

Community-Based Protection

March 2024

Social cohesion: UNHCR promotes dialogue and interaction between **refugees and their host communities**. It also supports local communities as part of the overall refugee response.

Community participation: UNHCR is working to ensure **meaningful participation** of the people we serve in local and national decision-making processes.

Inclusion: UNHCR aims to ensure that refugees are included in the activities and services available to them, recognizing their rights and responsibilities as refugees in Moldova.

POPULATION STATISTICS

As of March 2024, **118,754** refugees from Ukraine have remained in the Republic of Moldova.

CBP KEY FIGURES

- **Ten Community Service Centers were launched across Moldova.** The centers offer refugees, local residents, and community activists valuable services, training opportunities, and a community-owned space to promote refugee engagement in community life.
- More than **30,000 individuals accessed services** at Community Services Centres, including on child protection, mental health and psychosocial support, GBV prevention and response, cash support, vocational trainings, activities targeting youth and older persons, and community events.
- In 2023, UNHCR partnered with the Charity Centre for Refugees (CCR) to implement **32 Community Support Initiatives (CSIs)**. These initiatives aimed to foster inclusion, social cohesion, and boost community participation, benefiting over 90,000 people in Moldova directly and indirectly.
- **Peaceful Coexistence Projects:** two PCPs were supported by UNHCR in close collaboration with local communities and local authorities, establishing a children's sports ground in Otaci and providing **60** social workers in Donduseni, Ungheni and Soroca with tablets to support their work.
- **4** Hackathons, **1** Community Forum involving **35** participants, and **1** event dedicated to International Roma Day were some of the community events organized.
- **261 refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless persons participated in Focus Group Discussions** conducted during the 2023 Participatory Assessment, including **33** displaced persons residing in the Transnistrian region.

HIGHLIGHTS

2023 Participatory Assessment

The Participatory Assessment conducted in October 2023 aimed to gain deeper insights of the protection risks and levels of integration of refugees, asylum-seekers, and stateless persons in Moldova.

Community Service Centers

Community service centers were established as safe spaces for people of diverse backgrounds, including members of the local community, to engage in social and recreational activities.

Community Forum

The launch of the Community Forum in November 2023 marked a significant milestone in community engagement and support to grass-root organizations.

Partnership with a local Roma led-organization

UNHCR partnered with the NGO Tarna Rom to provide literacy classes to Roma children and adults, and facilitate labor inclusion for Roma refugees.



RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER IN DONDUSENI

Children and young people from both the refugee and local community regularly meet to play board games at the Community Service Center in Donduseni.

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OPERATIONAL RESPONSE

- **Integration and inclusion:** The Community Forum offered open discussions, workshops, and networking opportunities, empowering active participants from both the refugee and host communities. The Forum aims to create a network of community activists that will be instrumental in building a conducive protection environment.

- **Supporting diverse communities:** Recognizing the importance of cultural sensitivity, around 35 Roma mediators were equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to inform Roma refugees about Temporary Protection and how to report SEA.

A referral system between local NGOs assisted 13 LGBTQI+ refugees received assistance with non-food and core-relief items, and employment counselling. Chisinau's Community Centre 151, run by UNHCR's partner Laolalta, is a safe space for LGBTQI+ people. The centre hosts tailored events like Safe Love Day and Coming Out Days. Additionally, free HIV testing and exhibitions showcasing LGBTQI+ artists are available.

- **UNHCR uses a twin-track approach to disabilities:** making all services accessible and offering targeted programs for refugees with specific needs. Since 2022, UNHCR implemented 10 small projects to foster cohesion and well-being of refugees with disabilities. In December 2023, UNHCR and MLSP co-hosted a dialogue with government officials and humanitarian actors, including Organizations of Persons with Disabilities, on how to improve the inclusion of refugee with disabilities in the refugee response.

- **Community empowerment and self-reliance:** Various aspects of empowerment, from education and capacity-building to community engagement, are being addressed through initiatives such as CSIs, Hackathons, literacy classes for ethnic Roma, among others.

- **Increasing awareness and promote social cohesion:** UNHCR and UNDP launched a joint initiative to raise awareness and promote social cohesion-sensitive activities within the Refugee Response Plan. UNHCR monitors social cohesion through Laolalta's social media listening, and regular focus group discussions.

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

- UNHCR partners engaged in community-based protection activities include: Charity Center for Refugees, National Congress of Ukrainians in Moldova, Laolata and Tarna Rom.
- **External engagement:** UNHCR signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Culture to foster inclusion and cultural diversity for the benefit of refugees and Moldovans alike. Also UNHCR signed a memorandum with the Municipality of Ungheni within the framework of the Cities of Solidarity initiative with the purpose of ensuring protection and meeting the basic needs of refugees, and finding durable solutions for forcibly displaced and stateless persons, alongside support to members of host communities.
- **Working with the private sector:** UNHCR, OneSight Essilor Luxottica Foundation and Low Vision Centre opened free, temporary eye clinics in Chisinau and Ungheni.



LITERACY CLASSES FOR ROMA CHILDREN

UNHCR partner, Tarna Rom, provides literacy classes to more than 190 Roma children aged 5 to 18 years old.

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REFUGEE COORDINATION FORUM

UNHCR is largely supporting the functioning of the Roma Task Force under the leadership of a local Roma-led NGO and INTERSOS, both UNHCR partners. The task force is instrumental in finding solutions, mobilizing resources and advocating for the right of ethnic Roma refugees. They produced the Roma [mapping](#), a yearly exercise.