Regional Refugee Response for the Ukraine Situation

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

Palanca Local Coordination Meeting

Meeting Minutes – 20 September 2023

1. Meeting Details

Date	20 September 2023
Time	12:00 – 13:30
Chair	Volokh Karina, UNHCR Senior Field Assistant
Reporting	Roman Lipadat, ACTED
Email	volokh@unhcr.org; nicolae.derli@acted.org

2. Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Update on recent developments in Palanca Bus Station (PBS)
3. Activity updates from participants
4. AoB

3. Information collection and relevant links

Moldova operational data portal: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine/location/10784
Local Refugee Coordination operational data portal: https://data.unhcr.org/en/search?

4. Participants (Name, Position, Organization)

- Karina Volokh, UNHCR
- Catalina Sampaio, UNHCR
- Cristina Babin, INTERSOS
- Ilaria Guidoni, INTERSOS
- Diana Negru, BLUE DOT
- Stela Satova, UNFPA
- Roman Lipadat, ACTED
- Olga Costenco, IOM
- Igor Vozian, ACR
- Igor Calancea, IGSU
- Dmitri Surovtov, IsraAID
- Aliona Pashchenko, TTA (online)

5. Information collection and relevant links,

Agenda	Discussion	Agreements/Actions
Introduction	**UNHCR** shared the following points:	

Ms. Karina Volokh, UNHCR Senior Field Assistant, volokh@unhcr.org	• Between 10 August 2023 to 18 September 2023, UNHCR received 9 evecuations with the total of 121 people evacuated by the GLORIA organization. All people benefited from the various services offered and had coffee/tea and some snacks. After that, all left for Romania with IOM bus. • On 10 August 2023, UNHCR together with CDA visited 3 host families in the Crocmaz village and conducted a winterization survey and CDA provided consultation on TP. • On 15 August 2023, the Mobile Team visited Purcari village. UNHCR and its partner CDA offered legal assistance, TP information and registration for those who have not yet done so. The visit was attended by 18 people, including 5 men, 13 women and the social worker of Purcari village. Among the main concerns raised by the refugees are the types of sanctions applied in case of staying in Moldova for more than 90 days and without TP, and whether people who, in addition to Ukrainian citizenship, also have Moldovan citizenship have to register for TP. During the visit, UNHCR and CDA provided information on the TP and what kind of penalties they may face if they do not apply for it and after the visit, UNHCR and CDA registered 3 people for TP. • On 15 and 17 August 2023, UNHCR visited Moldovan refugee-hosting families in Stefan Voda district and conducted a winterization survey. • On 16 August 2023, UNHCR received a visit from the INGO Kindernothilfe, which has several projects in Moldova through its partners such as AAH. The purpose of the visit was to familiarize themselves with the bus hub and to find out what services are offered to refugees at PBS. • On 21 August 2023, UNHCR together with IGM, UNFP and IOM successfully solved a GBV case, and the beneficiary was transported to the CAP center to receive necessary assistance. • On 23 August 2023, the Local Coordination Meeting was held by UNHCR in Causeni. At the meeting were present: CDA, INTERSOS, DRC, CSC, Volunteer from NGO Viitorul, UNFPA, representants from the Municipality, a refugee woman. The meeting started with the presentation by UNHCR and then continued with updated from each present, TP updates, information about Service Advisor and answers to questions. • On 24 August 2023, a delegation from UNICEF including Maha Damaj visited PBS and Blue Dot offices.	

	• On 28 August 2023, UNHCR and IGSU received a visit from the Jewish community representatives to speak about the possibility to use the territory as a place for stop during the Hasidic pilgrimage. • On 30 August 2023, UNHCR donated a laptop to Ms. Valentina Cebanenko, an English teacher. • On 29 August 2023, UNHCR, with the support of the Palanca Municipality, conducted a Winterization assessment to a local kindergarten. • From 6 to 7 September 2023, UNHCR removed the 8x20 tent at BCP after the request received from the Border Police. • On 8 September 2023, the UNHCR's representative in Moldova, Francesca Bonelli, met with Minister of Internal Affairs Mr. Efros, the Mayor of Stefan Voda, and the Secretary of the Palanca Municipality at PBS. • On 12 and 13 September 2023, UNHCR, together with the IGSU, welcomed the Hasidim Jewish community at the bus station, redirected by the Border Police, who used the tents of the waiting area and the WASH facilities until the customs were freer. Last week, around 10.000 Hasidic Jewish community were received at the Palanca bus station. • On 13 September 2023, UNHCR together with UNICEF, UNFPA and Magenta Consulting visited the bus station and have done the GBV safe walk at the bus station and at the BCPs. • On 18 September 2023, UNHCR Field team together with UNHCR child protection and UNICEF spoke with Blue Dot and CDA representatives from Palanca about the situation at the PBS and on a few UASC child protection topics. • On 19 September 2023, the Mobile Team visited Popeasca RAC. UNHCR and its partners CDA and INTERSOS useful information, legal assistance, TP information and registration for those who have not yet done so and spoke about the enrollment of the children in Moldovan schools. The visit was attended by 46 people, including 6 men, 31 women and 9 children. Among the main concerns raised by the refugees are impossibility for Roma people to enroll their children in Popeasca school and the lack of a school bus that could take children from the centre to the Russian school in Stefan	

	Voda. During the visit, UNHCR and CDA provided information on the TP and the importance of enrolling the children to a school. • UNHCR had a discussion with all the partners about the recalibration of PBS: reduction of territory and containers. The recalibration will be also for transport routes. Acted will reach out to villages and centers to provide assistance where needed.	
Activity updates from participants	• **IGSU** reported as follows: – IGSU thanked partners for their successful work and patience during the recent movement of Hasidic Jewish community across Palanca BCP and reported that approximately 10,000 Hasidic people were managed properly. The government's enhanced support is needed to implement some strategies in PBS in the future, rather than relying solely on the actors present in the PBS. Some organizations suffered damage, and it was challenging to keep an eye on the hundreds and thousands of people present. – IGSU and UNHCR discussed the recalibration process of PBS to have more clarity about the containers to be removed and about the security measures. As for the personnel stationed in PBS, IGSU considers that it is not necessary to keep all the personnel and the staff should be relocated to more needed places. IGSU will monitor reduction in electricity expenses and other changes after the recalibration. • **TTA** asked UNHCR to provide more information on the removal of the tents from Palanca BCP. UNHCR explained that the tents were removed upon a request from the border police since the tents were not positioned well. • **ACTED** reported the following: – ACTED transported a total of 102 beneficiaries from PBS to RAC centers and Chisinau between 10 August 2023 to 19 September 2023. – The other activities are operating normally, but they are receiving more requests compared to the months of June and July. – Additionally, together with UNHCR, ACTED launched a new project called "Free Transportation through Moldova", which includes two routes three times a week	

on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The purpose is to cover as many RACs as possible and assist individuals in the northern and southern regions of the country who do not have frequent access to transportation or who are facing financial difficulties. Each request will be examined individually. The RAC managers and social workers are the primary points of contact. They inform UNHCR or ACTED and request information about how many individuals have appointments at the Consulate for legal services, IGM, or the hospital. If there is a RAC that is not directly on our route, the transportation can adjust the schedule to accommodate them in a timely manner without affecting other refugees with earlier appointments.

- **IsraAid** reported that there were no major updates. They reduced staff and activities but continue to work in the same shift. Since the last meeting, they transported a total of 44 children and 60 adults.
- **ACR** reported that there was no major update. They continue to provide food kits and travel kits to beneficiaries. On 21 September 2023, WFP will visit PBS to brief them about the future changes. The remaining tea and coffee will not be restocked until the end of the current supplies.
- **Blue Dot** reported that 264 individuals (153 children and 111 adults) received their services. Blue Dot reduced their daily presence in Palanca three months ago, now 2 staff are present at PBS.
- **UNFPA** reported that their work schedule remains the same, with one person at PBS and one at BCP. There have been no major changes since the last meeting. UNFPA continues to provide the same support and services.
- **IOM** reported that, since the last meeting until today (20 September 2023), they have assisted 205 individuals, including 106 females, 67 children, and 32 males. The medical team is present 7 days and provides assistance to everyone. On 24 September 2023, Gloria will conduct an evacuation, which will take place on Sunday, although it is still being discussed.
- **INTERSOS** reported the following:

	– They have initiated English classes in Causeni since 19 September 2023. English classes are also being held in Talmaza. – On Wednesdays, they are present for MHPSS at Stefan Voda Library. In Purcari, the presence may be discontinued as AVE Copii is already working there. To avoid duplications, INTERSOS will start in Olanesti Gymnasium to provide their services. UNFPA offer MHPSS and English lessons in Crocmaz to children on Fridays. – They also started MHPSS sessions with teenagers in Stefan Voda Lyceum after school hours. Regarding staff distribution, part of the staff will remain here, and the other part will be in Causeni due to the recalibration process.	

6. Details of the Next Meeting	
Date	18 October 2023
Time	12:00 – 13:00
Venue	Palanca Bus Station