



SECTOR: Child Protection Sub-Working Group (CP SWG)

Meeting Details	
Date	11 December 2024
Time	3:00- 4:30 pm
Chair	UNICEF/UNHCR/MLSP
Reporting	UNHCR
Email	lampe@unhcr.org , frossi@unicef.org
Agenda	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Update on recent trainings2. Education update3. Update on UASC referrals4. Successes and challenges of 20245. Discussion on how the CP SWG can best support in 20256. AOB<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ RAC consolidation process for 2025○ Partner updates	
Information collection and relevant links	
Please use the below link to fill out information Link to operational data portal: https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine/location/10784	



Participants

1- Flore Rossi/UNICEF (Co-chair)	9- Olena Bavyko/ ACTED		18- Victor Rotaru/APSCF	
2- Katie Lampe/UNHCR (Co-chair)	10- Irina Vrincean/CDA		19- Valentina Ghenciu/Lumos	
3- Carolina Sclifos/UNHCR	11- Alina Druta/ OGI		20- Luminita Drumea/ Speranta 87	
4- Alexandr Solomenco/PIN	12- Corneliu Tarus/IOM		21- Diana Alexei/Chisinau Municipality	
5- Raluca Stoican/ Impact Initiatives	13- Constanta Popescu/World Bank			
6- Virgiliu Hangan/ P4EC	14- Nicolai Bruma/Concordia			
7- Fede Bagolin/ WeWorld	15- Alina Mihaila/MIA			
8- Victoria Morozov/ Moldova Project	16- Daniela Ciumac/MIA			
	17- Tatiana Zalaj/TdH Moldova			

Summary of discussions and agreements/ action points

Agenda	Discussion	Agreements/ Actions
Introductions & CP SWG Agenda	The co-chairs and newly arrived participants were introduced. The meeting's agenda was presented for approval. Participants were also requested to mark their attendance and the new participants introduced themselves.	



<p>1. Update on the trainings</p>	<p>UNHCR co-chair shared updates about the training to be organized for child protection specialists and community mediators. The training will be organized from 18-20 December and facilitated by AVE Copiii, with the support of an expert from Romania. It will target professionals from 8 districts. The training will provide a refresher on the basic principles and child protection legal framework, the role of community mediators and CP specialists, focusing on communication and the prevention of violence against children, as well as further collaboration with the authorities. For next year, the intention is to replicate the same format while targeting other specialists. UNHCR welcomed further collaboration between the members of the CP SWG on similar trainings.</p> <p>UNICEF co-chair shared updates regarding the trainings for the child protection specialists supported by UNHCR, Plan and UNICEF. Another training was organized for the community social workers and child protection specialists on coordination of the work on case management. Additionally, UNICEF organized a training on child protection for ATAS and STAS specialists.</p> <p>UNICEF co-chair also shared information about the ongoing training for the members of 82 multidisciplinary teams. Another ToT was organized for specialists from ATAS and STAS, and social workers from Ukraine and Moldova, on interpersonal skills and communication with children. Gender based violence and sexual abuse are also key topics and UNICEF is planning to roll-out a specific training on case management for child victims of sexual abuse.</p> <p>As per MLSP request, these trainings will continue next year, while focusing on specific subjects. Members of CP SWG were asked to coordinate with MLSP and the CP SWG if they want to organize trainings for social services staff.</p> <p>IOM informed about an upcoming two-day training coordinated with MLSP, on child protection (continuous training to be provided by Ave Copiii trainer) and anti-trafficking for child protection specialists and consultants, (will target over 200 professionals). The training is scheduled for February-March 2025.</p>	<p>CP SWG members to coordinate any planned trainings with CP SWG co-chairs to avoid duplication/overlap.</p>
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<p>2. Education update</p>	<p>UNHCR co-chair noted that the school enrolment numbers are increasing and the latest figure from the Ministry of Education and Research shows a total of 2479 children enrolled in the Moldovan schools and 835 children enrolled in kindergartens. Around 86% of children are studying in schools that teach in the Russian language, which represents a decrease (and increase of children enrolled in schools that teach in Romanian).</p> <p>The members were informed about the roadmap and action plan developed by the Education Working Group to support the Ministry of Education in the eventual enrollment of all refugee children in the country in Moldovan schools. The roadmap has been costed by a UNICEF consultant and is currently in the final review stage by MER. The roadmap will be used as a planning as well as a fundraising tool. The launch is tentatively scheduled for February 2025 and further updates will be shared with the members.</p> <p>The co-chair added that CP SWG members have an important role to play in supporting children’s school enrollment, to help mitigate negative child protection risks that arise from child being completely out of school or studying online for prolonged periods.</p>	
<p>3. Update on UASC referrals</p>	<p>UNICEF co-chair highlighted the challenge related to referrals of children at risk between the Border Police and the Guardianship Authority continues. The CP SWG co-chairs continue to follow up on this issue. Following an update in the last meeting that the co-chairs had a meeting with the Ministry of Internal Affairs to discuss the issue further, additional follow up was conducted in a written letter to MIA, to which they responded with feedback.</p> <p>It was noted that there is currently a proposed revision to the Law on Asylum being debated in Parliament, which might partially help address the issue. Additionally, it was noted that MLSP is reported to be working on the inter-institutional cooperation mechanism related to this topic. CP SWG co-chairs will continue to follow up on this topic and keep members updated.</p> <p>On the draft agreement for the repatriation of unaccompanied children currently being discussed between the governments of Ukraine and Moldova, UNHCR and UNICEF are following closely this topic, to ensure that all relevant provisions related to best interest procedures are included, including coordination between the child protection authorities from both countries.</p>	



	<p>OGI asked who will conduct the assessment in these cases? UNICEF clarified that it should be authorities from both countries. Hence, specific procedures must be in place for coordination of the process.</p> <p>Th UNICEF co-chair highlighted the example of Ukrainian children, previously in institutional care in Ukraine, who were evacuated to other countries, particularly EU countries. It was noted that as part of ensuring safe return, there is need to avoid placing the child back into an institution but to prioritize family care and alternative care services. UNHCR co-chair added that neighboring states have received children evacuated from institutions, and there is close follow up of the situation.</p> <p>IOM noted that a regulation exists on the repatriation of children to other countries from Moldova, however, further bilateral agreements are necessary between some specific states to ensure that the proper procedures are in place.</p>	
4. RAC Consolidation Update	<p>UNHCR share a brief update on the RAC consolidation process and informed the members that MLSP has shared that 8 RACs are planned for closure during 2025. However, it was noted that the information is not final and may change. It was noted there are currently 27 active RACs in Moldova, accommodating 1400 people. The selection of RACs to be closed is based on the assessment exercise conducted by MLSP and partners, considering multiple factors (infrastructure, services, management, further investments needed, etc).</p> <p>UNICEF asked for clarification on the timeline of the RAC consolidation process, as the objective was to avoid closure during winter period. UNHCR clarified that the first 2 RACs are scheduled to start the closure process in the middle or end of January 2025, but as this is only the start of the process, the RACs will likely close at the end of March. The next group is scheduled to start in April, meaning that the RACs will close in June 2025. However, this information is tentative and could change.</p>	The Basic Needs WG will be invited to give an update presentation at the January CP SWG.
5. AOB	<p>IOM noted that there will be a presentation in Parliament this week on UNICEF's research on the inclusion of children with special education needs in the educational system in Moldova. IOM highlighted that it will be useful to share results with CP SWG.</p>	UNICEF to share the results of the survey on inclusion of children with specific needs in



		educational system with CP SWG.
6. Successes and challenges of 2024; vision for the CP SWG in 2025	<p>CP SWG members were asked to think of inputs to 4 questions, and to write their feedback on a post-it note. The inputs were then shared and discussed with the group.</p> <p>What were the main successes of the CP SWG/child protection sector partners in 2024?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Good coordination- Recruitment and training of the CP Specialists and continuous capacity building for authorities.- Further partnerships among NGOs which take part in CP SWG- Offering MHPSS services in static and mobile spaces for refugees and vulnerable community members.- Openness of the host community towards refugees- New law on asylum- The right of Ukrainian children and youth to study in Moldovan schools- Large number of case openings in various sectors- Large numbers of beneficiaries benefiting of protection services and good fundraising- Government's draft plan on the phased integration of foreigners- Submitting project proposals related to the educational inclusion for refugee children.- 50 children benefited of speech therapy services and elaboration of the 2 modules for social workers and parents.- Documenting separated and unaccompanied children on the territory of Moldova and alerting the authorities to assign a legal representative.- 3887 children legally counseled and assisted with obtaining a legal stay status.- Starting the "Back to school campaign" and providing a safe space in schools for children studying online. <p>What were the main challenges of the CP SWG/child protection sector partners in 2024?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reducing the number of services and of the funding to assist children.- Integrating refugee children, particularly Roma children into Moldovan schools and kindergartens- Lack of localization	



- RESTART reform
- Lack of clarity in the priorities.
- Time consuming meetings, but with little impact.
- Fear of displaced people to seek support, which makes it difficult to monitor the situation of children.
- Changes in the UNHCR cash assistance program.
- Difference in the curriculum and lack of schools in the Russian language.

How can the CP SWG best support you in 2025?

- Share monthly newsletter and updates from MLSP and other UN agencies.
- Continue the meetings and support the exchange of information and capacity building.
- Organize thematic meetings and meetings to discuss the challenges and successes which appear on the way.
- Advocate for increased focus on Moldovan and third country national children.
- Opening of new learning spaces.
- More interactive activities between the NGOs part of the CPSWG
- Facilitate efficient exchange of relevant statistics between various working groups.
- CSO co-chair

Suggestions for logistics of the CP SWG in 2025?

- Hybrid format for the CPSWG meetings, and networking meetings for the members.
- Share meeting minutes one week after meetings.
- Share relevant statistics on refuge children, including from the Transnistria region.
- Training for the CP focal points from state institutions.
- Facilitate efficient exchange of relevant statistics between various working groups.
- 8 members expressed preference for hybrid format of the meetings and 4 noted that online format is more preferred.



7. Discussion	<p>The above points were discussed, and the following additional points were noted:</p> <p>IOM shared congratulations on the referral pathways and noted that it might be more challenging to keep them updated next year, as the activities might change and focus will shift towards the child protection system of the Republic of Moldova. IOM noted that the ToR of CP SWG might need revision. UNHCR co-chair noted that there is a discussion on the referral pathways regarding what kind of information should be shared and modality of updating. Also, the co-chair noted the intention of making a simplified version for the child protection authorities, targeting supplemental services.</p> <p>Secondly, the co-chair noted the priority to work on the nexus and transitioning the responsibilities to the government, avoiding overlap. The co-chairs are exploring options to support MLSP's capacity, so that the Ministry will eventually be able to take the leadership of the sub working group.</p> <p>UNICEF co-chair thanked the participants for sharing interesting and helpful ideas. Collaboration and increased coordination with MLSP were highlighted as key points. The main advocacy point is to ensure that refugee children continue to be included in the national child protection program. The co-chair added that the idea of CSOs as co-chairs the CP SWG can also be explored.</p> <p>UNHCR co-chair noted that a draft workplan of the CP SWG for 2025 will be shared at the next meeting in January 2025. Meanwhile members are encouraged to share any other further inputs.</p> <p>PIN asked about the advocacy on the process of simplification of obtaining disability for children and UNICEF informed that the meeting with the state-secretary Cusca did not take place yet, but the co-chairs will follow up on this.</p>	<p>UNHCR will follow up with the disability focal point and UNICEF will follow up internally.</p>
8. Closing	<p>The meeting minutes for October and December will be shared before the holidays.</p> <p>The co-chairs will inform the members about the date for the next meeting in January 2025. Happy Holidays!</p>	