

**UKRAINE REFUGEE RESPONSE
REGIONAL CHILD PROTECTION SUB-WORKING GROUP MEETING MINUTES**

Time & location:	20 February 2023 15:00-16:00, online
Attendance:	EGN, Child Helpline International, SCI, ICRC, Lumos. CP Sub-cluster, UNICEF (co-lead), UNHCR (co-lead)
Agenda:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update on Child protection response and situation in Ukraine (highlight the issues that might be of relevance to CP response in the refugee settings) – by CP AoR Ukraine 2. Key issues of the response in refugee settings that require the discussion with CP AoR in Ukraine- by all the participants 3. Cross border programmatic coordination and information sharing between child protection actors working in refugee settings and those working in Ukraine – by UNHCR DIP 4. TDT. Discussion of the information sharing request from Ukraine PM
AGENDA POINT	DISCUSSION
1. Update on child protection response and situation in Ukraine (Child Protection AoR, Ukraine) – presentation attached	<p>→ Child protection issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The voluntary return of children without parental care remains concerning, both in Ukraine and host countries - Children in the EU, who were previously in Ukrainian institutions, are not integrated in child protection systems; some of them are also returning to Ukraine with their caregivers, which may not be in their best interest - Documents issues by Ukrainian authorities proving guardianship are often not recognized, resulting in family separation, among others - In Ukraine, unaccompanied and separated children and child-headed households do not receive sufficient support, mainly due to lack of child protection services <p>→ Coordination and funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a national child protection AoR. There is also a coordination structure at the sub-national level - There is a Strategic Advisory Group (SAG), comprised of UN agencies, national and international NGOs and the Case Management Working Group

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As of the end of 2022, there were 98 partners. The number of partners in 2023 stands at 80; depending on the availability of resources, the number of partners could further decline - Funding: In 2022, 69 percent of the 90 million USD requested was not received. Given the prevalence of child protection issues, increased financial support is critical <p>→ Main activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Case management - MHPSS services - Family tracing and reunification - Legal assistance - Community engagement and community-based child protection - Emergency cash for child protection outcomes - Awareness raising and information dissemination - Capacity building: there is a huge demand for training on case management and MHPSS
<p>2. Key issues of the response in refugee settings that require the discussion with CP AoR in Ukraine- by all the participants</p>	<p>Regarding the process of deinstitutionalization in Ukraine and CP Sub-cluster view on this, there was the research done by Better Care Network with 30 recommendations and key considerations, made during the sub-cluster meeting. UNICEF is making an effort to bring the government on board to ensure a family-based care for children. There are commitments from the President, Ministry of Social Policy and the support from the First Lady. No specific coordination of these efforts from any forums yet, UNICEF is leading the process, which is complicated given ongoing war in the country</p>
<p>3. Cross border programmatic coordination and information sharing between child protection actors working in refugee settings and those working in Ukraine. (Division of International Protection, Child Protection Unit, UNHCR) – presentation attached</p>	<p>→ In situations where families and children are moving across borders, it is important to establish a cross-border program. Some key priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sharing information on child protection issues/trends - Sharing information on relevant policy positions across borders - information sharing and coordination on specific movements e.g., evacuations from institutions - Identifying and harmonizing advocacy messages - Sharing technical expertise and tools

- Coordinating information sharing with populations across borders e.g., help pages
- Developing harmonized strategies and standards

→ Live Learn and Participate Program

- This program is a cross country, cross-regional, multi-partner, and multi-year program
- It was developed for a range of countries in East and Horn of African and Western Africa
- The aim of the program is to ensure the existence of coordinated and strategic interventions to address issues facing children on the move, including through coordination with national child protection systems
- Overall, the project has ensured the effective coordination of actors from various countries

→ Cross-border information sharing

- Since States carry the primary responsibility of protecting children in their territories, information should be shared based on procedures put in place by States. In case such procedures are absent, information sharing protocols need to be developed, in coordination with the concerned State
- Personal data should be treated confidentially and can only be shared with another country with the consent of the person concerned, or in case of children, their parent or legal guardian. If consent is not given and there is a risk of immediate harm, personal data can only be transferred if it is in the best interest of the child
- In general, the best interest of the child must be the primary consideration

Discussion

The participants wondered how the case management procedures were established in different countries and if there has been any link to case management task force of the kind. It was discussed that case management procedures exist in the European countries within the framework of respective national CP systems. Concern on inclusion of the children into the national CP procedures remain. Also the participants discussed the particular focus on any best practices that can be applied in the European context, and respective inter-agency initiatives. It was underlined as important to have the safe space to discuss the technical aspects of child protection, like regional workshop. The other thing – cross-border advocacy messages. Two most helpful things from Syria response. It was agreed to further look into the possibility of having joint messages.

<p>4. TDT. Discussion of the information sharing request from Ukraine PM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine requested, through Permanent Mission of Ukraine statistical information and data on unaccompanied and separated refugee children from Ukraine hosted across Europe. UNHCR and UNICEF have jointly responded to the request, referring to the fact that governments are the primary source of data and information on refugee children, and these children should first of all be registered. Participants requested to share the response publicly.- The next meeting will be held on 20 March 2023
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Drafted by UNHCR RBE
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