



CASH WORKING GROUP MOLDOVA

Meeting Details	
Date	<i>6 October 2023 – Sector Consultation RRP 2024</i>
Time	<i>16:00 to 18:00</i>
Co-Chair	<i>Yigit Anil Gurer, CBI Officer, UNHCR</i>
Reporting	<i>Natalia Postaru, Associate Programme CBI Officer</i>
Email	<i>mdachcbi@unhcr.org</i>
Agenda	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opening remarks – Sector Leads 2. 2024 RRP – Regional Objectives and Steps, IAC Team 3. Overview of Existing Assessments 2023, Sector Leads / IM IA 4. Presentation of Sector Planning Figures (PiN), Sector Leads / IM IA 5. Joint Data analysis – identification of gaps and challenges, Group Activity 6. Debriefing of the two activities: Data analysis, Activities, and indicators – Representatives from the Groups 	
Information collection and relevant links	
<p>Operational Data Portal – Ukrainian Situation in Moldova</p> <p>Winter Evaluation Assessment conducted by ACTED in collaboration with INTERSOS, People in Need, World Vision, UNHCR, IFRC, Moldova Red Cross.</p> <p>UNHCR Regional Protection Monitoring and Profiling Dashboard</p> <p>REACH RACs Monthly Needs Monitoring</p>	
Participants:	
Vasile Cusca - Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MoLSP) Jana Costachi - Ministry of Internal Affairs (Mol) Oleg Barcari - Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MoLSP) Teodor Vicol - Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MoLSP) Ina Ursan - Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MoLSP) Vera Valuta - General Inspectorate for Migration, Mol Lilia Gautatuc - General Inspectorate for Migration, Mol Ceban Roma - Ministry of Internal Affairs (Mol) Michel Gerges - World Vision International (WWI) Viorica Bulat - World Vision International (WVI)	Alexandru Nicolaescu - Caritas Moldova Orfan Shahada - Action Against Hunger Dilnoza Niculescu - Caritas Moldova Valentina HAROVSKI - IFRC Hleb Salauyou - IFRC Jomari Borlongan - IFRC Davide Falcomata - HEKS EPER Daniela David-Cimpoies - UN Women Rei Doi - Peace Winds Diego Nardi - UNHCR



Eirini Aletra - Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Fadel Daoud - World Food Programme (WFP) Ibrahim Marte - International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Yigit Anil Gurer UNHCR Natalia Postaru UNHCR
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Summary of discussions and agreements/action points

Agenda	Discussion
<p>Open Remarks</p>	<p>The State Secretary of the Ministry of Social Protection (MoLSP), Mr. Vasile Cusca, extended a warm welcome to the CWG Partners during the consultation session. This session is part of a series of discussions happening this week, focusing on the proposal for the 2024 Refugee Response Plan (RRP).</p> <p>In this role representing the MoLSP, it was emphasized that there are several components and measures in place to support refugees. Gratitude was expressed to the various humanitarian actors, development partners, as well as national and international NGOs for their collaboration and efforts in supporting refugees and vulnerable populations in Moldova.</p> <p>It was highlighted that valuable support provided to vulnerable populations in Moldova during the year, including assistance during the winter period and support from UNICEF for social services. There's a desire to continue these types of programs in the future to ensure ongoing support for those in need.</p> <p>The primary goal of this meeting is to establish priorities for 2024, address the challenges faced, and encourage continued support to refugees and vulnerable Moldovan populations. The sector consultation for the Refugee Response Plan (RRP) for 2024 aims to agree on figures for people in need (PIN), identify gaps and challenges, and determine how the Cash Working Group (CWG) can respond effectively to these identified gaps and challenges through relevant activities. The collaboration between all stakeholders is crucial in achieving these objectives.</p>
<p>2024 RRP – Regional Objectives and Steps, IAC Team</p>	<p>The 2024 Refugee Response Plan (RRP) serves as a critical tool in coordinating and facilitating the response to refugee influxes within the broader framework of global humanitarian development architecture. In essence, it operates alongside the cluster and development systems, each having distinct objectives and scopes.</p> <p>Refugee System: This system is invoked when there is an influx of refugees requiring coordinated support. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is responsible for this coordination at the global level, as mandated by international refugee law. UNHCR annually reports to the General Assembly on the global refugee situation, states' compliance with legal frameworks, and strategies to manage refugee responses.</p>

Cluster System: This system is deployed in situations involving internally displaced people (IDPs), such as in Ukraine, or during natural disasters. It focuses on coordinating emergency responses within affected countries.

Development System: The UN Sustainable Development Group, led by the Resident Coordinator, oversees the development system. This system aligns with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and supports governments in achieving sustainable development goals.

In Moldova, these two systems, refugee and development, coexist and collaborate closely in responding to refugee influxes. The Refugee Response Plan (RRP) serves as a key instrument for this coordination. It is an inter-agency tool designed to:

- ✓ Identify the needs of refugees.
- ✓ Guide actors, including UN agencies, INGOs, local civil society, and faith-based organizations, in providing support for refugees and ensuring their rights are respected.
- ✓ Cover a wide range of responses, from immediate humanitarian assistance to medium-term efforts focused on resilience and solutions.
- ✓ Not only support refugees but also host communities.

In the 2024 RRP, the regional objectives include ensuring refugees' access to legal status, protection, and rights; providing targeted support for those with specific needs; enhancing refugees' socio-economic inclusion; and reinforcing social cohesion between refugee and host communities.

Project submission under the RRP is governed by specific timelines, and organizations eligible to submit projects must be formally registered in Moldova, adhere to international humanitarian standards, demonstrate operational capacity, and actively participate in coordination forums.

Project Submission

- 08 October - Activity Info will be opened for submission of projects by Partners.
- 15 October - Deadline for Partners to share RRP Submission through Activity Info with the Inter-Agency Coordination Team. (extended to 18th of October reported on 12/10/2023).
- 20 October - Submission of ballpark figures to UNHCR Regional Office (Planning Figures, Targets and Funding Requirements).
- November - Detailed planning and RRP Narrative drafting. De-duplication and sectoral adjustments of activities.

It's crucial that project submissions include information, such as gender and age disaggregated targets, the geographic areas of implementation, funding requirements per activity, and the identification of implementing partners to prevent duplication of efforts. The RRP plays a pivotal role in facilitating a well-coordinated, comprehensive response to refugee situations, ensuring that refugees receive the necessary support while also benefiting host communities.

<p>Overview of Existing Assessments 2023, Sector Leads / IM IA</p>	<p>The presentation during the meeting shed on the significant achievements of the Cash Working Group (CWG), primarily focusing on multi-purpose cash assistance for both refugees and host communities. Here are the key highlights:</p> <p><u>Multi-purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A total of 374,426 payments rendered to refugees for basic needs (note that this figure does not correspond to unique individuals). - A total of 98,566 payments rendered to host communities for basic needs for different partners (this doesn't correspond to unique individuals). <p><u>Multi-purpose Voucher Assistance:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 52,344 individuals from both refugees and host communities (Ref: 37,222; HC: 15,122) were support with multi-purpose vouchers. This figure does not include sector-specific vouchers for purposes like hygiene kits to response to WASH needs and livelihoods. <p>There are 12 partners involved for the MPCA for refugees where 9 partners for host communities.</p> <p>The CWG has significantly improved data collection and assessments throughout the year, which enables the calculation of People in Need (PiN).</p> <p>Key assessments contributing to CWG's decision-making process include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UNHCR Socio-Economic Profiling Exercise: This exercise, with the support of CWG, provides valuable insights into the socio-economic conditions of refugees. 2. UNHCR PDM Reports: These reports, resulting from seven rounds of Post Distribution Monitoring, underscore the appropriateness and effectiveness of MPCA in Moldova. 3. Winter Evaluation Assessment: Conducted collaboratively by ACTED, INTERSOS, People in Need, World Vision, UNHCR, IFRC, and Caritas Moldova. This assessment helps in understanding the impact of winter conditions on refugees and host communities. 4. Market Assessment: Conducted by UNHCR, this assessment confirms the availability of essential items in the market for both refugees and host communities. 5. Rental Market Assessment: Conducted by REACH to understand the rental market conditions. 6. MSNA (Multi-Sector Needs Assessment): Data collection for MSNA is complete, and assessment analysis is ongoing. <p>Relevant findings for <u>Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM)/Market Assessment/Socio-economic profiling:</u></p>
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Market Assessment has confirmed the availability of essential items in the market for both refugees and the host community. Food items are readily accessible, with an impressive 95% availability rate, while non-food items maintain a robust presence at 82%. The supply chain is functioning efficiently, with most sellers confident in maintaining adequate product stock. The accessibility of the marketplaces for refugees and host communities: 74% of the people are seeing that they have access to market less than one kilometer away from the residential places. The accessibility of the marketplaces for refugees and host communities: 74% of the people are seeing that they have access to market less than one kilometer away from the residential places.

Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM). UNHCR conducted 7 rounds of PDM. The findings underscore the appropriateness of MPCA in Moldova. The findings show that 96% of the interviewed refugee population prefers cash assistance, as it enables them to meet their essential needs. The remaining 4% opt for a combination of cash and in-kind assistance. This strong preference for cash assistance highlights its effectiveness in addressing the needs of the affected population.

The needs for the refugees are still high according to the PDM exercise:

- Only 9% of the total population are able to cover more than half of the basic needs.
- The rest, 91% has the availability to cover half or less than half of their basic needs.

Since the needs are really high and the refugees are not able to cover all their basic needs, they obliged to resort some negative livelihood coping strategies. The most commonly used negative copying strategies are using savings to meet the year basic needs (60% of the HH); reducing expenditure on hygiene items, water, baby items in order to meet household food needs (43%); reducing expenses on health (including drugs) and education to meet household needs (40%), etc.

UNHCR rapid socio-economic profiling:

To analyze socio-economic vulnerability levels among the refugee population, an association analysis was conducted by using key variables, including the Food Consumption Score, Negative Coping Strategies, and Economic Capacity to Meet Essential Needs.

The initial findings of this association analysis reveal that household demographics (*families with 4+ members*), heating sources, accommodation types, residential areas (urban vs rural), and specific needs associated with specific profiles (older people, people with disabilities and single parents) has a significant correlation with the level of socio-economic vulnerabilities among refugee population. Based on these indicators, it is estimated that approximately 70% of the total refugee population requires support to cover their basic needs, with approximately 15% classified as extremely vulnerable due to multiple layers of vulnerabilities within their households.

<p>Presentation of Sector Planning Figures (PiN), Sector Leads / IM IA</p>	<p>These findings are consistent with observations from partners in the field, and it is worth noting that they cover characteristics of certain groups at higher risk of marginalization, such as Roma households, who have an average household size of 5.6 individuals according to available data, as well as single female households.</p> <p>For 2024, the planning figure includes 90,000 refugees in Moldova and 55,000 individuals in host communities. Approximately 63,000 refugees are estimated to be in need of support to cover their basic needs based on vulnerability assessments.</p> <p>RRP is primary focus on refugee, for Moldova we are consider the host community as well, and the PiN figures for 2024 is 55,000 individuals. The host community figures are calculated based on the population who are affected by crisis, residing in the refugee concentrated locations.</p>
<p>CWG Objectives 2024</p>	<p>The general objective of the CWG is to effectively coordinate the delivery of cash assistance from multiple actors across the response to maximize resources, avoid duplications, address unmet needs, increase effectiveness, and enable programmatic coherence.</p> <p><u>Specific objectives:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Targeted refugees and host communities have continued and equitable support to meet their basic needs. 2. Ensure the overall cash response is coherent, avoids duplication, and finds opportunities to increase effectiveness, coordinating with sectors and protection to guarantee coherence and referrals. 3. Promote use of streamlined mechanisms, standards, and tools across partners for harmonized, qualitative and accountable programming. 4. Promote streamlined efforts and early alignment with Government’s social protection schemes across the cash response. 5. Review requirement of and undertake capacity building activities for CWG members and local actors. <p>Ministry of Social Protection (MoLSP) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) reiterate some crucial points and guide on planning for the upcoming period:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Needs-Based Cash Assistance: MoLSP and MIA strongly emphasized the importance of providing cash assistance based on the actual needs of the most vulnerable groups, to focus on individuals who intend to legalize their status in Moldova. This support should be designed to assist newcomers for a short-term period, allowing them the necessary time to apply for and receive temporary protection or other forms of status in the country. 2. Transfer Value in Temporary Accommodation: A revision of the transfer value for individuals residing in RAC might be required considered that some of their basic needs are covered. 3. Promoting Refugee Integration: We encourage efforts to motivate the refugee population to integrate in host community. This integration should extend to the labor market and access to education.

	<p>4. Inclusion of Vulnerable Moldovan Population: It is vital to include vulnerable Moldovan population in partners' plans. By doing so, we can address broader humanitarian needs and reinforce our commitment to supporting all vulnerable groups within our society.</p> <p>These points underscore our collective responsibility to ensure that our actions are aligned with the principles of need, integration, and inclusivity.</p>
<p>Activity Identification of solutions – Sector activities and indicators Group Activity</p>	<p>The group discussions highlight key insights regarding gaps, challenges, activities, and indicators related to sector activities and assistance for refugees and host communities:</p> <p>Gaps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of Programs for Vulnerable Moldovan Population: There is a gap in programs specifically designed to assist vulnerable Moldovan population. 2. Transnistria (Left River Part): Host families in this region lack adequate assistance programmes. 3. Government System Capacity: There is a deficiency in the capacity of government systems to handle refugee and host community support effectively. 4. Knowledge Gap on Temporary Protection: Some individuals lack knowledge about the Temporary Protection procedure or may lack the required documentation. 5. Employment Motivation and Knowledge: There is a lack of motivation and knowledge among refugees regarding employment opportunities. <p>Challenges:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social Cohesion: Considering the limitations on the coverage of social assistance schemes for Moldovans vs more inclusive programmes by humanitarian actors for refugees. 2. Eligibility Criteria: More targeted approach to be put in place after one and half year of inclusive programme implementation. 3. Review of Transfer Values: Regular reviews of transfer values for cash assistance and vouchers are necessary. 4. Coordination and Harmonization: Ensuring coordination and harmonization of assistance systems, including the establishment of a common database for refugees and host communities assisted by the cash partners. 5. Cash Assistance Conditions: Linkages of cash with legal status in the country

Activities:

1. **Explore Criteria for Better Retargeting:** Investigate and develop criteria to enhance the targeting of assistance.
2. **Strengthen Government Capacity:** Enhance the capacity of government systems to effective response to person in need of support.
3. **Review Transfer Values:** Regularly review transfer values, frequencies, and eligibility criteria.
4. **Government Mechanisms Alignment:** Evaluate and align cash-based assistance with existing government mechanisms.
5. **Raising Awareness in Transnistria:** Conduct awareness campaigns to inform individuals in Transnistria about available support opportunities.
6. **Interoperable IT System:** Explore ways to create an interoperable IT system that facilitates assistance delivery.

Indicators:

1. **Number of Individuals Receiving Targeted Cash Assistance:** Measure the effectiveness of targeted cash assistance for refugees and host communities.
2. **Number of Individuals Receiving Targeted Vouchers:** Assess the impact of targeted voucher programmess for refugees and host communities.
3. **Number of Individuals Receiving Winter Assistance:** Monitor the provision of winter assistance to those in need.
4. **Number of Individuals Transitioned to Strengthened Government Assistance Schemes:** Track the transition of individuals to government assistance programmes.
5. **Number of Capacity Building Activities for Cash Assurance:** Measure efforts to enhance the capacity of cash assurance programmes.
6. **Number of Monitoring Activities for Transfer Value, Frequency, Eligibility Criteria:** Regularly review and adjust transfer values, frequencies, and eligibility criteria.
7. **Number of Joint Awareness Activities for Temporary Protection:** Measure the impact of joint awareness campaigns aimed at informing refugees about their rights and services.

These insights and proposed actions are essential for the effective implementation of cash-based interventions and assistance for refugees and host communities, ensuring that their needs are met, and their vulnerabilities are addressed.