis; • Assess the impact of the current humanitarian crisis and the sessional needs changes (such as winter) on the market systems; • Assess the capacities in supply chain and market system to respond to increased demand; • Contribute to a broader understanding of the market environment for the benefit of humanitarian actors across all sectors. <p>A quantitative method was employed for the research. 2 surveys were conducted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Retailer survey on 46 retailers, to gain a better understanding on how the different markets operate, to assess the commodity prices, accessibility to the market and the market capacities to response increasing demand. Method: face-to-face TAPI (Tablet Assisted Personal Interview) method Sample size: 46 retailers (markets, open markets, supermarkets, non-food items shops) Respondents: trader representative responsible for the purchase or has a role in decision-making Geography: national (Right Bank of r. Nistru). 2. Customer survey on a sample of 191 households, to provide a customer’s perspective to the exercise on the functionality of marketplaces, observations on the prices. Method: face-to-face TAPI (Tablet Assisted Personal Interview) method for the Right Bank data collection; CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interview) method of Left Bank data collection¹.

¹ For the Transnistria region, only refugees were included in the survey through telephone interviews, with the citizens and retailers have not been included. The main reasons for this were difficulties related to logistical arrangements that would allow conducting data collection in the region and time limits.



Sampling technique: proportional stratified probabilistic sample
Sample size: 191 households - 108 refugees from Ukraine and 83 RM citizens
Respondents: retail customers aged 18+
Geography: Right and Left Banks
Margin of error: +-11 at 95% confidence level

Preliminary findings and recommendation:

- Most respondents perceived food prices as high, particularly for items like meat, fish, eggs, fruits, and vegetables. Prices have generally increased compared to the previous year, with fuel prices showing significant spikes. Affordability concerns were prevalent, especially among Moldovan citizens and certain regions.
- Overall availability of both food and non-food items was deemed sufficient. Refugees reported better availability than Moldovan citizens. While accessibility to markets was not a major issue, financial constraints, high prices for both food and non-food items, and fuel costs were the key challenges faced by respondents.
- Physical and social barriers to accessing markets were minimal, with distance to markets being relatively short for most respondents. Rural areas experienced greater distance discrepancies. Concerns over gas/fuel/electricity costs were prominent in certain regions, and accessing financial services was more accessible in urban areas, with Posta Moldovei being a widely available option.

Based on the study of surveyed retailers:

Product Range: Majority of stores surveyed offer up to 200 distinct items for sale. Top food items include bakery products/pasta/corn/rice, sugar/sweets, vegetables, and vegetable oil/butter. Leading non-food items are drinking water, hygiene products, and clothing/footwear.

Stock Availability: Most surveyed stores do not face shortages of essential products and are confident in maintaining their stock levels. However, over half anticipate that their current stock would last for a maximum of 2 weeks.

Suppliers: Stores usually have up to 2 suppliers for essential food and non-food items, though non-food items tend to have more than 2 suppliers. Suppliers are primarily located within their region, notably Chisinau.

Price Trends: Retailers reported a 10% price increase for most products they sell, lower than customers' reported increases. Retailers struggle to estimate prices in a week's time accurately.

Store Operations: Stores prioritize easy visibility and identification of prices, swift checkout times (under 10 minutes), automatic receipts, multiple payment options, and on-site purchases.

Payment Methods: All stores accept cash payments, while less than half accept card payments.

Financial Services: Most retailers have a bank, ATM, and financial service provider within 1 km. Similar to customers, Posta Moldovei is



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Regional Refugee Response
for the Ukraine Situation



	<p>the most widespread financial service provider.</p> <p>More details related the indicators please see in the attached presentation.</p>
Nest Actions:	<p>Action Point:</p> <p>Partners are encouraged to share any suggestions, feedback, and potential correlations between indicators based on the findings. Please utilize the attached presentation as a reference. Your insights are crucial for the comprehensive understanding of the market situation.</p>