

Regional Cash Working Group (CWG) Refugee response to the Ukraine Situation

[30 March 2022 - Meeting Minutes and Action Items](#)

Chair: **UNHCR** (Marian Schilperoord)

Participants: **CaLP** (Lynn Yoshikaw), **CRS** (Jennifer Weatherall), **IFRC** (Emma Delo, Stephen Hagerich), **IOM** (Francisco Astudillo, Juliana Hafteh), **Mercy Corps** (Diana Tonea), **NRC** (Tim McInerney), **Oxfam** (Shreeju Shrestha), **Relief International** (Sabah Fara), **OCHA/ Ukraine Cash Working Group** (Juliet Lang), **UNDP** (Anca Stoica), **UNICEF** (Pamela Dale), **UNHCR** (Scott DiPreto, Annika Sjoberg, Caroline Dulin Brass), **UN Women** (Ceren Gures, Ekram Elhuni), **WFP** (Giancarlo Cirri, Marie-Helene Kyprianou), **WHO** (Jetri Regmi), **WVI** (Isidro Navarro),

Action Items

- IFRC will start serving as co-lead of the Regional CWG.
- Members requested to share additional comments on the Terms of Reference (TORs) by COB 30 March. UNHCR will circulate an updated version to be endorsed at the next meeting. The TORs will then be shared with country-level CWGs for awareness and to solicit any specific requests for support from the regional CWG.
- The joint UNHCR and UNICEF regional concept note on Blue Dots will be circulated for reference.
- Data sharing will be discussed at the next meeting. WVI offered to present on the Collaborative Cash Delivery (CCD) Network; other members are invited to present on the topic.
- Additional topics raised for future discussion include best practices on communication channels for outreach on cash; ways to support localization; status updates on government social protection programs; and the extent to which cash programs have rolled out across the region.

Meeting Minutes

- New members introduced themselves and minutes from the 24 March meeting were endorsed.
- Members discussed the revised TORs and will share further comments to include an objective on data protection, to concretize language on localization and capacity building, and to clarify the relationship between the Regional CWG and Ukraine CWG, among any other suggestions.
- The proposal for IFRC to co-chair the regional CWG was raised and agreed to by members.

Protection Outreach and Cash Enrolment

- UNHCR presented on protection outreach efforts and linkages with cash assistance. A key protection challenge has been the limited identification of persons with specific needs (PwSNs) at border entry points and ensuring the most vulnerable are reached. Accordingly, UNHCR is advocating for enhanced screenings at borders and in refugee accommodation centers and is using community-based protection, cash enrollment sites where the registration data is an entry point to identify vulnerable persons and assistance and referrals.

- Jointly with UNICEF and other partners, UNHCR is also operationalizing Blue Dots, which are safe spaces for persons fleeing Ukraine that provide basic services and referrals with a focus on children and women. So far 8 of the planned 31 Blue Dots are operational. Locations vary and include border points, train stations, ferry terminals, cash enrolment centers and accommodation centers. Given the large numbers of accommodation centers in some countries, identifying those best suited to host a Blue Dot is an ongoing process; the intention is for some of these to evolve into community centers in the longer term.
- Outreach activities have also been scaled up through call centers, self-referral platforms, social media and other channels, as has training on identifying PwSNs; training materials have also been translated into Polish and Ukrainian.

AOB

- **UN Women** presented on the rapid gender assessment carried out in partnership with IOM in Moldova. Findings underscored the concentration of children and women among the refugee population and their priority needs, including transportation, financial assistance, food assistance and access to information. UN Women will share the assessment report once it is published.
- **WFP** flagged the need for a better understanding of the extent cash is being used as a response modality in particularly Ukraine as well as of any constraints to scaling up cash assistance.
- The **Ukraine CWG** shared links to the [CWG Fact Sheet](#), [Modality Decision Tree](#), and [CWG page](#) to help demonstrate the scope of cash assistance in Ukraine. Cash is more so being used as a modality in western and central Ukraine for IDPs and people on the move.
- Regionally, **UNHCR** noted cash assistance is starting to scale up, with the main challenges being the identification of those most in need. Data points on cash assistance in the region will likely start to become more available in the next weeks as programs take off.
- **UNICEF** raised the need to keep stock of government cash responses. In Poland, for example, authorities are already registering significant numbers of people for social security support.
- Addressing child protection issues in relation to cash assistance is another focus area. In Poland, the Cash and Protection Working Groups have developed guidance on child protection around cash assistance, taking into account global recommendations and specific national regulations and legislation. Once shared, the guidance will be tailored to the contexts of the other surrounding countries.