Regional Refugee Response for the Ukraine Situation

Inter-Agency Refugee Education Working Group (IREWG)

Meeting Details	
Date	24th of July 2025
Time	1:00-2:30pm
Chair	Chair: Dr. Ivan Duminica, Head of the Policy Service for Interethnic Relations, Ministry of Education and Research (MER) Co- chairs: Loujine Khoury, Education Specialist, UNICEF & Katie Lampe, Child Protection Officer, UNHCR.
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Agenda

Agenda point	Time	Focal Point
1. MER updates regarding: • Updates on education monitoring mechanism for children with different legal statuses learning in Moldova. • Updates from MER's field visits. • Updates on the recent communication received from Ukraine MoES regarding the simplified Educational Program for Ukrainian children abroad. • Update on the Roadmap Donors' Bilateral Meetings • Updates on the university admissions for refugee students	13:00 – 13:40	MER
2. PiN Presentation on the main findings of the evaluation conducted for the UNICEF Edutech Labs.	13:40 – 13:55	PiN & UNICEF
3. Presentation on the outcomes of the awareness-raising campaign about the inclusion of young people with disabilities and access to higher education.	13:55 – 14:10	IOM

4. AoB • **(Back to School Campaign, Planned summer activities, Preparatory program, AEP consultancy, Romanian language consultancy and RRP 2026)**	14:10 - 14:30	NCUM, UNICEF & UNHCR

Information collection and relevant links

Activity Info Platform: https://www.activityinfo.org

Participants

- Dr. Ivan Duminica - MER
- Katie Lampe - UNHCR
- Loujine Khoury – UNICEF
- Christos Martinis – Education Officer deployed at MER
- Carolina Sclifos – UNHCR
- Sean Sager – UNHCR
- Cosmina Nazaru – MER
- Diana Alexei – Chisinau Municipality
- Mariana Stratulat – JICA
- Olesea Cazacu – NCUM
- Nina Cusnir – Tarna Rom
- Dmitri Surovtov – People in Need
- Evelina Mocanu – People in Need
- Alesya Kovalchuk – Female Support Force
- Yuliia Zenchenko – Female Support Force
- Iurie Tabuncic – U.S. Embassy
- Cristina Tîmbur – C.E. PRO DIDACTICA
- Corneliu TARUS – IOM
- Olga Morozan – Pestalozzi Children's Foundation
- Alexandrina Trofin – Amici dei Bambini
- Djavid Paknehad – CCR
- Cristina Triboi – TdH
- Tatian Zaloj – TdH
- Diana Antir – Caritas Moldova
- Martha Glover – CRS
- Maher Daboul – NRC

Summary of discussions and agreements/ action points

Agenda	Discussion	Agreements/ Actions
Welcome and presentation of the agenda.	UNHCR co-chair opened the meeting and thanked members who attended both in person and online. She invited Dr. Duminica from MER, the chair, to share the latest updates in the sector related to refugee education.	
1. MER Updates	**-Updates on education monitoring for children with different legal statuses learning in Moldova:** On May 28, 2025, MER signed the Ministerial Order No. 806/28.05.25, approving the use of recording forms for children enrolled in educational institutions in the Republic of Moldova, including those attending online education. In accordance with this order, each Education Department appointed a focal point responsible for collecting local-level data on refugee children who: • Are enrolled in educational institutions in the Republic of Moldova; • Attend online classes in Ukraine, either in parallel or exclusively. Currently, 35 focal points have been appointed (one per Education Department). On June 25, 2025, an online coordination meeting was held to focus on their roles and responsibilities. MER maintains direct communication with all focal points, closely monitoring their activities and identifying challenges in the data collection and reporting process. MER is also collaborating with the MER Information Department to update the Education Management Information System (SIME) with data on refugee children studying online. In parallel, UNHCR and UNICEF also prepared a leaflet [RO] [RU] [UKR] containing all necessary information for parents and legal guardians, to be distributed to IGM offices as well as through all available communication channels. ***Partner Remarks:*** PiN noted that some students are enrolled in both Moldovan schools and Ukrainian online education programs, causing confusion about which program to report to the Education	

	Department. It was clarified that in such cases, students should declare both types of enrollment to ensure accurate tracking and appropriate support. **- Updates on the recent communication received from the Ukrainian MoES regarding the simplified Educational Program for Ukrainian children** The Ukrainian Ministry of Education simplified its online education program tailored for refugee students enrolled in host country schools who wish to stay connected to the Ukrainian curriculum. This information was communicated via Official Letter No. 1/13149-25, dated June 23, 2025, and transmitted through the Embassy of Ukraine in Chișinău. According to the simplified education program, students in Grades V–XI are eligible to follow a reduced schedule of 6–8 hours per week, covering six core subjects specifically related to the Ukrainian curriculum (Ukrainian Language, Ukrainian Literature, History of Ukraine, Geography, Fundamentals of Law, and Defense of Ukraine). Subjects studied by the student at the host school abroad (i.e., in the Republic of Moldova) will be recognised and accredited by the Ukrainian education authorities. To support this, the Ukrainian Ministry of Education developed a grade equivalency table for countries with a significant number of Ukrainian refugee students. MER formally acknowledged receiving this information and, through the 05/34696 of 30 May 2025, informed the Education Departments and schools about the possibility for eligible students to enoll in the simplified program, in conjunction with their studies in a Moldovan school. MER encourages all REWG partners to support the dissemination of this information among parents and refugee communities, including through IGM offices and all available communication channels. **-Financial Support for Refugee Children** On 21 July 2025, the Government of Moldova approved a decision granting a one-time financial allowance of 1,000 MDL per child enrolled in Grades I–IX, including to families with temporary protection. The support is intended to help cover school-related expenses such as clothing, supplies, and materials ahead of the 2025–2026 academic year. The allowance will be distributed automatically by the National Social Insurance House (CNAS) to the child's legal guardian based on school enrollment data extracted from the Education Management Information System (SIME) by the Ministry of Education and Research. Additional procedures are in place for exceptional cases and late registrations. Disbursement will begin on 4 September 2025 via the MPay platform, with a withdrawal deadline of 26 December 2025.	Action Point: Email and MER circular to be shared with partners

	Partner Remarks: Participants emphasised the need for clear, user-friendly materials (leaflets, posters) to guide parents on the simplified curriculum, enrollment, and financial support. Coordination with other working groups and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection was suggested. **-Breakfast Program at Schools** Starting 1 September 2025, based on Government Decision No. 80 of 26 February 2025 all students in Grades I–IX enrolled in public general education institutions—primary, lower secondary, special, professional-sports, and vocational-technical—across the country, will receive a free breakfast, either hot or packaged, depending on school infrastructure. For students in special education (Grades I–IX), the program covers both breakfast and lunch. Free breakfast will also be provided in secondary sports schools and vocational-technical secondary institutions. **-Updates on Taras Shevchenko Gymnasium** On 15 July 2025, an inter-institutional meeting was held at Taras Shevchenko Gymnasium to plan the 2025–2026 school year for over 200 enrolled Ukrainian refugee students. Participants included representatives from MER, the Chişinău Education Department, the Rîşcani Education Department, the Embassies of Ukraine and Japan, UNICEF, NCUM and PiN. Discussions focused on continuing Ukrainian-language classes with Romanian instruction, infrastructure repairs, and enrollment. Starting from September, two new parallel Grade V classes will be added. **-Update on the Roadmap Donors' Bilateral Meetings** Following the Donor Roundtable held on 26 May 2025, the Ministry of Education and Research (MER) initiated a series of bilateral meetings with development partners to explore funding opportunities for implementing the Refugee Education Roadmap. Invitations for dialogue were sent to the embassies of Japan (a meeting was held on 16 June), Austria, Norway, Italy, and Denmark, as well as to the Swiss Cooperation Office and the World Bank. While donors have so far indicated limited availability of funds, MER remains committed to pursuing alternative funding avenues in coordination with relevant stakeholders. **-Updates on the university admissions for refugee students** MER, with support from Female Support Force and UNHCR, organised two sessions on 10 and 18 July 2025 to facilitate access for Ukrainian refugee youth to vocational and higher education in the Republic of Moldova. Participants included refugee youth, representatives from 25 vocational education institutions and 14 higher education institutions, as well as IGM, UNICEF, NCUM & PiN. Key topics covered included: a) Admission procedures for vocational and higher education, b) Required	

	documents and conditions for enrollment; c) Recognition and equivalency of diplomas, d) Refugee-specific benefits; e) Study conditions in host institutions. Following these sessions and the feedback received from refugee families regarding intermediaries demanding payments for the translation and notarization of documents during the admission process, MER issued Circulars No. 05/3-5246 of 21.07.2025 & No. 05/3-5273 of 21.07.2025, removing the requirement to submit translated and notarised documents for admission to vocational and higher education. In parallel, the Female Support Force and UNHCR jointly developed and distributed flyers providing information on university and technical education enrollment.	Action Point: To distribute the Leaflets with the minutes.
2. PiN Presentation on the main findings of the evaluation conducted for the UNICEF Edutech Labs.	(See Presentation) ***Partner Remarks:*** In response to follow-up questions from partners, PiN and UNICEF clarified that the list of active tech labs will be revised before the new school year. Priority will be given to the 20 labs that previously supported large numbers of children in online learning. Additional labs will be selected based on the number of children accessing non-formal education and the presence of trained facilitators, to ensure targeted and non-duplicative support in high-need communities.	
3. Presentation by IOM on the outcomes of the awareness-raising campaign about the inclusion of young people with disabilities and access to higher education.	(see presentation)	

3. AoB	**-Back to school campaign** NCUM presented key updates of their outreach effort to increase awareness among Ukrainian refugee families about the benefits of enrolling children in Moldovan schools. (see presentation). Key materials and messaging will be shared with REWG partners once finalised to support further distribution and harmonised messaging. **- Planned summer activities** Partners were invited to share any additional information or updates related to planned summer activities with UNHCR (Carolina Sclifos). **- Preparatory program** A national consultant will support the Ministry in finalising the legal and regulatory framework, including accreditation and certification processes. **- AEP consultancy** UNICEF has launched a consultancy to support the Ministry of Education in developing the curriculum. The evaluation of applications is being finalised, and implementation is expected to begin in the coming months. **- Romanian language consultancy** A concept note for the language course was recently discussed with Ministry officials, academics, and teachers and was broadly approved. The consultant is now working on the course content, with finalisation expected in the next two months. **- RRP 2026** The process to update the RRP for 2026 is beginning. Many partners are already familiar with this process and have participated in previous years. Over the next two months, each sector will review its indicators, as well as the overall goals and objectives. The co-chairs will reach out to the partners during this period (date to be confirmed) to consult them on any necessary updates. While most of this year's framework is likely to remain relevant, some adjustments may be needed.	