

Ukraine Situation

RETS MOLDOVA

10 March 2022

- Agenda**
1. UNHCR: Situation overview
 2. Information and data management overview
 3. Digital Inclusion and Connectivity for Refugees
 4. Field partner updates
 5. Global RETS partner updates
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Situation Overview

Since the escalation of conflict in Ukraine on 24 February, people have been forced to flee to neighbouring countries. As some refugees continue their movement to the other European countries, UNHCR set up monitoring in the Romania – Moldova border crossings. As of 06 March, **82,762** people have been displaced to Moldova, however, UNHCR's planning figures estimate this number reach up to 1 million in the incoming weeks and months.

As the situation evolves, more humanitarians are reaching to Moldova and consequently, the needs of both people forced to flee and humanitarians delivering critical protection and programme activities in the country is increasing.

UNHCR is continuing with its assessment in Moldova and Poland and collecting needs from the ground.

Attacks in Odesa raises the potentials for another major influx from Ukraine to Moldova via the crossing points in Palanca. Many refugees continue their journey to Causeni and then Chisinau. There are also direct bus services from Palanca to Chisianu.

The government has established a number of refugee reception centres and together with partners essential protection services are provided at these centres.

Working with ACTED, UNHCR RETS is planning to provide and expand connectivity in operational sites as well as the 3 Blue Dot Hubs that are planned with UNICEF.

A separate call regarding the implementation plans will be shared.

Nizar Zeidan will leave Moldova on 11 March, and sector coordination will be taken over by Alexander Thomas.

Information and Data Management

- UNHCR is coordinating with REACH to establish efficient information sharing mechanisms across the impacted countries. A regional approach will facilitate information sharing across countries and different partners.
- In Moldova, UNHCR is collaborating with UNDP, who rolled out a COVID-19 situation monitoring system using satellite and Google Data for analytical assessment. Working with UNDP, UNHCR aims to understand how to utilize this data to better map connectivity in Moldova and track movement of people beyond the country.
- Similarly, to get a better understanding of onward movement to Romania and other countries, UNHCR is working together with the local MNOs in Moldova to identify ways of using the data from the SIM cards distributed to the people.

Digital Inclusion and Connectivity for Refugees

- A dedicated coordination structure around digital inclusion and connectivity for refugees is being established by UNHCR's Innovation Service.
- There is an overwhelming interest in enhancing digital inclusion of affected populations, therefore there will be a separate call on digital inclusion.
- A short document detailing the contributions of the local MNOs will be circulated by the UNHCR Innovation Team.
- Most of the MNOs have relaxed their requirements for 30 days for all Ukrainians entering Moldova.

Field Partner Updates

ACTED

- ACTED is expanding its presence in Moldova. The first deployment will take place on 11 March - a needs assessment, starting from the border points will be initialized.
- 4 main border crossing points are prioritized, and the transit stations (100 approved and 15 pending approval) will also benefit from ACTED's services.
- There are plans to distribute sim cards and LTE devices at the border.

IOM

- IOM colleagues have just landed in Moldova and are beginning with their assessments.

Global RETS Partner Updates

TELECOMS SANS FRONTIERES

- TSF has deployed to Poland and has been providing calling services to POCs at border points.
- A mission deployed to Romania to conduct needs assessments.
- Both in the Ukrainian side where people are waiting and when they make it to Poland, SIM cards are not functioning well.
- Refugees are transported to the reception centers where they can receive Polish SIM cards.
- TSF has not observed any issues with people using SIM cards provided by the Polish MNOs.

GEEKS WITHOUT FRONTIERS

- Geeks without Frontiers are expressing interest in providing connectivity in the Blue Dot Hubs and other locations where connectivity is required.
- 10 Container Kits outfitted with alternative power solutions, AC, heating etc. are ready to be deployed. Geeks without Frontiers are asking partners to identify priority locations. Working with technology companies and end-users, these kits can be further modified in longer term.

CISCO

- Cisco has deployed a team to the Cisco Krakow Office and has shipped quick deployment network kits for use across the region.

VODAFONE FOUNDATION

- Vodafone Foundation has teams in Hungary and Romania part of the dedicated emergency response programme.
- National Vodafone entities have conducted a number of operations locally, including the distribution of SIM cards in border locations in Romania and Hungary.
- In two border cities in Hungary, Vodafone Foundation also provides free wi-fi to an average of 195 users per day.
- In 3 railway stations in Budapest, Vodafone is planning to provide wi-fi.
- A number of charging units have been installed in Romania; further needs assessment is being conducted at the border areas.
- There are ongoing discussions with UNHCR to send equipment to support the Ukraine Situation.

ERICSSON RESPONSE

- A number of wi-fi equipment kits are being transported to Moldova and Poland.

ETC

- The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster is active in Ukraine since early March.
- ETC have been working closely with UNHCR across the border in Ukraine.

Action Points	Responsible	Deadline
1. The next RETS Coordination Meeting for Moldova will take place on 17 March, meeting invitation will be sent to all participants.	UNHCR	10 March 2022

2. Finalizing the coordination structure around digital inclusion and connectivity for refugees	UNHCR	Pending
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