Moldova: 8th refugee coordination forum meeting minutes

Meetings	
Date	10 May 2022 - Next meeting on 23 May 2022
Time	13.30 pm
Chair	Diego Nardi, Inter-Agency Coordination Officer
Reporting	Irina Roibu, Inter-Agency Coordination Associate
Email	mdachrcf@unhcr.org

Agenda
Updates from sectors 1.Opening Remarks: - RRP national launch - Monitoring Framework - Refugee Funding Tracker (RFT) - Updates 2. Sector Updates. - Achievements and Impact - Identified needs and remaining gaps - Planned activities 3. Contingency Planning 4. AOB

Information collection and links
Please use the below link to fill out information 5W (Please note to fill only one entry per activity per location) https://bit.ly/36BYfFs Moldova Assessment Registry. https://bit.ly/37Ug0jG Link to operational data portal: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine/location/10784 Reporting: Quantitative https://bit.ly/3Dg6bbl ; narrative/photo https://bit.ly/3DfimW0

Summary of discussions and agreements/ action items

Agenda	Discussion	Agreements/ Actions
Introduction	**Diego Nardi, UNHCR Inter-Agency Coordination Officer** informs **that following the end of the mission of Lachin Hassanova,** he will support facilitation of weekly Refugee Coordination Forum meetings, and remains available together with the UNHCR Inter-Agency Team to support coordination efforts in the framework of the Refugee Response in Moldova.	
Overview of the local coordination mechanisms at the BCP Otaci	**UNHCR presents an overview of the coordination mechanism at the BCP Otaci, which is bordering the Ukrainian BCP Mohyliv-Podilskyi, Vinnytsia region in Ukraine.** The 7th coordination meeting will be taking place on May 10th. The meetings are chaired by UNHCR, supported by the mayor's office, and attended by LPA, Ocnita raion emergency cell, Border Police, EUBAM local office and humanitarian actors present at the site: ACTED, Blue Dot, BRF, IOM, MSF, Helvetas and volunteer group, LCA). The meetings are taking place every Tuesday at 14h00 at the mayor's office. The actors operating in the area are invited to join. Currently, the site upgrade (IOM and UNHCR, in coordination with LPA) is in progress - graveling works are ongoing. After containers will be located for organizations present at the area, where the regular busses from Otaci BCP to Chisinau and Iasi are located. The purpose of the local coordination group is information sharing and coordinating activities on site. The situation during the last weeks have been stable, the passengers' flow is moderate, at the level it used to be before the war begun. However, different types of services are being requested by persons staying with the local community (enrolling in schools, kindergartens). Cash enrollment for both refugee and host community are taking place for already several weeks in the North. Identified needs and gaps:	Organizations that have actions located in the Otaci area and would like to join the coordination meetings can contact Olena Turchyn, TURCHYN@unhcr.org

	- The site conditions. The work on the improvements is in progress (IOM, UNHCR and ACTED). - Improvement of the information provision processes and referrals (to identify the actors that are providing services not only in Otaci, but also in the neighbor villages and towns - in progress – ACTED, LPA) - Transportation provision during the after-work hours. Currently people arriving after work hours are being placed at the Calarashovka accommodation center, open 24/7 with low occupancy level (ACTED). - Finalization of the local scale contingency plan - the group actively works with the local Emergency Cell on the local scale contingency Plan and actions to be taken in case of the high influx. - Planned activities: - Continue with weekly coordination meetings, engaging the new actors as identified. The meetings are taking place every Tuesday afternoon. - Site improvement (graveling, information provision, latrines maintenance) - Expand engagement with municipalities on social cohesion and inclusion work - Training for Border Police on access to asylum - Continue work on contingency plan	
The coordination mechanism at the BCP Palanka.	**UNHCR presents an overview of the coordination mechanism at the BCP Palanka.** UNHCR convened the 6th and 7th Palanca Coordination Meetings with the participation of IGSU, volunteers, and organizations providing aid and services on site. The revised and improved **Site Plan** by UNHCR was presented and shared. It was agreed that prior to any works and new installations, information would be conveyed to the IGSU (Officer in Charge) and UNHCR (Field Coordinator and Site Planner) to ensure proper site development and a safe and functional space for all. UNHCR presented an inter-agency referral pathways package to the group, and all agreed to continue to coordinate efforts both as part of immediate response as well as contingency plans. UNHCR maintains the **Palanca Service Mapping Tool** for all actors on site, which has formed the basis for **the Palanca Bus Station Workflow** document. The document's	Organizations interested in conducting actions at Palanka can contact UNHCR or IGSU Officer in Charge in Palanca are invited to send an email to the following address: ailiotis@unhcr.org

purpose is to provide the workflow steps from the border to the bus station and to accommodation solutions, particularly in the event of increased arrivals.

UNHCR is supporting the graveling of the entire site, deployed 4 unarmed security guards (one female security staff), finalized the tender process for CCTV system in agreement with IGSU, installed 3 notice boards at Palanca and Tudora BCPs with information on EU Flights / Safety / Transportation / Anti-trafficking, etc. Additional Blue Dot containers have been installed for the extension of services and UNICEF is installing additional WASH facilities. UNFPA is preparing for service provision on site in double container provided by UNHCR/ACTED. HELVETAS has replaced tents with containers. INTERSOS has transferred their medical services from tent to double container provided by UNHCR/ACTED.

The bus circulation within the site has been altered for safety and functionality reasons with good cooperation of involved actors (ACTED, IOM, UNHCR, IGSU, ANTA)

Identified needs and remaining gaps:
- Increase security on site, especially in case of mass influx.
- Increase office, consultation, and storage spaces.
- Create accessible pathways on site for persons with disabilities.
- Further ensure complementarity and avoid duplication.
- Streamline information dissemination to refugees at both BCP and Bus Station.
- Further improve bus circulation.
- Ensure shaded and cooled areas for summer months.
- Improve WASH.
- Improve waiting areas.
- Ensure implementation of referral pathways.
- Palanca specific SOPs are being prepared and will be shared with all partners.
- Mobile cooling units for the waiting area / luggage trolleys / baby strollers / additional wheelchairs.
- Ensure electricity costs are covered after May (SDC stops end of May) / Provide reserve for contingency (generator).

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Planned activities:

- Fence to be completed covering entire perimeter. Barriers to be placed at entry and exit points. Controlled entry system (monthly passes – visitor passes) to be established. Most actors have already provided staff lists for this purpose.
- Multi-lingual information material for ethical media coverage to be prepared for press visits.
- Palanca SOPs to be prepared in English and Romania and shared with all actors on site.
- Additional office spaces (for individual protection work/counselling by UNHCR) and storage space (by UNHCR, IOM) planned and incorporated in site plan.
- Emergency accommodation space planned (UNCHR, ACTED).
- UNHCR and HELVETAS coordinating for the creation of PWD pathways.
- Additional hand-washing stations to be installed.
- Additional benches and shaded areas to be installed and procurement of essential bus station items (trolleys, etc.).
- Collaborative desk to provide information where the same information on all the services will be provided to refugees. Bus station noticeboard and site map.
- Volunteers and organizations - trained on how to deliver the information.
- Specific coordination meetings for actors offering similar services – to avoid duplication and complementarity (e.g., Child services, food provision, WASH).
- ACTED to implement a colored ticket system to differentiate the routes that persons are taking.
- Work on the collaborative inclusive information leaflet with all basic information including links and the QR codes. The Border Police agreed to disseminate the leaflets to all people crossing the BCP.

| Contingency Planning, Marcel Colun, UNHCR | The Government of Moldova is developing a Contingency Plan in case a mass influx of refugees coming from Ukraine takes place. The Government of Moldova is planning their contingency response based on their current capacity.

The key factors to focus on: | The Inter Agency Coordination team will shared a kobo with sector leads in May 12th to map preparedness |

	- **The processing capacity:** capacity of the Moldovan BCPs of processing people in and out of the country. - **The transportation capacity:** capacity to transport people from the entry BCP to the exit BCP. - **The accommodation capacity:** capacity of an overnight stay in Moldova, at the same time relying mostly on the larger reception capacity in Romania. - **Accommodation for those who may opt to stay in Moldova** (longer or for a few days before transit to another country). That would require the stand-by accommodation capacity in the transit areas at the border and within the country, as well as current or potentially opened RACs. - **Protection on the move.** - **Boost scale – up readiness through strengthening current response.** Areas of focus and most vulnerable groups: - **Highly vulnerable:** people fleeing in this situation might be even more vulnerable than witnessed thus far due to prolonged conflict, war-wounded, PTSD, etc. - **PwSN:** elderly, children, PLW, persons with reduced mobility, etc. - **Pets:** consider people travelling with their pets and related needs when moving onwards. - Should the influx happen, there will be a high presence of authorities at the border (Border Police, potentially militaries, etc.) as well as partners aiding on the ground (pets dots, documentation dots, etc). Thus, would be relevant to decide on the reasonable number of people involved. - **Missing ID;** People without proper documentation may not have major problems crossing Moldova, Romania confirmed their capacity to regularize documentation. - **UASC: early identification at the BCP**. Regarding the identification of the unaccompanied children, the PWG has been working with the Child protection partners to establish the procedures for regular cases. However, should the numbers to be very high, the minimum actions or SOPs should be identified. The same applies for the activities related to - **trafficking and GBV risks/survivors.**	capacity and emergency response activities in case a mass influx scenario takes place.

Should the influx occur, several actors have the capacity to intervene. The capacity at the Palanka site has been increased, the capacity of Otaci site is in process.

The Joint Crisis Center is currently at the stage of finalizing the Contingency Plan. By the end of the current week, the sectors are required to identify their internal response capacity (capacities available in the country, or possible to provide in a short time). By the end of the next week, the Sectors Leads are required to compile all sector inputs to be ready to be included into the Governmental Plan.

Comments/remarks/questions on the presentation

KeyStone Moldova requests to integrate actions related to PWD into the Plan (adapted transportation, adapted toilets at the border, provisions with medications for people with chronic diseases, pampers).

UNFPA highlights the absence of several Sectors imputes in the plan and suggest identifying what can be provided by the UN in totality. UNFPA has already prepositioned in the country the post trip treatment kits and 10.000 dignity kits. **UNHCR highlights** that the presented Plan is the only the Draft/Frame of Emergency Preparedness Plan, as a main component and analysis of the key issues. Following the completion of the Kobo form it will be filled in accordingly. In preparing the Contingency Plan, the Government is actively designing it preparedness considering their capacity. However, the Government will rely on the partners assistance, in particularly for costly items and will complement within its possibilities.

UN Women rises the concern that there are more men within the security survives and front-line services thank women. That creates a gender disbalance and might create discomfort for the refugee women. The request is to ensure the gender balance within the service providers, where possible. **UNHCR informs** that Government plans to regulate the presence of service providers and volunteers at the border areas. The access will be granted to those agencies and NGOs authorized to work at the border areas, which will reduce the PSE, etc. risks. The

	agencies/services recruiting staff should be made aware about the necessary of ensuring the gender balance.	
	Operation Orphan asks information regarding the activities at the South of the country (Cahul raion), whether the South BCPs are included in the plan as well as local reception accommodation. **UNHCR** informs that all BCPs are included in the Plan. The capacity of the Basarabeasca BCP might be analyzed. **IOM** informs that the assessment of the Southern BCPs as well as the ones at the MD-RO border has started, analyzing the potential possible improvements, and required support.	

Livelihood & Inclusion WG	**UNDP** updates on the group activity and highlights that the L&I WG represents humanitarian & development nexus: considers immediate humanitarian needs + longer-terms priorities from a livelihoods and inclusion perspective.
	
	- The group has a high ownership by the Government being co-chaired by the State Chancellery
	- 8 WG weekly meetings have been completed
	- Filled in all activities at the 5W. Initiating a series of meeting with the weekly presentations of members' interventions for information sharing and partnership-building.
	- Indicators on I&L have been submitted to MSNA
	- The Work Plan for the WG is under development
	
	Identified needs:
	- Expecting the results of various assessments required to develop targeted individual and joint interventions addressing livelihoods and inclusion, particularly:
	  • MSNA – assessment of refugees' and host family needs (household assessment)
	  • UNDP/ CALM – assessment of local public authorities' needs and capacities to address the refugee crisis implications
	- Investment in livelihoods solutions that are win-win – they can benefit local development beyond the crisis and have longer-term impact which requires advocacy with partners and donors.	

- Area-based approaches that will allow different partners to align their areas of interventions across the different sectors at the level of communities that are affected.

Remaining Gaps:
- Most WG members' interventions are focused on humanitarian assistance, and only few implement/ plan activities that may have a longer-term impact on development
- Current WG members' interventions are largely focused on integration and social cohesion aspects – and less on livelihoods (cash assistance has limited implication on sustainable livelihoods)
- Current and planned interventions are largely small-scale (limited number of beneficiaries, selected localities)
- Uncertainty of Ukraine crisis limits the depth and scope of interventions beyond immediate relief
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Planned activities, many of them coming under the Work Plan that is being under development:
1. *Collective thinking and influencing:*

- Donor awareness piece: "Showcasing the Nexus – Inclusion & Livelihoods Priorities in the Refugee Crisis Response in Moldova"
- Policy-oriented piece: "Socio-economic inclusion and sustainable livelihoods at times of crisis: Lessons learned from the Ukraine refugee response in Moldova"
- Compendium of good practices on socio-economic inclusion and sustainable livelihoods in refugee crisis settings
- Checklist on disability-inclusive humanitarian and development interventions (joint with the Disability TF)
- Checklist and training session: Livelihoods and inclusion through a gender equality and women's leadership lens (joint with the Gender TF)
- Thematic Issue Briefs.
2. *Collective planning:*

	- Workshop(s) on livelihoods & inclusion priorities for the refugee crisis in Moldova: identifying gaps and planning interventions collectively – upon availability of assessment results - Cross-sectoral activities planned with the Disability TF and Gender TF. 3. *Collective impact monitoring:* - Looking forwards to updating and monitoring the activities in the new IM system "ActivityInfo"	
GBV SWG	UNHCR informs on the GBV Safety Audit activity, which require support from all sectors. The GBV Safety Audit has following objectives: 1. Assess GBV risks for refugees, in particular women and girls, in different settings of Moldova, in order to develop contextualized GBV risk reduction guidance for each individual sector, in line with the IASC guidelines. 2. Assess GBV response needs, gaps and barriers to accessing support in order to better inform survivor centered GBV service provision that is fully inclusive of refugees and adapted to their specific needs. 3. Adapt, contextualize and test a GBV Safety Audit toolkit for the Moldova refugee response, that can be shared with different stakeholders in order to increase capacity to access and reduce GBV risks across different humanitarian [programs and more locations. GBV Safety Audit Methodology/ three tools to be tested: - Safety Walk: walk through a specific area to identify the factors that could make people, in particular women and girls, feel safe/unsafe. Through the safety walk risks related to infrastructure, service access and presence of different threats are identified. - Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Tool: Focus group discussions are structured conversations with a group of refugees (8-10 people) representing a specific population, thus groups should be age, gender and diversity sensitive. - Key Informant Interviews (KII): KIIs are conducted with persons with a key role in GBV risk reduction and response for refugees, including refugee focal points. Key informants	The UNHCR GBV SWG welcomes focal points from different sectors to participate in GBV Safety Audit Orientation on Friday 13th , contact Colleen Roberts robertco@unhcr.org

	may include GBV service providers, RAC managers, community volunteers, security forces, organizations representing specific groups, etc. GBV Safety Audit Next Steps: - Adapt tools. - GBV Safety Audit Orientation planned on Friday 13th, May 2:30 – 5:00 pm., open for focal point participants from each Sector. - Data collection in the selected sites – between RACs, host communities and border areas. (Participation from Sectors according to agreed planning). - Validation of key findings and recommendations for GBV risk reduction and response. - Report sharing and workshop with key stakeholders. - Dissemination of adapted Safety Audit toolkit.	
Education WG	**UNCEF informs** that Education WG is led by Ministry of Education and co-led by UNCEF and UNHCR and monitoring following indicators: - # of children benefitting from national education system - # of refugee children provided with hot meals in formal and non-formal education settings - % of teachers including refugee teachers trained to provide child-centered education services during crisis - So far, with the joint efforts and through the child and youth friendly spaces (CFS/YFC) has been managed to ensure equitable access to learning to: -1800 refugee children enrolled in formal education - 7000 children and youth to non-formal education -UN Secretary General visit at Moldexpo also covered CFS/YFS To identify the real needs of the children, a rapid need-assessment has been initiated and is estimated to be finalized by the end of the next week. The findings of this RNA will complement the other MSNA.	

UNICEF highlighted the importance of training teachers to respond to the individual needs of refugee children. In this regard, 700 teachers trained on child-friendly approaches, inclusive education etc. Some child friendly spaces and youth centers learning were equipped and didactical materials, cognitive toys, etc. In terms of system strengthening - 30 professionals have been trained on coordination of EiE. Is being provided policy support to the Ministry of Education to finalize the long-term education sector plan - the 2030 ESP will include a separate component on response to crisis.

Identified needs and remaining gaps:
- Inconsistency of data regarding children included into the national education system and children connected to Ukrainian learning platform.
- Learning gap/loss caused by the pandemics and war.
- Language barrier
- Lack of IT devices, ATs, LM, cognitive toys
- Poor WASH facilities
- Lack of access ramps, toilets, rehabilitation facilities, facilities for CWD, training for teachers working with CWD.
- Provision of hot meals for lower/upper secondary children and youth. AAs of this week UNCEF started to cover hot meals for pre-school and primary school children. The mechanism of delivery of the hot meals for secondary level should be identified.
- Poor parenting skills, especially for CWD.

Planned activities
- Rapid Needs Assessment-dissemination of results
- Procurement of IT devices (Tech Labs), Assistive Technologies, learning and didactical materials, cognitive toys
- Hot meals in schools and preschools
- Scale-up of Child and Youth Friendly services nationwide
- Day Summer Camps covering children and youth

	- Promotion of Positive Parenting nationally/BEBO app (already translated in Ukrainian, to be translated in Romanian) - Cross-sectoral planning covers disability, nutrition, WASH etc. **KeyStone Moldova** asked the information regarding the number of PWD that are integrated in the mainstream schools, what schools and type of the disability, to address the support, should it be identified. **UNICEF informed** that the rapid needs assessment results will include the requested data and once received, the findings will be shared with the Educational WG.	
RRP national launch	UNHCR informs that the date of the RRP national launch is not yet received from the Government. In regard of the RRP Monitoring Framework, a meeting with the Sector Leads has been held last week, to discuss the next steps to be taken to put in place the ActivityInfo - monitoring tool for the RRP Moldova. Sector Leads are reviewing the individual submissions, deciding on the general activity tags by the sector and relevant indicators. Once completed, the configuration of the ActivityInfo will be finalized. All the RCF members will be invited to provide inputs their information on the system monthly. The organizations pledged under the RRP are invited next week for a workshop on the RFT (Refugee Funding Tracker). The workshop will focus on the reporting of funds received by INGOs/NGOs in the context of the RRP.	
AOB	UNHCR informs that UN Secretary General, Mr. Antonio Guterres, and the Deputy High Commissioner, Ms. Kelly Clements, are this week on a mission in Moldova. Also, this week is a mission of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in conflicts will take place.	