

Regional Cash Working Group (CWG) Ukraine Refugee Situation

[13 April 2022 - Meeting Minutes and Action Items](#)

Chair: UNHCR (Scott DiPretoro) & IFRC (Emma Delo)

Participants: CaLP (Georgios Frantzis), CRS (Jennifer Weatherall), (IOM (Francisco Astudillo), Mercy Corps (Alessia Volpe), NRC (Avril James), UNDP (Anca Stoica), UNICEF (Thomas Byrnes), UNHCR (Annika Sjoberg, Marian Schilperoord, Susanne Klink), UN Women (Ekram Elhuni, Ceren Gures), WFP (Giancarlo Cirri), WVI (Isidro Navarro)

Action Item Updates

- The Regional CWG TORs were shared with national-level CWGs for awareness and to solicit any specific requests for support from the regional CWG. Additionally, meetings are being set up with the Chairs of each CWG to discuss any issues or support needed in further detail.

Meeting Minutes

1) The minutes from the 6 April meeting were reviewed and endorsed.

2) Discussion on local capacity building and localization (IFRC & CRS)

The cash coordination caucuses advise that the national CWGs should seek to achieve the following:

- Ensure local organization attendance in meetings – target of 50% (can be cash and others with cross-cutting expertise)
- A co-chair role should be designated for a local actor
- Translation should be provided in all meetings if held in a non-local language

IFRC noted that the Regional CWG could promote and track this.

Regional CWG members, could support local capacity building by:

- Jointly mapping local participation/leadership of CWGs, their skills/knowledge gaps, and requests for support in this area.
- In the future based on CWG requests:
 - o Jointly offering training, potentially also including local authorities.
 - o Joint effort for sensitization of humanitarian principles e.g., for new staff and for third parties such as the private sector
 - o Funding and/or managing the translation into Ukrainian/local languages of guidance and tools

CRS noted that we haven't yet identified the best way of engaging with local actors in CWGs and other coordination fora, so we could map out how to address this localization gap.

There can be hesitancy by local partners to work with international partners, so we need find the right approach for this. Some ideas to support localization include: 1) the regional WG can collect and share best practices of working with local actors. 2) Map out engagement in the coordination fora and support CWGs to strengthen that. 3) Assess how local actors can be involved in the Social Protection space considering the longer term.

- CCD is in the process of hiring a regional localization and capacity strengthening lead to support the CCD NGOs to consider best approaches for how to engage with local actors.

UNICEF noted that the regional CWG needs to add value for the national CWGs. This could include regional mapping of FSPs, cross-sharing tools/guidance that have been developed in

each country so that practitioners in one country don't have to attend all the CWG in other countries.

CaLP is co-leading the Learning group under the Ukraine CWG to document best practices. CALP is also seeking to adapt core CVA trainings to the needs of this crisis and will come back to the group for inputs on how to roll this out.

3) Collaboration opportunities with Inclusion WG and social protection systems updates (UNHCR)

Under the Refugee Coordination Model, social protection is covered by the Regional Inclusion WG. This WG will meet every other Wednesday at 3pm.

UNHCR has done a mapping of refugee access to SP schemes in Europe prior to this crisis. While the legal framework is rather favourable, there are many de-facto barriers such as inconsistencies between national and local laws, as well as those without legal status or documentation. The presentation provided an overview of the barriers, some related to the Ukraine response and recommendations on how to overcome them. In principle, refugees from Ukraine do have the right to open a bank account. The Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) is in place, but each member state will define how the TPD will be applied under national law.

Some recommendations based on expected challenges include: Build government capacity to work with refugee populations, enhance response capacity of social protection systems (registration, funds and programmes available, information, individual counselling and support).

Opportunities for exchanges between the Cash WG and Inclusion WG on relevant topics will be continually assessed.

4) AOB

Mercy Corps noted that some donors in the US are pushing for the use of cryptocurrencies in the regional response. It was recommended to discuss the feasibility of cryptocurrencies as a delivery mechanism, including challenges encountered and lessons learned, things to have in place? IN the market assessment in Poland and Romania this doesn't look feasible. Offer to next meeting to present the market findings and to have a short discussion.

Members were advised to propose any agenda points for the next meeting, as well as if they wish to present on any specific topics.