



ROMA TASKFORCE

Meeting Details	
Date	29 July 2022. Next meeting will be on 12 August 2022
Time	10AM to 11AM
Chair	Olga Bitca, Protection Associate, UNHCR
Reporting	Olga Bitca, Protection Associate, UNHCR
Email	bitca@unhcr.org
Agenda	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Welcome2. Progress so far in meeting the needs of Roma refugees3. What remains to do and challenges4. Roma information access research, presentation Internews	
Information collection and relevant links	
Moldova operational data portal: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine/location/10784	
Participants	
German Embassy Helvetas Platform of the Roma Women ROMNI, Roma activist and Academic representative IsraAID Coalition Roma Voices NRC DRC IRC UNHCR OHCHR	



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Summary of discussions and agreements/ action points

Agenda	Discussion	Agreements/ Actions
Welcome notes	UNHCR co-chair welcomed the participants and presented the agenda of the meeting.	
Progress so far in meeting the needs of Roma refugees	Elena Sirbu , co-chair of the RTF informed partners that in the framework of collaboration with INTERSOS, she recommended the hiring of two Community Mediators, one for the mobile-team interventions and one for the Palanca Bus Station. INTERSOS agreed and the mediators were hired. Also, humanitarian aid was provided to Roma families in Ungheni who are privately accommodated and in a difficult situation to make payments on rent and services. Concerning the OXFAM project, it was reported that interviews are underway, including on the identification of needs and focus group discussions in RACs, and in community and private accommodations. She elaborated on the variation of the situation of Roma refugees depending on the subgroup they are belonging and the situation at the moment. Elena Sirbu noted that she is searching for more resources for Community Mediators, as they are a proven successful mechanism, especially the	Activity: Monitor the activities of the agencies involved in the Roma Taskforce Deadline: Next Roma Taskforce meeting



	<p>mediator hired by the Crisis Centre, Marin Alla. He has helped decrease tensions by mediating conflicts among refugees in general, among Roma refugees, with the administration of RACs or other official representatives and finally, with the host community. She further noted that future mediators must be very well trained in order to be helpful, and she thanked international organizations for the support provided for Roma refugees. Improvement in the conditions of accommodation at the RAC Testemiteanu 6 was noted, for example, in the last few days beds were provided and installed. She concluded that things concerning Roma refugees are moving, progressing.</p> <p>Ion Bucur, representative of the National Roma Centre, Community Mediator in Chisinau, expressed his concern of a possible protection case in Loganesti village, Hincesti rayon and asked for assistance in addressing it. He noted that distribution of humanitarian aid is realized via a CDS project especially in Ungheni, Vadul lui Voda and Chisinau locations of Roma refugees. He also raised the issue of disinformation of Roma refugees realized by certain persons which is raising tensions with the Roma refugees’ communities and is an obstacle in providing assistance.</p> <p>The INTERSOS representative reported that they had hired a psychologist who is working on the left bank of the river Dniestr and in the North of Moldova, as well as two mediators, one for the mobile-team and one at Palanca bus station.</p> <p>Visits and assistance was provided at Banana Park, Vatra, Loganesti village, where there are 24 Roma refugees, Telecentre, Chisinau – 200, Posta Veche, Chisinau – 30, Glodeni RAC – 50 persons, but on this day there were 72.</p>	
<p>What remains to do and challenges</p>	<p>Elena Sirbu, co-chair from the part of Roma voice coalition and activist from the part of the Platform of Roma Women ROMNI, noted the needs and challenges of the near future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to hire more well-trained mediators; • Baby powder milk, strollers, clothes and shoes for children, also adults, is needed; • In some areas, it is difficult to obtain humanitarian aid. While in the surroundings of Balti it’s possible, it is not so elsewhere because of the need for transportation; 	<p>Activity: Learn about the opportunities of education for Roma children; Finalization of the consultation of the Kobo tool for the</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The need of trainings for humanitarian volunteers, as discriminatory acts are still occurring;• The biggest challenge remains the education of Roma children. She noticed many 10-12 years-old illiterate children without studies, but also children who previously were enrolled in Ukraine schools and need to continue their studies since September on-line with the Ukrainian schools or in person in Moldovan school; <p>Ion Bucur, the National Roma Centre representative, noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At present, activities and academic education services are insufficient and need to be provided in RACs, such as Testemiteanu 6.• The costs for medical interventions, especially surgical, for refugees are high and not completely covered;• There is a need to cover bills for utilities; also, rents are high for privately accommodated refugees• It is challenging when entities misinform Roma refugees, making unrealistic promises. This causes Roma refugees distrustful• The mapping of Roma refugees is a challenge, but he is willing to contribute if needed• The coming winter is the biggest challenge, as a part of the Roma refugee community will be seeking accommodation and we need to be prepared. <p>The Helvetas representative mentioned the low enrollment rates in school of Roma children, as well as the barriers to enrolment, including the lack of desire to settle and remote schooling. A complex solution is necessary.</p> <p>The TF chair mentioned preparations for winterization on the part of UNHCR and partner organizations. She also mentioned a regional survey on education which attest to higher intentions to enroll in person tin schools. For Roma children, access to internet services and devices constitute another barrier. Sometimes, groups of Roma refugees might settle in localities with lower access to schools. Another barrier is the lack of temporary protection for refugees from Ukraine. At present, refugees are attending as audience</p>	<p>mapping of Roma refugees and bilateral discussions. Deadline: 12 August 2022</p>
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	<p>members without being evaluated and without receive a diploma or diploma equivalence. This is less attractive for parents and pupils. All these barriers might cause big delays. The network of local Roma Community Mediators can help address them.</p> <p>Ion Duminica, Roma activist and Academic representative, concluded that the problems of Roma refugees are intersectoral, including access to information, access to internet, education, medical services, housing, employment, and documentation. Discussion on RTF activities and projects concluded with agreement that dialogue with local Roma experts is necessary and helpful, and that the projects underway are necessary and complementary. Several participants noted that the RTF meetings were very informative and encouraged the sharing of presentations with RTF participants and others.</p>	
<p>Roma information access research, presentation Internews</p>	<p>Internews presented research on Roma information access which aims to understand their humanitarian needs and preferences, as well as identify barriers for newly arrived Roma refugees in Moldova. Also, to advocate for improved information and communication practices. Data will be gathered via key informant interviews with relief organizations, community media and focus groups discussions with cultural mediators, community leaders and trusted persons, as well as Roma community members.</p> <p>For contact purposes, Marianna Prysiashniuk - the Internews Humanitarian Liaison officer, + 380 97 082 28 24, + 373 78 00 18 81, mprysiashniuk@internews.org</p>	<p>Activity: Research on possibilities of Roma information access Deadline: Next Roma Taskforce meeting</p>