



Protection Working Group

Meeting Details	
Date	21.09.2022 - Next meeting on 05.10.2022
Time	10.00 am
Chair	Andrew Painter, Senior Protection Officer, UNHCR, Sector Coordinator; Carolina Cazaciuc, Coordinator on Refugee Rights, Ombudsperson Office, Co-Chair
Reporting	Olga Bitca, Protection Associate, UNHCR
Email	painter@unhcr.org , carolina.cazaciuc@ombudsman.md
Agenda	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome & Review of Agenda• Situational Update• Updates<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Winterization workshop• PWG/PAG• Legal assistance project• Presentations<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Persons with Disabilities• AOB• Close	



Participants			
<i>Tatiana Rotaru, Joint Management Crisis Center Ombudsperson Office Ministry of Internal Affairs Louis Mazel, US Embassy Tatiana Lungu USAID OSCE mission Moldova Ersilia Apreada, IOM Martina Castaldello, OHCHR, Dawood Khan, UNICEF Traian Turcanu, UNICEF Andrew Painter, Olga Bitca, UNHCR</i>	<i>Svetlana Jioara, CDA/LCA Victoria Tipordei, CDA/LCA Stavros Zotos, Plan International Stefania Martello, ACTED Maja Mandrapa Terzic, DRC Andrei Dobre, NRC Dania Trefi, INTERSOS Marin Onica, CCR Hana Badando, MSF Moldova Laura Canali, Medical Corps, Panagiota Siafaka, IsraAID Olesea Cazacu, UNDP</i>	<i>Maria Nazarenko, People in Need Adel Sasvari, Oxfam Diakonie, DKH Samuel Fensterheim, ICRC Aleksandra Andjelic, IRC Tatiana Pusca, CRS Oleg Hincu, Palladium Greta Heller, ADRA Anca Soldubanu, Clear Global Nicolas Karadjian, EPER Lindsay Bingaman, Helpage Natalia Sorbala, Doreas Anatol Donu, Caritas Czech Republic,</i>	<i>Iana Rotaru, CERI Aida Araklya, HI Marianna Prysiazhniuk, Internews Greta Heller, ADRA Dan Mandef, PEC Simone Reznic, Terre des Hommes Andrei Lutenco, Moldova for Peace Ludmila Ciocan, Keystone Wolfgang Wedan, Jugend Eine Welt Vitalie Popov, Greenline Women Rights Center Elena Sirbu, Coalition Roma Voice</i>

Summary of discussions and agreements/ action points

Agenda	Discussion	Agreements/ Actions
<p>Agenda Point 1: Welcome & Review of Agenda Andrew Painter, Senior Protection Officer, UNHCR, Sector Coordinator; Carolina Cazaciuc, Coordinator on Refugees Rights,</p>	<p>The PWG chair welcomed participants, thanked them for their presence and encouraged participants to attend in person for future meetings to have more engaging discussions. He presented the agenda of the meeting and asked the participants if there were any suggestions.</p> <p>If there are any modifications necessary to the minutes of the PWG, please contact: bitca@unhcr.org</p>	<p>Agenda revised and agreed</p>



<p>Ombudsperson Office, Co-Chair. painter@unhcr.org, carolina.cazaciuc@ombudsman.md</p>		
<p>Agenda Point 2: Situational Update Svetlana Jioara, Program Director, CDA/LCA svetlana.jioara@cda.md</p> <p>Ottavia Sanvito, South Protection, INTERSOS protection.south.moldova@intersos.org</p>	<p>The INTERSOS South Protection representative, Ottavia Sanvito, presented the situational updates:</p> <p>In Palanca BCP, arrivals are slow, with most arrivals coming from Mykolaiv and Odessa regions. Private transportation companies continue to bring groups of between 50-200 persons, most of whom are single mothers with children and those within the Roma community.</p> <p>Although most of the arrivals are Ukrainian citizens, several cases were reported of Russians who left due to some challenges of discriminatory attitudes toward them in Ukraine, of whom almost all left immediate family members in the country. Out of the total number of arrivals, 80% were Ukrainian, while 8% were TCN. 60% of the arrivals were female and 80% of the total arrivals were holding biometric passports. Half of all arrivals have a secondary education (50%), while 20% have a university education or a primary education (20%).</p> <p>The majority of arrivals expressed their intention to continue to other destinations, with only a small number planning to stay in Moldova. Priority needs were as follows: 1. Accommodation 2. Transport 3. Employment 4. NFI, clothes 5. Cash and Food.</p>	



The **CDA Program Director**, Svetlana Jioara, complemented the updates on **Palanca BCP** with information on the flow of individuals in both directions, as well as the food provided by Amici dei Bambini and ACR, the latter of which is not being provided daily, with a reported shortage of food on the same days.

Evacuations are being organized by the organizations *Be an Angel* and *Gloria*.

Most arriving refugees are heading directly to other countries and EU countries. There is also a great flow of returning Ukrainians, who are reportedly tired from being outside of the country for 6 months, as well as having a shortage of financial resources.

22 UASC children between the ages of 16-18 years entered the country, with the guardianship authority issuing the necessary authorization papers.

In **Otaci**, the simplified regime is still influencing the border crossing; No UASC reported.

On **BCPs with Romania**, it was reported that the flow of refugees is stable, but the number of individuals returning to Ukraine has increased, mostly for short visits by those PoCs benefiting from Temporary Protection in EU countries.

Arranged buses were reported from Ukraine to cash centers. As Donduseni cash center is closed, individuals are heading to the center in Balti. Proof of stay in Moldova for at least 1 week is now required. A similar situation was reported at Causeni, as Cahul is closed.

Svetlana Jioara was asked about the presence of the Ukrainian Border Police on the transit road near Palanca, and she explained that the situation is controversial. The presence of Ukrainian BP is regularly reported to the Moldavian Border Police. Ukrainian BP leave when approached by Moldovan BP, but usually return within an hour.

The UNICEF representative, Dawood Khan, asked if there is an evaluation process regarding whether children should remain or return to Ukraine. The CDA representative answered that CDA is assisting and monitoring this issue, but the Guardianship Authority



	<p>is taking the decisions on children up to 18 years. The INTERSOS representative added that UASC are referred to Blue Dots, in coordination with a representative of the Government.</p> <p>The NRC representative asked about the figures on the returnees; the CDA representative answered that they are similar to those entering the country.</p>	
<p>Agenda Point 3: Update on the Winterization Workshop and PAG</p> <p>Andrew Painter, Senior Protection Officer, UNHCR, Sector Coordinator painter@unhcr.org</p>	<p>UNHCR representative, Andrew Painter, provided an update on the winterization workshop and the Protection Advisory Group (PAG):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• He thanked everyone for the inputs provided for the winterization strategy and during the workshop which took place on Thursday, with many participants joining different working groups, especially protection. Food, NFIs and heating in RACs and homes were discussed as priority needs.• Heated Community centers are perceived as a solution and source of services for the community, as is legal counseling, information sharing, and consolidation of partnerships.• The final document of the winterization strategy will be circulated, with the inputs added.• A document with two brief questions was sent to organizations interested in participating in the PAG. Organizations were asked to describe their activities in Moldova and what they believed should be the priority activities of the PWG in 2023. It was also noted that measures would be taken to ensure no conflict of interest for those organizations who wish to be on both the PAG itself and the PAG selection committee.	<p>The final document of the winterization strategy will be circulated.</p> <p>PWG members who expressed an interest in joining the PAG are asked to answer two questions.</p>



<p>Agenda Point 4: Legal assistance project</p> <p>Gheorghe Reniță, Clinic Legal Aid, Clinica.juridica17@gmail.com</p>	<p>The Clinic Legal Aid representative, Gheorghe Reniță, presented a 6-month project on the provision of free legal assistance to the population affected by the Ukrainian crisis in the Republic of Moldova.</p> <p>The scope of the project is to respond to the main needs of the conflict-affected population with an effort to identify, map and connect people who fled Ukraine due to the war, and who would like to stay longer in Chisinau and do not yet know their rights and their options for the near future.</p> <p>A guide will be developed to provide information on main topics such as how to obtain lost or damaged internal and external Ukrainian passports, how to obtain a Moldovan IDNP, how and why to apply for temporary protection (when available), what services are available, how do enter into a rental agreement, and how to register birth, marriage, and death certificates in Republic of Moldova.</p> <p>In regards to the inquiry by the PWG Chair, including the involvement of Law students, the representative answered that students will provide legal assistance under supervision. The guide will be available and circulated (not printed) as the intention is to have a live, constantly updated instrument.CDA will be involved in its development.</p> <p>In regards to the question by OHCHR, regarding the inclusion of stateless persons, the NRC representative answered that they will be included.</p> <p>In regards to the question by UNICEF on the updating of referral pathways, Andrew Painter answered that the Interagency unit is doing a mapping of local services.</p> <p>UNFPA suggested to also map mobile services, the locality, the provided services, and the frequency of the visits, in order to better coordinate and identify gaps.</p>	<p>To collaborate with CDA on the elaboration of the guide</p>



<p>Agenda Point 5 Persons with Disabilities</p> <p>Ludmila Ciocan, Project Manager, Keystone lciocan@khs.org</p>	<p>The Project Manager of Keystone, Ludmila Ciocan, presented the activities of the Disability Taskforce, which has as its main objective to advocate for and promote effective disability inclusion in the Ukrainian Refugee Response in the Republic of Moldova, to ensure accessibility and reasonable accommodations and to efficiently refer persons with disabilities for assistance.</p> <p>Some of the main achievements mentioned were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Regular coordination and communication among stakeholders through periodic meetings;- The development of a referral mechanism;- Advocacy actions (especially for the accessibility of shelters, inclusion and mainstreamed disability in other sectors/working groups);- The development of a Disability Checklist;- Establishment of a regional EASPD hub in Moldova and relationships with NGOs from other countries, including Ukraine, to implement joint initiatives;- Assistance in partnership with other CSOs and public authorities (200-400 cases/monthly);- A wide range of services provided by CSOs: from needs assessments to financial support. <p>Ludmila Ciocan also mentioned the main challenges faced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Little data on the number of refugees with disabilities staying in the Republic of Moldova and their locations (estimations 4% -REACH, Washington Group set of questions, 12% of families with a family member with disability - last assessment);- Incomplete data provided by CSOs;- Disability degree confirmation/assessment and access to disability cash benefits- Lack of accessibility of Refugee Accommodation Centers (RACs) and host community facilities;- Limited access to cash assistance program due to limited accessible information;	<p>Invitation to attend Disability Task Force meetings.</p> <p>Need to analyze how level of disability affects access to cash assistance program Concerning accommodations in RAC for PwD, need to coordinate with the Accommodation WG and the Health WG.</p>
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- Lack of computers and internet and need for support to fill out the online application form (e.g., cases reported by CASMED, Keystone Moldova Hotline);
- Barriers in accessing the food and non-food packages (e.g., cases reported by Oxfam – distribution points);
- Reduced access to specialized medical services as well as lack of resources to buy necessary medications by persons with chronic diseases, mental health, epileptic syndrome and other disabling medical conditions;
- Insufficient medical and assistive devices;
- Limited access to education of children with special educational needs, difficulties in hiring specialized staff for a short period of time by CSOs’.

The PWG Chair suggested to look at how the level of disability is influencing the cash assistance program and how to collect more data, such as implementing the Washington Group questions. He also reminded everyone to reach out to the mobile teams for service delivery to PwD as needed. Concerning those with disabilities in RACs, he suggested to coordinate with the Accommodation WG, as well as with the Health Sector.

NRC informed the group that a project by the Center For Persons with Disabilities on the assessment of the legal needs of refugees from Ukraine with disability will be supported by NRC and that NRC will be more active in the Disability Task Force.

Furthermore, NRC asked about the procedure of confirmation or recognition of a disability assessment. Ludmila Ciocan answered that an intervention of the level of the two Governments is necessary, in order to have a recognition of disability assessments, even if the criteria are slightly different. This will remain a big issue. Some PwDs are still receiving allowances from Ukraine on their disability cards.

Finally, NRC asked about the access to social protection benefits. The PWG Chair responded that Temporary Protection will hopefully include access to social protection, but that access to medical insurance seemed unlikely. Concerning reproductive health,



	mentioned by the UNFPA representative, it will be helpful, but not in the needed extent, as the Government has concerns on the costs of such medical coverage. One of the solutions might be to access one of the global funds.	
Agenda Point 6 Close	The PWG Sector Coordinator closed the discussion with an invitation to attend the AAP meeting on Thursday and to discuss the information campaign for Temporary Protection.	

Information collection and relevant links
Moldova operational data portal: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine/location/10784

If necessary, feel free to add extra rows in the matrix above.