



Regional Refugee Response
for the Ukraine Situation



Basic Needs Working Group Meeting – 26th August 2024

Meeting Details

Date	11.11.2024
Time	15:00 pm
Lead and Co-lead	Andrea Cuisana, UNHCR – Almothana Hasan, ACTED
Reporting	Natalia Stelea
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Agenda

1. RACs update (3 min)
2. RRP project submission update (3 min)
3. EVRF application process (5 min)
4. Presentation on the findings on the Housing Ecosystem assessment – IOM (15 min)
5. Presentation of the housing program assessment - REACH (15 min)
6. Food Security and WASH Sub-Working Groups (5 min)
7. Update from partners (15min)
8. AoB

Information collection and relevant links

Participants



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<i>Andrea Cuisana, UNHCR</i>	<i>Chelsey Carr, CWS</i>	<i>Dmitro, PIN</i>
<i>Almothana Hasan, Acted</i>	<i>Fadel Daal, WFP</i>	<i>Gabriela Georgial, CRS</i>
<i>Iva Vavic, UNHCR</i>	<i>Tarra Mccoy, IMPACT-REACH</i>	<i>Corina Andronic, UNICEF</i>
<i>Rotaru Mihai, MLSP</i>	<i>Dragan Maria, IOM</i>	<i>Mihaila Alina, IGM</i>
<i>Emmanuel Otika, UNHCR</i>	<i>Babanuta Sergiu, MRCS</i>	<i>Roman Ceban, CCR</i>
<i>Athina Nalmpalti, ACTED</i>	<i>Cires Svetlana, CRS</i>	<i>Vlada Medvedova, INGO</i>
<i>Gantatuc Lilia, MAI</i>	<i>Danielle Perdetti, HelpAge</i>	<i>Sean Sager, UNHCR</i>
<i>Borodac Nicolae, MAI</i>	<i>Dragalin Catarina, Intersos</i>	<i>Lucie Minov, WeWorld</i>

Summary of discussions and agreements/ action points

Agenda	Discussion	Agreements/ Actions
<p>1. RACs Update</p>	<p>The Chairperson of the BNWG welcomed the participants and thanked them for attending both online and in person. The meeting began with introductions from all participants. The BNWG briefly presented the agenda and proceeded with the meeting.</p> <p>Active RACs Overview - 27 active RACs, one center, UID 1092 in a process of closure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently accommodated 1,370 individuals, including: • 112 PwD. • 507 children aged 2–18 years old. • 51 children under 3 years old. • Elderly individuals above 60 years. <p>Group F consolidation is completed. Since the consolidation started, 372 households (886 individuals) have relocated through supported options such as: moving to other RACs, rental assistance, private accommodation with relatives/friends.</p>	<p>Relocation statistics 2023-2024 follow the dashboard link: Microsoft Power BI</p> <p>Details regarding RACs demographics and needs follow dashboard link: Microsoft Power BI</p>
<p>2. RRP project submission update</p>	<p>The 2025-2026 RRP projects under the Social Protection WG and Economic Inclusion WG were reviewed jointly with UNDP. Initial idea was to merge all groups into one, however it was decided that</p>	



<p>3. EVRF application process</p>	<p>economic inclusion will remain separate, WASH and Food Security SWG will merge into one group on social protection.</p> <p>Approximately 80% of the submitted projects have been approved, without significant changes. Minor issues were noted, such as projects being submitted under incorrect groups or indicators. The coordination team will reach out to partners to correct these submissions. Some major agencies, like WFP, have not submitted projects, possibly due to misalignment of internal planning processes with RRP timelines.</p> <p>Partners who haven't submitted are urged to do so and reach out for assistance if needed. Corrections and submissions need to be completed by the end of the month before the information becomes public and accessible to donors.</p> <p>Many submissions focus on community-based protection activities. Themes identified in the submissions will shape next year's priorities, emphasizing areas like NFI distribution due to increased vulnerabilities.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>#Partners: 46</td> <td>Indicators: 19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Target</td> <td>Budget</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025 - 251,557</td> <td>2025 - 125,805,219</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2026 - 323, 563</td> <td>2026 – 38,563,848</td> </tr> </table> <p>The new social protection working group will launch in January 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BNWG will transition into Technical WG meeting on an ad hoc basis for specific needs. • Terms of Reference for the new structure will be finalized by year-end. <p>The Energy Vulnerability Fund (EVRF), a government initiative aimed at helping households in need manage their energy costs more effectively. This year, instead of direct payments toward utility bills, assistance will be provided in cash. This change gives families flexibility, allowing them to allocate the funds according to their specific needs.</p> <p>The deadline to register online at compensatii.gov.md is 28th November. Eligible criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants must have resided in Moldova for at least 8 months within the past year. • All household members listed in the application must meet this residency requirement. 	#Partners: 46	Indicators: 19	Target	Budget	2025 - 251,557	2025 - 125,805,219	2026 - 323, 563	2026 – 38,563,848	
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<p>4. Presentation on the findings on the Housing Ecosystem assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support is available through social workers, dedicated call centers, and mobile teams for those who need assistance with the platform. • After the registration period closes, the government will process the applications. • The compensation amounts will be announced in early December. <p>HEA was conducted by IOM Moldova in collaboration with Habitat for Humanity, focuses on the economic and demographic context, housing inequalities, affordability, the impact of the existing housing programmes, and lessons from international models.</p> <p>Key findings of the assessment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Moldova has a low stock of public housing, insufficient. 2. Majority of housing units lack proper connections to sewage and water systems. 3. Multi-unit buildings suffer from ineffective management, leading to deteriorated living conditions. 4. The rental housing market is insecure, unregulated rental housing market. 5. Low affordability. 6. Considerable vacant stock. 7. Increasing housing prices. <p>Programme, Institutional, and Regulatory Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very limited existing social housing programme- implemented by the Ministry of Infrastructure with no long-term strategy. • Insufficient social welfare support – managed by MLSP lack of housing benefits. • Housing law severely limits social housing eligibility. • Lack of tenancy regulation. • Lack of exit strategies for refugees in housing support programmes. • Lack of capacity and knowledge of municipalities for implementing and managing housing programmes. • No effective organization of housing management. • No long-term, sustainable funding plan. • Lack of housing strategy. 	
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	<p>Recommendations of the HEA -potential establishment of institutions and programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central housing institution – National Housing Agency (NHA). • Long-term revolving fund – National Housing Fund (NHF). • Local social housing agencies (LSHAs) in various forms to manage programmes. • Public housing programmes – units built or bought by LSHAs with NHF funding. • Social rental agency programmes (SRAs) – using private rental stock. • Limited equity homeownership programme – stock remains in the affordable sector long-term. • Pilot project with Chisinau Municipality. <p><u>Key stakeholders and possible engagement areas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ New-build affordable housing - Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development ➤ Emergency housing programmes - Ministry of Labour and Social Protection ➤ Existing housing stock retrofitting - Ministry of Energy ➤ Student & research housing - Ministry of Education and Research ➤ Tenants support programmes - Local NGOs ➤ Affordable housing pilot projects - various Moldovan Municipalities <p>Activities completed over the past two years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions with the Ministry of Infrastructure focused on findings regarding the housing ecosystem, reviewing both existing social housing programs and exploring potential new initiatives. • Continue discussions with the MLSP and Chisinau Municipality to strengthen municipal housing initiatives. • Developing pilot housing projects for large urban areas in Moldova leveraging successful experiences from completed projects in Ukraine. • Engagement with Local Authorities: consulted on policy initiatives to enhance local housing strategies in Ungheni. To discuss with the mayor of Cahul potential collaboration on an affordable housing pilot in partnership with IOM. 	
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<p>4. Presentation of the housing program assessment – REACH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To discuss with the Ministry of Energy about planning projects focused on improving energy efficiency in existing housing stock with emphasise on environmentally sustainable retrofitting methods, and <p>Ministry of Education and Research to explore affordable housing development for students and researchers, aiming to foster increased collaboration between academic institutions and the government.</p> <p>The next steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share the housing roadmap draft with stakeholders for feedback. Conduct bilateral meetings to refine components and milestones. Develop implementation strategies and cost estimates with government counterparts. Create advocacy plans to promote the roadmap to the government and donors. <p>The full HEA report will be shared once published.</p> <p>A quantitative housing assessment was conducted in collaboration with UNHCR and CRS in five regions: Donușeni, Soroca, Căușeni, Chișinău, and Cahul. The selected households were part of the cash for host run by CRS. 98 surveys were conducted between August 13–23, 2024, Questions explored costs, living situations, and tenants' experiences, the physical conditions of housing units were assessed.</p> <p>Key Findings of the living & hosting situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average of 3 individuals per unit. 84% of tenants have lived in the unit for over a year. 89% of shared units hosted both refugee and host families. 73% of tenants intended to stay for an undetermined/open-ended period. 92% of tenants had no formal rental agreement with hosts. 73% reported not paying rent, while 57% paid for utilities (median cost: 600 MDL). 	
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<p>6. Food Security and WASH Sub-Working Groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 89% of tenants were satisfied or very satisfied with current conditions. • 64% of units received no repairs in the past year. • Repairs were the top housing support need, followed by accessibility modifications and essential utilities. • Absence of agreements affects tenants' security of tenure. <p>A fact sheet summarizing findings will be published soon.</p> <p>Child and Pet Accessibility: 67% of units accepted minors, 51% allowed pets.</p> <p>Sanitation and Water Access: 51% had clean, running water within the unit.</p> <p>Accessibility for Low Mobility Individuals: Only 25% of units were both internally and externally accessible, key barriers included narrow doorways, lack of ramps, and multi-story units without lifts.</p> <p>Living Arrangements: most shared units hosted both refugee and host families.</p> <p>WFP - food provision in 25 RACs for 1,551 beneficiaries residing in centers.</p> <p>Assistance at Border Crossing Points: Palanca and Otach border crossing points, implemented with ACF. In October, 263 refugees received assistance, 73 snacks and 190 hot meals were provided.</p> <p>The Food Security WG has seen a decrease in active partners, making coordination challenging. Several partners have presented food provision activities for 2024-2025.</p> <p>WASH</p> <p>Services in Palanca and Otach, are being provided, but not as originally agreed with partners. There are fewer partners operating in the WASH sector in this area.</p> <p>Distribution of hygiene products planned distribution of hygiene products for common spaces (e.g., bathrooms, corridors) in RACs will occur in the coming months. These are not individual hygiene kits but are intended for shared spaces, accompanied by relevant equipment.</p>	
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	<p>ACTED</p> <p>1. NFI distribution in RACs of family hygiene kits. In October, 606 kits were distributed, benefiting 1,296 individuals across 25 RACs. The next distribution is scheduled from November 18th to 22nd, continuing the commitment to meet the hygienic needs of RAC beneficiaries.</p> <p>2. Winterization works are commencing this week in selected RACs to prepare for colder temperatures. The works include insulating facilities, sealing windows and doors, and enhancing heating systems to ensure the comfort and safety of residents during the winter months.</p> <p>3. Electric appliances distribution in October, the second round of electric appliance distribution was completed to 10 RACs based on prioritized needs identified by assessments.</p> <p>4. Infrastructure works in childcare facilities, upgrades to sanitation facilities are nearing completion, with finalization expected next week.</p> <p>RAC 12: Decommission works are finished, pending technical inspection and completion of the childcare facility.</p> <p>5. Repairs and maintenance, continuous small repairs and maintenance works are being conducted in RACs.</p>	
	<p>Next meeting: 9th December</p>	