

**The Child Protection Sub-Working Group**  
**For coordination of child protection issues for the refugee response in Moldova**

**Terms of Reference**

**Background:**

Due to the conflict in Ukraine that started on 24 February, a large-scale movement of population, mostly women and children, has started towards neighboring countries Republic of Moldova, Poland and Romania. The majority of refugee population consists of women and children, including 47% children, due to the restrictions on men aged 18-60 leaving the country. Children and their families require access to basic food, hygiene and medical care, as well as systematic protection services including to address gender-based violence, violence against children and to access psychosocial care. Key child protection risks include the separation of children from their parents and families is a key concern, with those separated from all family members at greatest risk as well as those being evacuated from child care institutions in Moldova – it is estimated that at least 2% of children are separated or unaccompanied. Most women are entering and travelling without male family members, which creates significant protection risks and limits the ability of mothers to provide quality care for children. Children and female caregivers have also experienced or witnessed violence and the stress and uncertainty of displacement, resulting in high levels of psychosocial distress.

The Moldovan Government's approach to coordinating humanitarian response to people on the move, resulted in general response actions to address humanitarian emergencies in all main sectors covered. Having in mind the vulnerability of children and their families, many organizations working in child protection are delivering support to children and families entering into the Republic of Moldova, with significant number of organisations providing or planning to provide child protection services including government authorities.

The need for coordination on child protection at national and subnational levels prompts the formation of a Child Protection Sub-Working Group (CP SWG). The CP SWG will work as a support mechanism to overall sector coordination structure for the refugee response agreed to with the authorities and under the existing child protection coordination structure spearheaded by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ministry of Labor and Social Protection.

The CP SWG shall be a forum through which organizations with child protection programs in Moldova can **undertake strategic planning on child protection, coordination interventions, seek consensus on issues, and create partnerships and linkages** for better prioritization of available resources and commitment to minimum standards of response with an overall goal of enhancing the protection of affected children. The WG will have the objective of attaining an effective and predictable response to child protection issues in Moldova through improved coordination among agencies involved in child protection programming.

**Membership and responsibilities**

Co-chaired UNICEF Moldova and UNHCR, the WG shall have regular rotational (the meetings may be hosted by different members) meetings as per agreed calendar, which will be shared with the members of the SWG.

The membership of the CP SWG shall include relevant local and central governments, UN agencies, national and international non-governmental organizations networks, partnerships, academia and other

institutions, responding to the child protection needs of refugee and other affected children.

The coordinators are responsible for:

- Ensuring effective implementation of the child protection response and addressing identified gaps
- Leading the child protection coordination and information management efforts, including advocacy
- Chairing coordination meetings
- Representing the CP SWG in protection planning and strategic meetings, and other in-country platforms, as appropriate
- Ensuring that refugee child protection strategies and priorities are integrated into national plans and policies.

Main responsibilities of members:

- Represent and take decisions on behalf of their organizations
- Regularly attend the CP SWG meetings and share information about activities, available and expected funding, trends and gaps, including geographical and programmatic gaps
- Coordinate planning and assessments with the CP SWG members to avoid duplication and address gaps
- Actively take part in the implementation of the CP SWG's responsibilities and work plan, including leading and or participating in the thematic taskforces, and any other child protection coordination mechanism
- Representing the CP SWG in other sector meetings, if required
- Endorse and disseminate interagency standards, guidelines and tools
- Contribute to the implementation of learning plan including through mentoring, providing technical support and learning opportunities

### **Purpose and focus of the working group:**

The Refugee Child Protection Sub-Working Group sets within the refugee protection coordination and leads the coordination efforts at national level. Its main aim is to ensure that children exercise their rights without discrimination, be protected from violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and attain solutions that are in their best interests. These are the benchmarks against which the effectiveness and efficiency of child protection coordination are measured.

The CP SWG is a coordination forum through which the child protection actors responding to the child protection needs of refugee and other vulnerable children affected by the displacement can:

1. Ensure that refugee child protection prevention and response activities are well-coordinated, efficient, responsive, and inclusive, in line with the Global Compact on Refugees, the Refugee Coordination Model and the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPMS).
2. Assess and monitor child protection concerns and undertake advocacy and programming to address them
3. Collate and disseminate relevant information on child protection issues and responses
4. Coordinate interventions, avoid duplication and address gaps to ensure a timely response
5. Support authorities to develop child protection strategy and funding plan for child protection, advocate for appropriate resources and coordinate resource mobilization for the child protection sub-sector
6. The CP SWG will also support contingency planning and preparedness for new emergencies if such work starts within the lifespan of the SWG.

7. Ensure synergy with the institutional response to strengthen existing systems and services and promote inclusion of asylum-seeker and refugee children into national systems and ensure financial and technical support to local child protection actors
8. Develop harmonized approach, tools and messages and seek consensus on emerging issues including SOPs and referral pathways
9. Establish partnerships and linkages for better prioritization of available resources
10. Commit to and align to minimum standards for child protection interventions as well as relevant refugee specific child protection standards including the Best Interests Procedures
11. Monitor progress and report on activities and needs
12. Promote and enhance local and community-led initiatives that empower children, family, community and society and strengthen their capacities to protect children.
13. Collaborate with the Refugee Protection Working Group and sectors to mainstream child protection into their planning process and response.
14. Enhance the technical capacity of child protection actors involved in the response and Coordinate capacity building efforts

Annex 1 provides a more detailed description of key responsibilities.

#### **Meeting schedule:**

The CP SWG meets on a weekly basis

Ad-hoc meetings and task forces are established upon consultation with the members of the SWG, when this is considered necessary to address an urgent issue.

#### **Structure**

The CP SWG reports to the Protection Working Group and may establish sub national CP coordination mechanisms, to coordinate efforts based on specific coordination needs. The CP SWG may establish taskforces or technical groups to work on inter-actor processes, guidance and tools.

#### **Linkages with other working groups/coordination forums:**

The CP SWG will establish and maintain close links with other working groups and coordination bodies including UN Inter-agency Refugee Coordination working group

#### **Endorsement and revisions**

The CP SWG's Terms of Reference will be endorsed by the members. The TOR is a working document that can be revised to address emerging needs with the approval of a majority of the members. It should at minimum be reviewed every year.

#### **Confidentiality:**

The CP SWG is *not a forum for discussion of individual cases*. In the event that individual cases are discussed, the cases must be treated in a confidential manner. No documentation related to such cases should be shared within these forums or with others. No information on such cases should be shared externally, unless in the best interest of the people affected.

#### **Registering**

Enter the link and register your organization: <https://forms.office.com/r/bjv9KpK1dz>

## Annex 1: Detailed description of responsibilities

The Refugee CP SWG will perform the following responsibilities to achieve the defined objectives, in accordance with the Refugee Coordination Model and guided by the Guiding Principles:

### → **Situational analysis:**

- ✓ Conduct/ update desk reviews to identify child protection risks and capacities and determine the information gaps, including mapping relevant stakeholders and their capacity.
- ✓ Map existing formal and customary laws, procedures and services for children and identify barriers to access for refugee
- ✓ Integrate child protection into inter-agency and multisectoral needs assessments and if the need arises, conduct child protection inter-agency assessments
- ✓ Incorporate current and anticipated protection needs of children and existing gaps in services into the protection analysis and other sectors, as relevant, including analysis of the impact of protection risks facing families/caregivers on children.
- ✓ Assess the learning needs of child protection actors
- ✓ Determine whether child protection coordination mechanism to be established at point of delivery (camp/site level) and creation of thematic taskforces

### → **Strategic planning:**

- ✓ Define child protection strategies and advocacy required to address the identified protection needs of refugee children, including mainstreaming activities,
- ✓ Develop child protection strategic objectives and result indicators, disaggregated by gender and age and specify funding required for the planned child protection programmes
- ✓ Develop the child protection strategy that includes detailed work plan, advocacy plan and learning activities to address technical and institutional capacity needs,
- ✓ Incorporate child protection analysis, overarching objective, key indicators and funding into the Protection and Solution Strategy and the Refugee Response Plan as a sub-sector of Protection
- ✓ Set the minimum standards for child protection activities in accordance with the Child Protection Minimum Standards CPMS and UNHCR's policy and guidance.
- ✓ Include child protection into inter-agency preparedness and contingency plans.

### → **Implementation:**

- ✓ In implementing the child protection response, work with State actors, UN agencies, international organisation and civil society, and refugee-led initiatives to facilitate access of refugee children to appropriate protection services
- ✓ Develop or adapt and disseminate relevant child protection guidelines and standards.
- ✓ Develop/adapt standard operating procedures and referral pathways in collaboration with Refugee Protection Working Group, the GBV Sub-Working Group and other services such as cash.
- ✓ Provide technical guidance to Refugee Protection Working Group, its sub-working groups and sectors to integrate child protection considerations in planning and services.
- ✓ Put in place feedback and complaints mechanisms are appropriate, accessible, and safe for children;
- ✓ Coordinate with the Refugee Protection Working Group and others in undertaking joint advocacy activities to address identified concerns and gaps
- ✓ Conduct learning plans targeting protection and non-protection actors
- ✓ **In urban settings**, collaborate with relevant actors to enable full access to key national services for refugee children and families, including health, education, child protection

services and refugee protection procedures within the national systems and strengthen the capacity of these services to address the specific needs of refugee and other children of concern

→ **Monitoring, reporting and information sharing**

- ✓ Maintain and disseminate a mapping of child protection actors and their programmatic and geographic reach to eliminate duplication and identify gaps.
- ✓ Harmonize monitoring and reporting process and tools (e.g. 5Ws, activity info, protection monitoring) and systematically monitor the child protection response and situation to determine:
  - Whether the child protection programmes are implemented as planned
  - Whether the expected results are being achieved.
  - Whether adjustments need to be made to the child protection strategies to ensure that expected results are achieved.
- ✓ Track and report funds received by child protection through interagency funding reporting mechanisms.
- ✓ Regular information sharing with the Refugee protection Working Group, GBV Sub-Working Group and relevant in-country forums on progress, gaps and advocacy priorities
- ✓ Compile and publish information on child protection response and gaps on a timely manner, including monthly dashboards, operational presence, and contribute to in- country and regional refugee protection coordination updates and advocacy efforts.
- ✓ Document and disseminate good practices in child protection