

Małopolska Coordination Group Meeting

Meeting Minutes – 01 December 2022

Meeting subject:	Małopolska Coordination Group Meeting
Time & location:	9 am – UNHCR Krakow Sub-Office
Chaired by:	UNHCR; Open Krakow Coalition
Minutes prepared by:	UNHCR
Participants:	Consul of Hungary in Krakow; Fundacja Instytut Polska-Ukraina; Fundacja Jednosc; Fundacja Kocham Debniki; Fundacja One World-One Heart; Fundacja Understanding; Fundacja Wolno Nam; Fundacja Zrodlo Zycia; IAHV; Internationaler Bund Polska; OWiM; Project Hope; Salam Lab; Save the Children; UAinKrakow; UNHCR; UNICEF; VOICE Amplified; ZHP Choragiew Krakowska;
Agenda:	<p>Introduction from the co-chairs and updates on the points decided on at the last Coordination meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updates from the refugee community and UA-led organizations• Presentation on cash for work program for volunteers (PCPM)• Presentation on education and Q&A (UNICEF)• AOB
AGENDA POINT	DISCUSSION
Introduction and update on points from last meeting	<p>Participants were welcomed to the eighth Małopolska Coordination Group meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open Krakow Coalition shared that every second week the coalition meets and the most frequently discussed issue is the issuance of PESEL number to Ukrainian citizens. Especially, this concerns Ukrainians crossing the Polish-Ukrainian border a second time and those entering Poland from other EU countries and discrepancies among practices of border guards. In addition, when the Polish Border Guard has been approached with these questions, the response has been that the result comes down to the specific border guard making the decision. Open Krakow Coalition asked if it would be possible for other participants to provide more clarity on this topic.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNHCR highlighted that concerns regarding PESEL numbers are relevant and have been expressed by refugees. In past Coordination meetings, amendments to the Special Act on Ukrainian citizens have been discussed. Nevertheless, it is important to share and report when new challenges are reported by refugees. UNHCR further noted that in the interest of time, a point on PESEL registration would be considered to the next meeting agenda on 15 December. • Open Krakow Coalition also shared that the fundraiser currently being hosted by the Coalition remains ongoing. The beneficiaries of the fundraised will be families and individuals living near the front line in Ukraine. The Coalition is aiming to collect 4,000 mats, 4,000 sleeping bags, and 4,000 power banks. To support the fundraiser an exhibition featuring photos from Ukraine is being held in Krakow until 13 December. Partners interested in donating to the fundraiser or learning more are invited to contact Ivan Kysloshchuk (Ivan.kyslshchuk@uainkrakow.pl) • UNHCR provided updates about ongoing activities. On December 4 and 5 a Christmas Market featuring crafts made by refugee women will be held. On 8 December a job fair for refugees and Polish citizens will take place in Krakow. Participants are encouraged to take flyers and posters for both events following the meeting and to share this information with their networks. As well, the annual Participatory Assessment exercise remains ongoing.
<p>Agenda point 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jednosc Foundation presented information about the Foundation’s activities and mission. The Foundation works mainly with children and parents on projects related to education and culture. The organization has been operating in Krakow since 24 February and a similar organization exists in Ukraine. It has been noted that in the past several weeks there have been electricity blackouts throughout Ukraine. At the same time, many children continue to attend school online and therefore the blackouts have affected access to education. In some cases parents also continue to work outside of the home, so out of necessity children are left home alone without electricity. As a result the foundation has created a project with the goal of helping children in these situations by allowing them to continue their education in Poland. In pursuit of this goal the Foundation is looking for reception support and services for children newly arrived from Ukraine. • Open Krakow Coalition added that currently up to 90% of the territory of Ukraine may be without electricity. This fact must be kept in mind. This is why the coalition is fundraising sleeping bags, mats, and power banks. The representative of the Coalition noted that she would be able to write a letter of recommendation to help gather support for the initiative presented by Jednosc Foundation. • UNHCR noted that UNICEF Child Protection Officer was present at the meeting and that a presentation was scheduled. Perhaps the above points could be included in this discussion.

Agenda point 2

UNHCR noted that at the last meeting during discussions about contingency plan, participants mentioned that there have been recent issues with attracting and retaining volunteers. UNHCR has learned about an initiative run by PCPM and has invited them to present at the Coordination meeting.

- PCPM began a Cash for Work Programme at the end of March 2022. The project began with PCPM signing almost 50 contracts with Ukrainian refugees in Lublin for employment as teacher assistants. Currently, there are 1190 beneficiaries of this program in various locations in Poland – including Bialystok, Bydgoszcz, Swinouscie, and Nowy Sacz. Refugees are employed in a wide spectrum of positions – including educational support, psychosocial support, translation, and family support. 30 individuals are also employed at reception centers in Warsaw.
- Following the initial program stage, PCPM is now preparing for the upcoming winter months. There have been signals in some cities where PCPM is active that a second wave of refugees is expected. As such, PCPM is looking to start a new cash for work program. The goal of the program would be to allow NGOs or local governments to employ volunteers to support their activities at the border or in public facilities. The program would include two months of financial support at 20 PLN net an hour for volunteer and 25 PLN net an hour for volunteer managers and coordinators. Contracts would contain the possibility of extension. PCPM would not be responsible for recruitment processes and the requesting NGO or local government would remain responsible for recruiting and managing the volunteers – including setting their working hours. At the current time, PCPM is planning to implement this program in Lubelskie and Podkarpackie regions. PCPM is also considering Malopolskie region if enough interest is shown by NGOs. NGOs may express their interest at the link that will be circulated in the email following the Coordination meeting.
- Save the Children asked what target PCPM had set for this program – what are the planned number of beneficiaries for the next two months.
- PCPM responded that this program is part of PCPM’s larger cash for work program. As such, there is no set target. However, the goal is also to see that the need is and what the interest is from local authorities and organizations in this program. This is why a link to express interest has been created.
- Internationaler Bund Polska asked when PCPM would know that Malopolska is a region of interest. Internationaler Bund also asked what the profile would be of the refugees targeted.
- PCPM responded that the focus of the program would remain in Lubelskie and Podkarpackie regions. However, the link will also be sent to organizations working in Malopolskie region to better understand their activities and see what plans they have for the upcoming months. In regards to the second question, there are not necessarily any targeted profiles. In the

	<p>previous cash for work program, teacher assistants were specifically targeted to support local authorities and schools. In the upcoming program, the goal is to support NGOs and local governments with their work through supporting volunteers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VOICE Amplified asked whether the program was just for Ukrainians, or also for Polish citizens cooperating with NGOs? • PCPM responded that the program is for Ukrainian refugees, Ukrainians who came before the war, Polish citizens, and other nationalities. Criteria determination for volunteers is on the side of the NGOs. • UNHCR thanked PCPM for the presentation. UNHCR further emphasized the need to consider Malopolska in the cash for work program, as there are many NGOs in the region doing vital work with refugees. UNHCR also noted that the question posed by VOICE Amplified links to another topic that has been touched on – the vetting and registration of volunteers. Following the meeting, UNHCR will circulate a document containing recommendations to host States for the vetting and registration of volunteers and volunteer organisations supporting refugees. A second point concerns the training and support of volunteers. Perhaps in this regard a harmonized training package could be of use. UNHCR also presented a regional document on dos and don'ts for volunteers. While parts of the document may appear straightforward, it can also serve as a basis to begin discussions and capacity building of volunteers.
<p>Agenda point 3</p>	<p>UNICEF shared a presentation on the Education Sector and subsequently a discussion on education took place between participants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Krakow Coalition noted that the individual responsible for education within the Coalition was not present at the current meeting. She has been active in the education sector at the local level for many years. Open Krakow Coalition also noted that there is an information group that meets every week and representatives of many groups are present. Open Krakow Coalition further asked if there had been an opportunity for cooperation with the Foundation for the Development of the Education System (FRSE). This is a national branch of Erasmus + and the European Solidarity Corps which is an expert on informal education. • Foundation Understanding noted that online school could allow children to begin learning Polish even before coming to Poland. Parents could also receive information online about how to prepare their children for school in Poland. There are discussions regarding a program on this topic under the Erasmus + program; however, they are still several months away from being realized. Perhaps further coordination will be possible.

- UNICEF agreed that benefiting from members of the sector and working group could be beneficial. This is why coordination and complementarity over duplication are important.
- Zustricz raised two points. The first was connected to the synchronization of activities being carried out. For many years, Zustricz has been preparing people to work as educational assistants. However recently there has been some chaos in this field and many people who have been employed as educational assistants were not prepared to work in Polish schools. This has had negative consequences. The second point was related to preparation of teachers in Ukraine for work in Polish schools. Even basic workshops could help in this regard. Workshops or even short training for Polish school directors could also prove helpful. Some school directors have an understanding of the scope of work for intercultural assistants, but others do not. Zustricz also posed a question. In early Coordination meetings, participants brought up the idea of a hybrid learning system. Under such a system those participating in Ukrainian online education from Poland could be supervised by Ukrainian teachers while they continue learning remotely. There could additionally be integration with Polish students through activities and sports events. As this has been mentioned, but not implemented, Zustricz wanted to know if there were any such plans or projects in this regard. It is a relevant question, because so many students remain outside of the Polish educational system.
- UNICEF acknowledged the importance of the above topics and noted that social inclusion and skill building activities are ongoing in Krakow. More information can be shared with partners for their reference. However, UNICEF further noted that it is also always important to standardize these initiatives and scale them up as much as possible. What the Education Sector would like to do is conduct the same initiatives in the same cities. This is in an effort to ensure that when student return to Ukraine they are not coming from two different backgrounds or systems. For the benefit of the children a standardized approach is necessary.
- Zustricz added that tensions between Polish and Ukrainian students had already been observed in schools. There is a lack of systemic preventive work on this topic. Zustricz wanted to ask what stage such prevented programs are at.
- UNICEF highlighted that a noted challenge is the limited interventions for skills development, mainly in regards to soft skills and socio-emotional skills. These types of skills allow children to be more open to themselves and to others who may or may not be different. Social cohesion activities such as trips, visits, and sports events are very important for children to spend time together. However, focusing on core development and improving social emotional skills is important as well. This is why

a goal for 2023 in discussion with the Ministry has been a greater focus on initiatives and activities that develop these skills in children.

- Internationaler Bund Polska noted that a discussion about discrimination had taken place in the Working Group on Women and Children. This discussion touched on parents and teachers and how to deal with these issues as necessary. Internationaler Bund shared three further questions. (1) In September there was a back to school campaign. However, a problem in Malopolskie region was a lack of information about available places in schools. As such, parents had to call schools themselves. As good practice, what can be done to promote schools outside of Krakow city which have a larger capacity to intake new students? While this problem is also multidisciplinary and has to do with, among others, transportation and accommodation, a network of information could prove useful. (2) What can be done to support children in online classes? Maybe the Ukrainian Ministry of Education could be helpful, as they may have information about children who are learning online. (3) A large number of children from the Roma community were mentioned during the UNICEF presentation. It would be interesting to hear solutions, as many were not attending school in Ukraine. This are also groups often move, so from an Ngo perspective support is difficult to provide.
- UNICEF responded that due to lack of time, there could be a further bilateral discussion on the above questions. There can also be further discussions under the coordination mechanism with NGOs on areas that will be of focus in 2023. For example, with the Roma community, it has been noted that interventions are necessary in this area. In regards to back to school and identifying available places, this is indeed a multisectoral discussion. Online hubs are needed, but in Ukrainian online schools there is not a curriculum, but rather a deposit of materials. Teachers are needed to guide the children. As such, there would need to be teachers in these hubs. UNICEF also noted that the Agency had recently hired an Education Specialist and that the capacity was growing. UNICEF has been following issues raised at the coordination meetings and also discussed directly with municipalities and NGOs. Everything that has been mentioned is not lost.
- Zustricz noted that the 500+ program could be used as a channel to reach children. Some children, mostly youth, who live in residential schools could be left in the street in the summer.
- UNHCR noted the need to organize a sperate meeting on education and that the above discussion should not end here. This has been discussed at earlier meetings, and now an opportunity has presented itself. UNHCR would be happy to participate.

AOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Foundation, along with partner the International Foundation for Human Values, shared their ongoing Peace of Mind project. An initial networking and introduction meeting is scheduled to take place on 8 December at 6 pm. The locations will be ul. Dietla 15. The Foundations would like to promote Ukrainian spaces and work on mental wellbeing and stress relief.
AOB	

ACTION POINTS SUMMARY				
No.	Action	Responsible	Deadline	Status (as of)
1.	Organize separate meeting on Education	Co-chairs' UNICEF	12.01.2021	Ongoing
2				