

UN REFUGEE RESPONSE COORDINATION IN ROMANIA
Education Sub-Working Group meeting
6 May 2022, 14:00
online

Agenda

1. Updates from the Ministry of Education on identification of Ukrainian children and teachers
2. Tour de table / Updates from RRP partners
3. Technical meetings

Minutes

1. *Identification of Ukrainian children and teachers*

In the absence of the Ministry of Education, UNICEF presented some update regarding ongoing efforts undertaken by the National Authority for the Protection of the Rights of the Child and Adoption together with other government partners to adapt and roll out a procedure and platform that will allow the identification, registration, and case management for refugee children from Ukraine. The platform is in the phase of testing and it will be rolled out in the next several weeks.

It is still unclear how the Ministry of Education is using their own system (ex. EMIS) to identify and map out both Ukrainian students and teachers, especially at the level of County School Inspectorate (ISJ). There is also a need to understand how the flow goes between the MOE at central level and ISJs at county level. Lastly, it was noted that there is some disconnect in terms of information and tools shared on the website of the MOE and websites of ISJs. The current enrollment system includes only children that are following the Romanian curriculum and lacks data of children who are following the Ukrainian curricula.

From the humanitarian actors' side (ex. UNICEF, Save the Children, World Vision etc.), the response was more reactive than pro-active, mainly addressing the needs on the ground and starting from grassroots. Several humanitarian organizations have been approached rather ad-hoc by groups of Ukrainian teachers or mothers to request education support for children – particularly in the big urban areas (Bucharest, Brasov, Iasi etc.). Lastly, the humanitarian partners raised the issue of Romanian language acquisition as being the top priority for refugee children from Ukraine, especially if the parents'/caregivers' decision is to stay longer in Romania and integrate children in the Romanian education system.

Action points:

- World Vision to share the methodology and tools for the mapping and take the lead on organizing a joint meeting between key humanitarian actors (World Vision, Save the Children, UNICEF etc.) and the School Inspectorate of Bucharest Municipality. At the same time, involve the operational group that was established by the National Authority for the Protection of the Rights of the Child and Adoption to agree on ways to identify Ukrainian children in various communities.
- Explore the possibility to expand the roles and responsibilities of the operative group at county level beyond the UASC.
- Humanitarian actors to put forward requests to MOE/ISJs for Romanian language acquisition for children (to double check with MOE)

2. *Tour de table*

UNICEF – mentioned the launch of a parenting application, Bebbo. This is a regional initiative and now it is available in several languages, including Romanian, Ukrainian and Russian. The application provides tips, advice and tools on child development and humanitarian actors are invited join the promo campaign. In addition, UNICEF and Step-by-Step joined hand to establish “parenting and playing hubs” to support parents of preschoolers and small children (0-6 years) with relevant information and services.

Save the Children – Working currently in Bucharest, within and around counties such as Iasi, Suceava, Baia Mare, Galati and Tulcea, as well as in other areas where Save the Children has branches (Targu Mures, Contanta, Brasov). In each county, they try to define a map of schools that enrolled Ukrainian children, but this proved to be a difficult task. At the same time, Save the Children are running integrated counselling hubs where mothers/caregivers can find out information about access to education. [Jessica – can you please check and add more, if/as needed?]

World Vision – currently identifying locations and partners to implement various initiatives. The first two non-formal education centers that will later continue as education hubs. Known as “happy bubbles”, the first one will be in Taberei/Bucharest and cover 80 mothers and children and the second one in Tei/Bucharest, serving 37 children and mothers. More such hubs will be open in other locations. The World Vision is also working on formal education, but face the same challenge like other partners.

Terre des Hommes – ISJ confirmed that Ukrainian children who still follow the Ukrainian curricula, they are allowed to attend classes such as sport, music, drawing etc. together with Romanian children. However, Romanian language is the biggest issue. TdH would like to be engaged in education programmes and can contribute, including through hiring Ukrainian teachers.

Plan International – detailed updates provided last time.

Action points:

- UNICEF to share more details about Bebbo app including the promo materials for other partners to use

3. *Thematic Task Force*

A few thematic areas have been identified for further in-depth discussion, such as Romanian language acquisition, especially during summertime; mental health and psychosocial support; non-formal education; support to digital learning; supporting the use of cash assistance etc.

Action point:

- An operational task team to meet every other week (in the week when the Edu SWG does not meet) and discuss one technical topic at a time, based on priorities. The discussions would be much more practical, looking at the implementation of what we discuss and decide as Edu SWG. UNICEF can offer the physical space (meeting room) as long as we are informed in advance.

4. *Any other business*

NRC mentioned their interest in working on youth related issues. While there is no formal working group on youth, a small group of partners could meet (including with National Youth Council) and discuss humanitarian programming with and for youth.

Action point:

- NRC to take this issue up with Action AID and other organizations. Those interested to be in touch with Alexia.

Accessibility to 5W matrix was raised again. UNICEF and UNHCR committed to solve the technical glitch.

Action point:

- UNICEF and UNHCR to follow up and ensure access to all members of the group.
- UNHCR IM colleagues to provide a brief intro on 5W

The education sub-working group meeting will continue to take place every two weeks, Wednesday, 10.00 to 11.30 am.

Next meeting: 18 May 2022, 10.00 – 11.30 am, UN House and Zoom