

SITUATION UPDATE #3: Republic of Moldova

Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector (RETS)

Update: 30 March – 12 April 2022

OVERVIEW



Ericsson Response volunteer installs access points in the Palanca Blue Dot to enable internet access to humanitarian responders in the Palanca Humanitarian Hub. (Photo: ©Yulia Fedorenko/UNHCR)

The UNHCR-led **Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector (RETS)** is the coordinating body for IT and communications assessment and service delivery in refugee emergencies. RETS seeks to reinforce multi-sector coordination by streamlining IT and communications into operational preparedness and response strategies for the delivery of assistance to refugees and other persons of concern.

In the Republic of Moldova, with the number of humanitarian partners providing services to persons of concern increasing, RETS is prioritizing the establishment of internet connectivity in reception centres and other key operational sites, and delivering internet connectivity in Blue Dot hubs across the country. Partners and other sectors are fully engaged in the assessment, planning and implementation of the RETS response, and play an active role in identifying sites where connectivity services are a core requirement for operational enhancement.



COORDINATION

Achievements and Impact

- There are currently two standby partner deployees from Ericsson Response in Moldova. The deployees are based out of Chişinău and rove between priority sites.
- ACTED is providing project management support to RETS service deployments.



CONNECTIVITY

Achievements and Impact

- New RETS Wi-Fi networks have been established in:
 - The office of the Guardianship Authorities of the district of Ştefan Vodă, on the Palanca border crossing point
 - One Refugee Accommodation Centre (RAC) in Chişinău municipality
 - Two RAC in the district of Bălţi
 - One RAC in the district of Anenii Noi
- Four other operational sites remain connected to RETS Wi-Fi networks:
 - Blue Dot, Palanca.
 - Palanca Humanitarian Hub, Palanca
 - Blue Dot, Otaci
 - Căuşeni Train Station
- Télécoms Sans Frontières (TSF) has installed mobile Wi-Fi connections for refugees on the coaches that undertake daily convoys between Moldova and Romania.
- The Ericsson Response Programme Director completed a one-week mission to Moldova, visiting the key sites where RETS is providing support to the humanitarian response community.
- RETS is working closely with focal points from the UNHCR Innovation Service and Accountability to Affected People (AAP) to enable extension of Wi-Fi networks to refugees hosted in Refugee Accommodation Centres.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- RETS continues to work closely with counterparts from the Accommodation and Transport Sector and the Refugee Protection Sector to determine internet connectivity requirements in operational sites, including Refugee Accommodation Centres (RAC), and Blue Dots.



RETS partners conduct a joint mission to the Palanca Humanitarian Hub to visit the Blue Dot and other sites where connectivity is being provided (Photo: © Yulia Fedorenko/UNHCR)



SECURITY COMMUNICATIONS

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The request for VHF and UHF frequencies has been submitted to the national telecommunications regulator and is pending approval.



INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR is working together with the partners to update the [5W Dashboard](#), which includes more than 700 activities across Moldova.
- UNHCR developed a publicly available [dashboard](#) that details total displacement figures for both Ukrainian nationals and third-country nationals arriving from Ukraine.
- An ActivityInfo database has been established by UNHCR, allowing streamlined data collection for key RETS connectivity sites.
- UNHCR is working together with Ericsson Response and Cisco to visualize data collected through the captive portals developed for the Blue Dots. Currently, the data is collected for all Blue Dot locations where RETS connectivity is provided.
- UNICEF has received the results of its first U-Report from Moldova. The report showed that 15% of responders (referred to as U-Reporters) were already

volunteering to support Ukraine, and 54% have already helped refugees in one way or another. Furthermore, a larger percentage of youth are interacting with refugees: 31% of U-Reporters have personally interacted with refugees in their city or village, 22% in social centres and 14% in schools.

- UNICEF carried out a multi-country Viber poll to understand the impact of the crisis across neighbouring countries. The poll reached almost 1,000 people in Moldova. Respondents were asked what channel of information they preferred to learn about available services and entitlements, with the most popular responses being messaging applications (34%) and social media (24%). When asked if they knew how to access health services in Moldova, 73% of refugees said they were not aware of how to do this.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- UNHCR is developing a dashboard to better visualize data captured via captive portals in Blue Dot sites.
- UNICEF is working to improve SMS aggregation for U-Report Moldova, as there is a need to scale-up and analyse large amounts of data.
- Data collected through the captive portals in the Blue Dots is not granular. Cisco is providing development support to provide granular data for each site.



EQUIPMENT

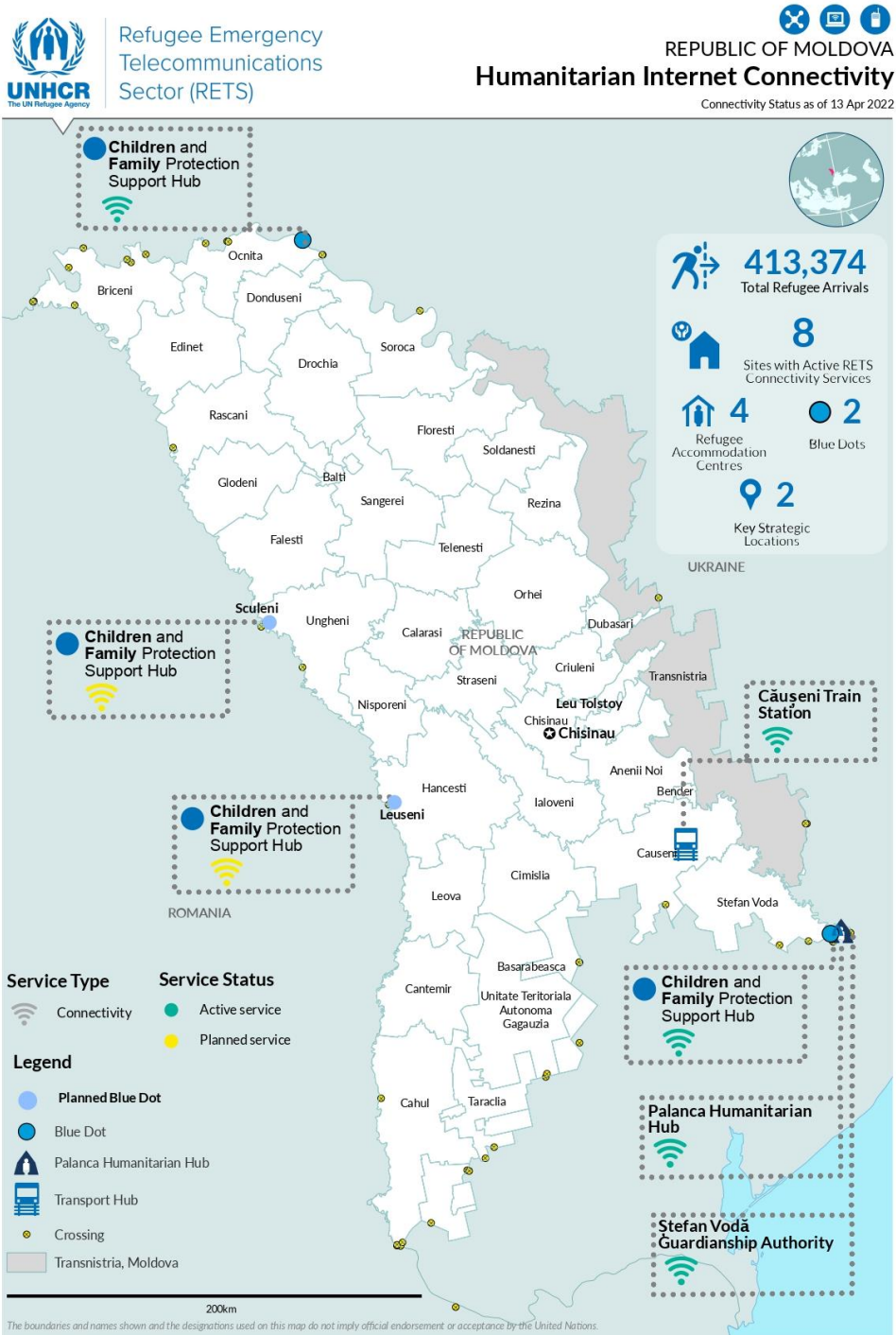
Achievements and Impact

- Charging stations for mobile devices provided by the Vodafone Group Foundation have been deployed in four locations, including the Palanca Humanitarian Hub, UNHCR Cash Enrolment Centre waiting areas, and Refugee Accommodation Centres.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- UNICEF has met last week with partners to explore how to provide equipment to children on the move who would like to continue following their national curriculum in Ukraine. Currently, no one is supporting children with equipment, but UNICEF continues to work with identifying partners who may be interested in this.

Reference Map



Funding and partnership

UNHCR is grateful for the contributions of its partners and donors who have generously given in support of the refugee response in the Republic of Moldova.



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LINKS

UNHCR's [Operational Data Portal](#) for the Ukraine Situation

[Inter-Agency Operational Update](#) (Ukraine Refugee Situation): Republic of Moldova

[UNHCR Moldova Update](#), 04 April 2022

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