

# Regional Cash Working Group (CWG) Ukraine Refugee Situation

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

**Chair:** UNHCR (Scott DiPretoro)

**Participants:** **CaLP** (Lynn Yoshikawa, Georgios Frantzis), **CRS** (Jennifer Weatherall), **IOM** (Francisco Astudillo), **Mercy Corps** (Alessia Volpe, Ingrid Betzler), **NRC** (Avril James), **OCHA** (Juliet Lang), **Relief International** (Sabah Fara) **UNDP** (Anca Stoica), **UNICEF** (Pamela Dale), **UNHCR** (Annika Sjoberg, Marian Schilperoord, Susanne Klink), **UNFPA** (Abandokht Sarkarati), **UN Women** (Ekram Elhuni, Ceren Gures), **WFP** (Dina Morad, Giancarlo Cirri), **WVI** (Amos Doornbos, Isidro Navarro)

### Action Items

- Development of a matrix to outline and prioritize potential initiatives related to supporting national CWGs or other regional CWG initiatives listed in our ToR. This can include deliverables, timeframes, resources needed and responsible/interested parties.

### Meeting Minutes

1) The [minutes from the 13 April meeting](#) were reviewed and endorsed.

2) [Feedback from the national CWGs on regional CWG support issues](#)

**UNHCR** provided an update on consultations that were held with the Chairs of each national CWG (Ukraine, Moldova, Romania, Slovakia and Poland) to discuss any issues or support needed from the regional CWG in further detail. Some key discussion points included: needs for local capacity building, level of local participation in CWG, alignment and coordination w social protection systems, development of resources and tools developed that can be shared regionally, what are the enablers and blockers to MPC, what they expect/need from a regional CWG

A few common themes amongst the CWGs were noted:

- **Data sharing agreements** – there is a need to establish MOU in order to obtain data from the government, templates are being developed at the country level
- **Development of guidance and tools** – There is a need to agree on a harmonized PDM methodology and indicators (UNHCR has provided a template) as well as joint market monitoring tools
- **Communications with affected populations**, Joint communications/program messaging need further development, especially considering movement of the displaced population between countries. A regional online cash assistance platform noting how to access assistance may be useful.
- **Complaints and feedback mechanisms** are non-unified and still in development. There are different FSPs providing assistance that may have their own technical support mechanisms in addition to humanitarian organization specific channels for the same multipurpose cash programs.
- **Deduplication** – There is a need for harmonized data points for deduplication (i.e. passport, tax ID #), for which guidance could be provided on a regional level.
  - **Biometrics** – It was noted that larger organizations can collect this information, but local NGOs may not be able to due to the legal risks and lack of legal resources to respond to any issues.
  - **Cross-border payments** – Cash actors may not necessarily have the capacity to conduct de-deduplication across border. This could potentially be addressed with a unified server and use of biometrics. Considering that we are in acute phase of crisis, it was noted that a balance needs to be obtained between efforts

to deduplicate and the need to deliver assistance rapidly. There is the issue of how best to ensure non-duplication across borders considering the different registration systems.

- **Role of local NGOs** – With potentially limited capacity or experience with cash-based responses, there is a question of how they can best be supported.
- **Translation of key documents** - UNHCR's PDM tool is being translated into Ukrainian and will be shared in each country. Other key documents of a regional nature may also require translation.
- **Training** on relevant CBI issues for local staff is also an issue that was raised. It is not necessarily available in local languages or there can be inconsistent terminology. National CWGs mentioned that support with a ToT, training for protection w/ cash linkages, and standards for local volunteers in enrolment centres would be useful. **CaLP** mentioned that they are seeking to collaborate with partners that need training support.
- **Taxation of humanitarian assistance** – previously this was an issue in Ukraine, leading to a legislative change. However, there is still resistance to providing a tax ID number as the displaced population may not be fully aware of their rights.
- **Transition to national social protection systems/long term plan** - there is a need to have a regional cash strategy, outlining a common approach, how to promote a transition to national social protection systems, including key considerations and best practices

The national CWG chairs each expressed their willingness to join the regional CWG to brief us further on these issues as well as provide an update on their activities. This can be scheduled for future meetings.

### 3) Tour de table on regional cash issues

**CaLP** noted that they started a Learning Group with the Ukraine CWG to consolidated different learnings from this and previous responses to develop key recommendations around several thematic areas (i.e., social protection linkages, interoperability, etc.) Outputs could briefing notes, videos, and other materials to better inform responding organizations.

### 4) AOB

UNICEF inquired about the possibility of moving to a bi-weekly meeting schedule. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.