


Meeting Minutes – SRH / Health Partner Meeting, 29 May 2024

Meeting	SRH / Health Working Group	
Time & Location	29 May 2024, 14:00 pm EEST, online - Zoom.	
Chaired by	Victoria Schiere (WHO Romania)	
Minutes prepared by	Victoria Schiere (WHO Romania)	
Agenda	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opening 2. Updates from Chair and Members 3. Call for Co-chair 4. Presentation from Necuvinte – “Two years of Necuvinte’s Humanitarian Intervention” 5. Findings from in-person SRH sWG Meeting 6. AoB 	
Participants	<p>Dana Timotin Anca Moldovan Caroline Clarinval – WHO Romania Shiori Watanabe – WHO Romania Bogdan Halgean – WHO Romania Georgios Mournianakis – WHO Romania Bhola Ghimire – Croix Rouge Française Carmen Niculescu – ANES Ionela Horga – EEIRH Mihai Horga – EEIRH</p>	<p>Bogdan Pavel - Care for Ukraine Response Team Jean Benoit Manhes – UNICEF Romania Olesea Russu - Necuvinte Diana Biclineru – Plan International Catalina Voican – World Vision Romania Luna Mehraïn – UNFPA Annet Nangonzi – SRH, UNFPA Carla Schoppel Katerina</p>
AGENDA POINTS		
Agenda Point 1	<p>Opening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Caroline Clarinval, WHO Representative in Romania (WR), is the special guest at the SRH sub-working group meeting, acting on behalf of Dr Silvia Gatscher • Members are welcomed to the first online meeting after the in-person session on 15 April 2024. 	
Agenda Point 2	<p>Updates from Chair and Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHO SRH Specialist: WHO Romania CO offered support to the Order of Nurses and Midwives and the Ministry of Health to organize an event celebrating the International Day of the Midwife. The event's theme was "Renewing Midwifery Tradition for a Healthy and Sustainable Future." The conference was attended by Health Minister Prof Rafila as well as members of key health institutions, civil society, and diplomatic missions and midwives from across Romania. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WHO Representative: During the event, a stronger commitment to promoting midwifery care at the national level was evident. Prof Rafila made a very positive statement endorsing and strengthening the role of midwives. The President of the National Health Insurance House, Dr Valeria Herdea, along with other participants, showed their support and acknowledged the crucial role of midwives in improving maternal and newborn health. It would be good to have frequent events to maintain the momentum at the national level. WHO remains committed to facilitate and to engage with the Order of Nurses and Midwives in Romania. As country representative, Dr. Clarinval shows full support to the activity of the SRH working group.• Diana Biclineru: Plan International Romania has conducted a research project on SRHR at the end of 2023/ beginning 2024, including in-person and online interviews and focus groups with the Romanian stakeholders, mostly civil society working in SRHR. The report will be publicly launched on 18 June and members are kindly invited to attend and will also be presented during the next SRH sWG meeting.• WHO GBV Specialist: WHO in collaboration with EEIRH will conduct 4 cascading trainings for health managers and OBS-GYN/ ER doctors on the clinical management of rape and intimate partner violence. The trainings will focus on the role of health managers, including the assessment of the infrastructure, minimal requirements, legal framework, protocol development etc. The locations of the trainings are Timișoara, Cluj Napoca, Iași and Constanța.• Jean Benoit Manhes, UNICEF: Romania is one of the countries with the highest measles related deaths in the region. This is an indicator regarding understanding, acceptance and access to health. Important to not only communicate messages but also contribute to the service delivery. UNICEF will continue to do this jointly with WHO.
Agenda Point 3	<p>Call for Co-chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members of the SRH sub-working group are invited to express their interest in becoming co-chair. Candidates will have the opportunity to present themselves during the next SRH sWG meeting and will be elected by the group’s members. The co-chairing role is an opportunity for national members to collaborate closely with WHO Romania.• Members can nominate themselves or their organization via the following link / QR code: https://app.sli.do/event/wyzezUVXEH7Ti9quQxPxUs 

Meeting Minutes – SRH / Health Partner Meeting, 29 May 2024

Agenda Point 4

Presentation from Olesea Russu, Necuvinte – “Two years of Necuvinte’s Humanitarian Intervention”

- Olesea Russu worked within Necuvinte as community facilitator for Ukrainian refugees in 2023.
- 5,98m refugees from Ukraine were recorded in Europe since 24 February 2022.
- 5,7m refugees crossed the border into Romania and by 10 May 2024.
- 164,000 Ukrainian refugees obtained Temporary Protection status in Romania, giving them access to services and to resources.
- Most of the Ukrainian refugees in Romania are women and children. This implies that they have specific needs and vulnerabilities that require a specialised approach.
- One of the first interventions from Necuvinte was “Together in Safety”, an information campaign on domestic violence, GBV, human trafficking and reproductive & sexual rights. The campaign involved information and awareness raising activities at 10 border points and reached >150.000 beneficiaries.
- DOVIRA, the subsequent project, focused on meeting essential SRH needs. Funded by UNFPA through IPPF, in consortium with Youth for Youth and Secs, it was aimed at women and girls fleeing war and included psychological support, the distribution of 800,000 dignity kits and medical services in partnership with a private clinic in Bucharest.
- A bilingual pocket guide in UKR-ENG with essential information on GBV, domestic violence and reproductive rights and sexual health was designed, printed and distributed at RomExpo and Edmond Nicolau Centre.
- Another implemented project “Safe Space for Womern and Girls”, provided multidisciplinary services focused on the individual needs of refugees. The partners in this project were The City Hall of Sector 2, DGASPC Sector 2 and EEIRH and it was funded by UNFPA, UK Aid and Global Fund for Women. The aim of the project was to provide a safe environment for UKR refugees to identify their needs for reproductive health, GBV, psycho-social, and medical services, socialization and integration.
- Courses on clinical management of victims of sexual violence and IPV, based on the WHO Sexual Assault Intervention Handbook, were provided in Bucharest, Constanța and Alexandria. The goal of the courses was to create a pool of qualified healthcare providers, healthcare managers and mental health service providers who can provide victim-centred services and referrals.
- WHO GBV Specialist: Regarding the CMR and IPV trainings, it would be good to have a separate call to try to avoid overlapping and discuss potetial points of collaboration.
- The Necuvinte center is still open until the end of June and psychological conselling sessions are provided on a voluntary basis.

Agenda Point 5

Findings from SRH sWG in-person Meeting

Challenges and Joint Actions

- Access to SRH education in schools has been identified as a challenge. Proposed actions include providing data to decision-makers (MoH and MoE), followed by advocacy aimed at the MoE to issue a recommendation letter to schools to make SRH education available. A national conference with members from the inspectorates could be planned to discuss the implementation of Health Education in schools. Although the legal framework exists for health education in schools, it is currently not implemented.
- For access to free contraceptives for vulnerable groups, including Ukrainian refugees, the proposed action is to support the MoH in procurement efforts. Advocacy and support at the NHIH for compensating mechanisms (100%) are also proposed actions for the next six months.
- Challenges identified in maternal health include a deficiency in the quality of care (high rate of caesarean sections) and a lack of baby-friendly hospitals. Proposed actions to address these challenges include improving obstetric care through awareness-raising and advocacy for the role of midwives in the multidisciplinary team, revising standards, and assessing baby-friendly criteria.

Joint Advocacy Messages

- Access to contraception can decrease the rate of teenage pregnancies and abortions, and improve education, employment, and gender equality. This message should be directed towards the MoH, the health system, and NGOs.
- Maternal Respectful Care: Address obstetric violence, reduce maternal and infant mortality, and increase trust in the health system. These concepts should be introduced in medical curricula and advocacy efforts should be aimed at the MoH and MoE.
- Adolescent SRH: A campaign is proposed to inform that adolescents ≥ 16 yrs can access SRH services without parental consent. Even doctors are often unaware of this legal provision. The campaign should target both adolescents and healthcare providers.

Proposed Areas for Capacity Building

- Training teachers and family doctors on SRH good practice.
- Training on SRH for people with disabilities, social assistants, and family members. Potential presenters are Secs and IPPF (previous project in 2015 – “Keeping Safe”)
- Access to abortion.
- Midwife training on GBV.
- Training of school principals of and inspectors on SRH resources incl. database of NGOs providing SRH.
- Education and links to resources was part of the WG within the MoH. This database should be updated.

Meeting Minutes – SRH / Health Partner Meeting, 29 May 2024

<p>AOB</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WR asks members to mention the key top three SRH priorities that are currently most important in Romania. This information can help shape the narrative in discussions with donors, Embassies and national stakeholders. A QR code will be shared for group members to provide their answers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ionela Horga: One top priority and advocacy issue is to include contraceptives in the list of compensated or free products. The MoH is reluctant to include contraceptives as a free product within national programs, but they are open to include them in the list of compensated or free products. This is the easiest way to ensure that products are free of charge, available and accessible for the people who might need them. The second message is related to GBV, as SRH and GBV cannot be separated, to advocate for health care providers to offer support, as emergency contraception is often linked to sexual violence. Currently, EEIRH is advocating for the network of family planning clinics to be part of GBV trainings, to be able to identify and provide first line support to survivors. Health education in schools, including sexual education, would be great as this is linked to the high rate of pregnancies among teenagers. This is however a very sensitive subject to be approached close to elections. ○ Carmen Niculescu: Health education in schools on SRH for teenagers. GBV trainings for teachers so they can identify potential issues. Free access to contraceptives, especially for teenagers and young people as this could decrease the number of teenage mothers. ○ Luna Mehraïn, UNFPA SRH in Emergencies Specialist, based in Istanbul: Would be good to discuss strategies going forward, transitioning from an emergency to prolonged response. High-level advocacy can be done. One of the elements that was highlighted during the in-person meeting was the role of midwives. Perhaps this can be one of the priorities, enabling services close to the women and close to populations on the move, and addressing education, teenage pregnancies and access to contraception, especially in rural areas. ○ WR: Access to contraception is an evergreen topic that we will be advocating for. ○ Bholá Ghimire: Teenage pregnancies and childbirth experience. Developing comprehensive sexuality education is a good intervention for policy advocacy. ○ Diana Biclineru: Access to free contraception and SRH services, receiving SRH education. ○ Shiori Watanabe: protocol in health facilities, access to abortion - addressing de facto barriers
<p>Actions</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Members of the SRH sWG are invited to express their interest in taking the opportunity to become co-chair of the SRH sWG (https://app.sli.do/event/wyzezUVXEH7Ti9quQxPxUs). 2. VS will share the presentation from Necuvinte together with the minutes of the meeting. 3. A QR code will be shared for members to express their view on the top three SRH priorities in Romania.
<p>Next meeting</p>	<p>Online (Zoom) Health/SRH Working Group Meeting on 26 June 2024 - TBC</p>