

### Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Sub-Working Group (SWG) Moldova

Meeting Details		
<b>Date</b>	18 December 2024	
<b>Time</b>	2:00 - 3:30 pm	
<b>Co-chairs and contact emails</b>	Vanessa Bordin, UNHCR - <a href="mailto:bordin@unhcr.org">bordin@unhcr.org</a> Violeta Terguta, UNFPA- <a href="mailto:terguta@unfpa.org">terguta@unfpa.org</a>	
<b>Reporting</b>	UNHCR	
Agenda		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduction of members</li> <li>2. Introduction of the new partners of the GBV Sub-Sector</li> <li>3. Tip Sheet on PSEA/GBV</li> <li>4. Refugee Accommodation Centres (RACs) consolidation update</li> <li>5. Updates by members</li> </ol>		
Information collection and relevant links		
<p><a href="#">GBV SWG Google Drive</a>  <a href="#">Moldova: Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Sub-Sector Working Group Data Portal</a>  <a href="#">UNHCR GBV Safe Disclosure Package</a></p>		
Participants		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vanessa Bordin, UNHCR</li> <li>2. Violeta Terguta, UNFPA</li> <li>3. Nata Plugaru, UNFPA</li> <li>4. Stefano Zanni, CUAMM</li> <li>5. Andrei Pavlenco, Women's Initiative</li> <li>6. Maria Korolchuk, HIAS Romania</li> <li>7. Elena Sirbu, ROMNI</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Veronica Pastela, ANPCV</li> <li>9. Adriana Procopciuc, HEKS/EPER Moldova</li> <li>10. Ludmila Afteni, Asociatia Psihologilor Tighina</li> <li>11. Oxana Buzovici, Uniunea pentru Echitate si Sanatate (UNION)</li> <li>12. Elena Usturoi, CWS</li> <li>13. Nicolae Cheles, UNHCR</li> <li>14. Aliona Onofrei, HIAS</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15. Natalia Moisevici, IOM</li> <li>16. Adriana Zaslavet, RCTV Memoria</li> <li>17. Milena Selianov, WHO</li> <li>18. Olga Bitca, ROMNI</li> <li>19. Elena Castravet, IOM</li> <li>20. Ludmila Popovici, RCTV Memoria</li> <li>21. Rodica Moraru-Chilimar, MLSP</li> <li>22. Gratiela Parlui IGM</li> <li>23. Natalia Stelea, UNHCR</li> </ol>

### Summary of discussions and agreements/ action points

Agenda Item	Discussion	Agreements/Actions
<p><b>Presentation by the Roma Women Platform, ROMNI</b></p> <p><b>Elena Sirbu</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roma women-led NGOs must be actively involved in programs and projects aimed at reducing and preventing GBV.</li> <li>• Prejudices and stereotypes, such as perceptions that Roma women are insufficiently educated, hard to engage, or untrustworthy, pose significant barriers to our involvement and commitment.</li> <li>• Isolation is a key factor contributing to ongoing violence against Roma women. Living in marginalized communities increases their vulnerability to violence and discrimination.</li> <li>• Roma women face discrimination not only outside their communities but also within them, further exacerbating their struggles.</li> <li>• To address protection needs and develop effective solutions, it is crucial for both national and international NGOs to collaborate with Roma women-led organizations.</li> <li>• Roma GBV experts are trained and monitored by ROMNI to ensure high-quality interventions and support for victims.</li> <li>• Shelters and safe spaces for Roma women and children are facilitated by Roma experts, ensuring culturally sensitive care and support.</li> <li>• ROMNI provides Roma-language translation services and fosters trust and courage among Roma women, empowering them to speak out.</li> <li>• With UNHCR support, six trainings were conducted for Roma women refugees.</li> <li>• The safe spaces created by ROMNI offer valuable opportunities for counseling, information sharing, and support for Roma women.</li> <li>• A strong emphasis is placed on building social and cultural dialogue between different Roma subgroups, promoting unity and mutual understanding.</li> <li>• Vanessa Bordin (UNHCR) raised a question about Roma women’s openness to discussing sensitive topics like gender and GBV, which are generally</li> </ul>	<p>ROMNI’s <a href="#">Facebook page</a>.</p>

difficult subjects to approach in any community. However, she highlighted the importance of sensitizing service providers (those offering GBV and other services) about the cultural nuances that must be understood and respected. It's crucial not to dismiss these issues but to approach them with openness and understanding. The key to addressing these topics effectively lies in the approach and the willingness to be respectful and open, as change does not happen overnight. Humanitarian workers need to recognize that each culture and background is unique. It is their responsibility to understand these differences and adapt their services accordingly. Additionally, she emphasized the importance of addressing isolation, mentioning an upcoming GBV SWG meeting where a study on the barriers to GBV disclosure will be presented, conducted in partnership with the WLO National Coalition Life Without Violence.

- Olga Birca (ROMNI) emphasized the importance of Elena speaking up on behalf of her community, noting that this gives Roma women beneficiaries a powerful voice. She shared an example from a village where a Roma community mediator claimed that GBV was a taboo subject. Despite this, they proved that it is not a taboo, as women began to speak out about their experiences. This shift was made possible by effective communication tools and the means to support these women in sharing their stories, which has led to more cases of GBV being disclosed. She also highlighted two distinct types of Roma GBV cases: one group has relatively easy access to GBV services, while the other faces significant barriers. She mentioned that while there are fewer cases related to shelters and specialized services, it became clear that there is a need to ask more questions and create additional services that are specifically tailored to meet the real needs of the Roma women beneficiaries. The aim is to fully provide the support required, not just based on assumptions, but based on what the beneficiaries themselves truly need.
- Violeta Terguta (UNFPA) emphasized the importance of being aware of services that do not work or fail to meet the needs of beneficiaries, as these

	<p>services are part of the referral pathways. She stressed the need for constant updates to these pathways, encouraging partners to ensure that the referral systems they work with are regularly revised. She also mentioned that strengthening GBV services within the Reception and Accommodation Centers (RACs) is key.</p>	
<p><b>Presentation by the Asociatia Psihologilor Tighina</b></p> <p><b>Ludmila Afteni</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asociatia Psihologilor Tighina is a woman-led organization that carries out activities that support women and girls and build capacity of local authorities and NGOs.</li> <li>• The services and activities include comprehensive assistance and counseling services, as well as legal aid, for youth, orphans, mothers with newborns, refugees, displaced persons, and other vulnerable groups; career guidance, entrepreneurial education, and support for the socio-economic integration of youth, such as professional training, qualifications, and requalification to enhance employability and assist individuals facing difficulties in their career paths; health education for both youth and adults, particularly in the areas of preventing development of the capacity and treating tuberculosis and HIV, as well as support for individuals with alcohol and drug abuse issues; of local authorities, NGOs, and communities to provide social to inform the public services, particularly in the fields of child and family protection is also part of the.</li> <li>• The Association also conducts activities through local TV and radio broadcasts, social media networks, and periodical publications about the Association's work.</li> <li>• Additionally, the association collaborates with local, national, and international organizations focusing on sustainable community development strategies.</li> <li>• Specific support refugees from Ukraine was and continues to be provided through the following projects:</li> <li>• You Can Count on Us (June-July 2022): Emergency support for Ukrainian refugees in the Căușeni district, funded by the British Chamber of</li> </ul>	<p>Asociatia Psihologilor Tighina's <a href="#">Facebook page</a></p>

	<p>Commerce Moldova. Outcome: 254 individuals benefited from essential goods packages provided through the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of Services through the Mobile Team (August 2022 - August 2024), funded by UNDP. Outcome: 300 beneficiaries were informed, and 30 beneficiaries received specialized assistance.</li> <li>• Comprehensive Assistance for Women and Children Refugees from Ukraine in the Căușeni District (November 2022-March 2023), funded by Institutum Virtutes Civilis. Outcome: approximately 400 women and girls received support for social integration, and an anti-crisis action plan was developed for the district.</li> <li>• Strengthened Competencies in Supporting the Needs of People Affected by the War in Ukraine (January-June 2023), funded by People in Need Moldova. Outcome: policies and procedures were developed and updated, along with mechanisms for improved support.</li> <li>• Emergency Assistance for Refugee Children from Ukraine Affected by the War with Russia (January-July 2023), funded by Terre des Hommes Netherlands. Outcome: 115 refugee children were assisted with psychosocial, medical, and financial support to cover basic needs.</li> <li>• Support for the Social Integration of Ukrainian Refugees in Causeni District Communities (April 2023-February 2024), funded by People in Need Moldova. Outcome: approximately 100 refugees and host families received assistance.</li> <li>• Increasing Resilience through Employment and Social Cohesion (August 2024-March 2025), funded by HEKS/EPER. Outcome: improved resilience and social cohesion skills for at least 150 refugees and local residents.</li> <li>• The Association offers the following services for survivors of GBV: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psychological and social counseling, as well as individual and group emotional support for women, young people, and their families.</li> <li>• Medical consultation and support in accessing healthcare services for refugee women and girls.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for the education of refugee and local children from families in difficulty.</li> <li>• Legal and para-legal support, including representation in courts.</li> <li>• Occupational counseling, job placement assistance, entrepreneurial education, and financial support for starting income-generating activities, as well as assistance with the first 2-3 months of legal employment.</li> <li>• Support in negotiating employment contracts.</li> <li>• Referrals to other services as needed.</li> <li>• The Association's partners include the Causeni District Council, Territorial Agency for Social Assistance and Family Protection, Pro Familia Maternal Center in Causeni, the Department of Education and schools in the Causeni district, the District Mayors' Offices, the Health Center, the Causeni District Hospital, the Psychopedagogical Assistance Service in the district, the Causeni Employment Agency, and others.</li> <li>• Vanessa Bordin (UNHCR) asked if the anti-crisis tool that was mentioned could be shared.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Presentation of the Tip Sheet on Applying a Survivor-Centered Approach to Handling Incidents or Disclosures of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), including Assistance to Victims</b></p> <p><b>Vanessa Bordin, UNHCR</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The tool was developed by the GBV SWG and the PSEA Task Force in response to feedback from several training sessions on PSEA, where it became clear that there was some confusion regarding the rights and entitlements of victims and survivors of SEA. To address this, we decided to create a tip sheet. In this document, we aim to clarify the definitions of GBV)and SEA, while also highlighting the key differences between them.</li> <li>• The consequences of SEA include several significant challenges. Victims may experience fear of retaliation after reporting, particularly from organizations providing assistance, and may be hesitant to seek out support services for fear of being stigmatized or the risk of losing access to assistance.</li> <li>• There is often confusion regarding victim’s assistance. The needs of the victim and their access to services must always be a priority, as they are critical for their well-being and recovery.</li> </ul>	<p>Link: <a href="#">Tip Sheet on Applying a Survivor-Centered Approach to Handling Incidents or Disclosures of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), including Assistance to Victims</a></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the first section of the document, there is a comparison of the differences between GBV and SEA and their consequences. Following that, the document provides general tips on implementing a survivor-centered approach. This approach emphasizes the importance of making services accessible to victims and survivors. It also stresses the need to respect survivors' wishes and desires, particularly if they do not wish to cooperate with an investigation or report the incident to the authorities.</li> <li>• The second part of the document offers practical tips designed to help implement a survivor-centered approach when working with victims of SEA. These tips provide actionable guidance to ensure that survivors' needs and preferences are prioritized throughout the process.</li> <li>• Investigations should not be conducted by anyone who is not a certified PSEA investigator as it can put the victim at risk.</li> <li>• The PSEA focal points are the designated individuals who are knowledgeable and can guide us on the proper steps to take in these situations.</li> <li>• Contact information for the PSEA Network, the GBV SWG and the Child Protection SWG are at the end of the document.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Update on Consolidation of Refugee Accommodation Centres (RACs)</b></p> <p><b>Natalia Stelea, UNHCR</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently, there are 26 active RACs with 1,391 beneficiaries accommodated, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 104 Persons with Disabilities (PWD)</li> <li>▪ 282 beneficiaries aged 60+</li> <li>▪ 51 children aged 0-2 years old</li> <li>▪ 504 children aged 2-18 years old.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Dashboard has the information of all RACs across the country collected on a monthly basis by UNHCR's partner ACTED. Information is also available specific RACs, including its demographics, its needs, infrastructural situation, non-food items and catering services available, as well as education and other protection services provided.</li> <li>• Top needs in the centers include hygiene kits, baby items and cleaning items.</li> </ul>	<p>Link: <a href="#">RACs Demographics and Needs Dashboard</a></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Dashboard was last updated in October 2024 and it will be updated again to reflect data as of November 2024.</li> <li>• In relation to the relocation option taken in 2023 and 2024:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 138 households (312 individuals) were relocated to another RAC.</li> <li>▪ 85 households (226 people) applied for rental assistance in.</li> <li>▪ 68 households (179 individuals) chose private accommodation.</li> <li>▪ 21 households (32 individuals) moved in with relatives or with a host family.</li> <li>▪ 5 households (14 individuals) were undecided or remained at the RAC.</li> <li>▪ 32 households (70 individuals) departed from Moldova either back to Ukraine or to the EU.</li> <li>▪ 23 households (53 individuals) opted for another alternative.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• On 29 November the T6 RAC was closed.</li> <li>• In 2025, 8 RACs will be closed. Factors impacting this decision includes the small size of the RAC, the living conditions, or poor management. This decision was made based on an assessment conducted in collaboration with several partners, alongside the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (MLSP).</li> <li>• 16 RACs have been identified as needing improvements for the winter season. The living conditions of these centers were improved by ACTED, including enhanced insulation, window repairs, sewage system upgrades, door replacements, and provision of essential appliances, such as AC units, boilers, and other items.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Updates by members</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viorelia Rusu, from UN Women, shared information about 2024's 16 Days of Activism Campaign, which was conducted under the slogan "You Might End Violence Against Women." In Moldova, the campaign was coordinated by the National Agency for Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, with the collaboration of and in cooperation with UN agencies, the government, civil society organizations, and other actors. UN Women launched the art installation "Do You See Me?"</li> </ul>	



	<p>Believe Me. Stand by Me”, featuring the stories of 16 women survivors of violence. UN Women also created a platform to reflect on the campaign and discuss the next steps needed to address GBV in Moldova. Additionally, UN Women organized the screening of the film “There Is Still Tomorrow” and hosted a gender café for legal practitioners, including women lawyers, prosecutors, and judges, along with other partner-organized activities. In terms of current initiatives, UN Women launched a project to support the emergency service 112, specifically focusing on equipping a special space for the recovery and well-being of service operators. Given that nearly 30% of calls received daily are related to GBV cases, UN Women will provide support for the psychologists and operators to improve internal regulations and tools for stress management and well-being. UN Women also provided support to three service providers, including shelters, by supplying furniture, equipment, and other items.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stefano Zanni, from CUAMM, indicated that the organization focuses on health, and is engaged in several activities in Moldova, including primary healthcare, distribution of non-food items, and capacity building for health and social workers. CUAMM is organizing a training at the end of January, most likely during the fourth week, with a focus on GBV. CUAMM is currently in the process of designing the training modules and selecting specific topics to be covered. A learning needs assessment questionnaire was shared with the GBV SWG to collect information. The target audience for this training will primarily be professionals involved in first-response services. A good practice has been bringing together health personnel, social workers, and psychologists for joint training sessions.</li> </ul>	<p>Link: <a href="#">Learning Needs Assessment questionnaire</a></p>
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Next GBV SWG meeting	
Date and Time	Details to be confirmed via email.