

Ukraine Regional Crisis in Moldova Situation Report

DATE: 18/03/2022

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Introduction

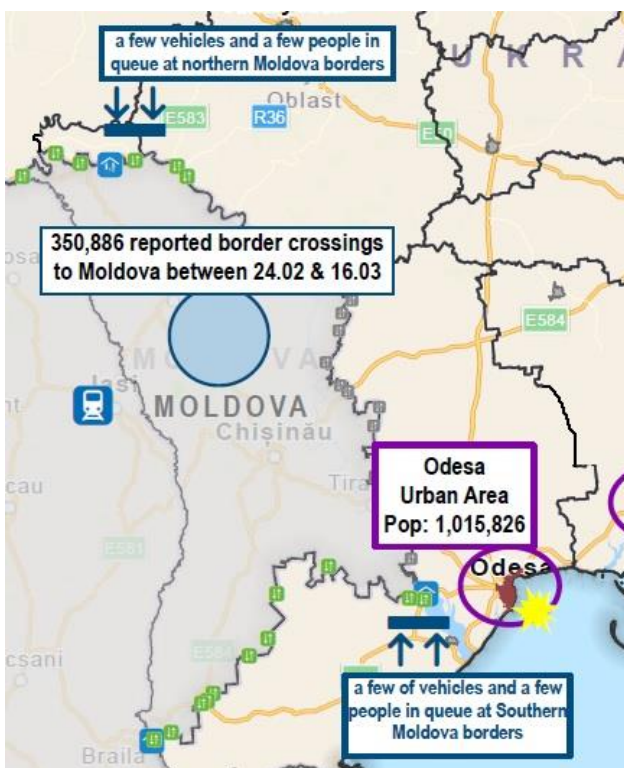
Country/Location: Republic of Moldova
Title: Assisting refugees from Ukraine in Moldova
Situation Report No.: 1

General overview

The conflict in Ukraine has created a regional humanitarian crisis.

A large-scale movement of population, mostly women and children, has started towards neighboring countries Republic of Moldova, Poland and Romania. The **majority of refugee population consists of women and children**, including 47% children, due to the restrictions on men aged 18-60 leaving the country.

The situation in Moldova is evolving rapidly. From the beginning of the war, on February 24th, until March 16th, **321,305 people entered in the Republic of Moldova**. During the same period, 218,823 left the country, mainly to continue their desperate travel and to Romania and find refuge in the European Union. **102,482 people are reported to be currently in Moldova**, of which little less than a half - around 48,000 - are children.



Entries coming particularly from the southern and south-western parts of Ukraine, including the port city of Odessa. However, border crossings in the North are also seeing a high level of arrivals in need of humanitarian assistance. The situation is volatile and is changing rapidly.

The Moldovan Government and the local population are showing extraordinary support and response. The Government of Moldova has declared its readiness to receive tens of thousands of refugees from Ukraine and is cooperating with the UN, local and international organizations to respond to the unfolding crisis.

On February 24th, the Government of Moldova closed its airspace and announced a State of Emergency, allowing the authorities to establish a special regime of entry and exit from the country and special measures for the protection of refugees. The protection of the population of the Republic of Moldova and of the country's institutions have also been addressed, and a special working regime for economic operators and public institutions established.

Despite a solid economic performance over the past two decades, **Moldova, with its around 3 million of habitants, remains among the poorest countries in Europe**, being not a member of the European Union member nor a NATO one. The pandemic and a severe drought in 2020 more starkly exposed the vulnerabilities of this growth model to shocks. With a subsequent decline in GDP of 7 percent in 2020, Moldova was among the countries in Europe most affected by COVID, which significantly impacted households and businesses across the country.



Overview of WeWorld/ChildFund response

WeWorld/Child Fund Alliance response focuses on the most urgent needs of the population on the move, especially children and women.

Children and their families require access to basic food, hygiene and medical care, as well as systematic protection services including actions to address gender-based violence, violence against children and to access psychosocial care.

Most women are entering and travelling without male family members, which creates significant protection risks and limits the ability of mothers to provide quality care for children. Children and female caregivers have also experienced or witnessed violence and the stress and uncertainty of displacement, resulting in high levels of psychosocial distress.

The risk of separation of children from their parents and families is also a key concern. Moreover, it is estimated that at least **2% of children are already separated or unaccompanied**; some of them are the ones evacuated from childcare institutions.

In this situation, the main risks for children are psychological distress, risk of abuse and violence, trafficking and family separation.

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1. Security & logistics

WeWorld has appointed one expatriate Head of operations based in Moldova from 15 March. She will be supported by two more WeWorld people in surge from the HQ in Moldavia for at least the 10 days in order to set up the mission: one program development specialist and one logistician.

The airspace over the Republic of Moldova was closed on 24 February; Chişinău Airport was temporarily closed as well. WeWorld team has reach Moldavia by car from the closest international airport in Iasi (Romania).

The security conditions are at the moment good in Moldavia. WeWorld is registered to INSO security services for the Ukraine crisis. Moreover standard security provisions have been put in place with the support of WeWorld security advisor.

2. Partnership and coordination

On Monday 07/03 two WeWorld emergency teams have been deployed: one to Poland and inside Ukraine; and another one to Berlin first and Moldova later.

Three days of backstopping coordination in Berlin were necessary to plan a coordinated ChildFund Alliance Regional Response together with ChildFund Germany.

WeWorld emergency team has set up an ad hoc rapid partners' capacity assessment procedure and template in order to assess the actual capacity of the local partners since all the partners identified by ChildFund Germany were trusted organizations for development projects, but not necessarily experimented in emergency operations. The assessment has been designed in order to evaluate also the understanding and adherence to the core humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. Training and capacity building should take into account this aspect as well.

WeWorld together with ChildFund Deutschland has assessed the capacities of 3 local partners in Moldova.

Localization with a strong component of capacity building and technical assistance is an important pillar of the Response Plan. Beside monitoring and training, direct implementation by WeWorld it is anyway to be foreseen to complement partners' capacity in such a volatile acute and fast changing emergency.

The integration of WeWorld/CFA action in the interagency coordination mechanism is also of paramount importance in order to foster complementary, avoid duplication, exchange practices and improve CFA overall understanding of the crisis.

WeWorld is already actively participating to the humanitarian coordination UN clusters system:

- *Regional level:* Interagency coordination group led by OCHA in coordination with UNHCR and Logistic Cluster.
- *Moldova country level:* Interagency coordination led by UNHCR - Education Cluster, Protection Cluster, Food Security& Nutrition Cluster and Cash Working Group.



Program

WeWorld managed to contribute to UNHCR Response Plan in Moldova, consequently the planned actions have been shared and approved at sectoral clusters level.

In a first phase, WeWorld/CFA response in Moldova will focus on the support to people hosted in refugee centers on protection, education in emergency, food and non-food items provision and multipurpose cash transfer.

Protection & Education

Key child protection risks include the separation of children from their parents and families is a key concern, with those separated from all family members at greatest risk as well as those being evacuated from child care institutions in Moldova – it is estimated that at least 2% of children are separated or unaccompanied. Most women are entering and travelling without male family members, which creates significant protection risks and limits the ability of mothers to provide quality care for children. Children and female caregivers have also experienced or witnessed violence and the stress and uncertainty of displacement, resulting in high levels of psychosocial distress.

Activities:

Mobile teams working to provide counselling and referral to services to refugees arriving in the country. In addition, psychosocial support will be provided alongside the creation of child-friendly spaces to offer welcome respite from the stress of escaping war. Educational activities (language courses) will also target both children and adults (parents and caregivers) and sensitization sessions on relevant topics (child rights, GBV prevention, refugee rights, ecc.) will be organized for parents.

Food & Non-Food Items

Food and other basic goods will be provided to families arriving at the transit centres, with particular attention given to children and babies who need baby food, formulas, diapers and so on. Distribution sites will spring up, providing weekly food boxes to refugee families

Multipurpose cash transfer

Cash Assistance is a key modality in Moldova for delivering assistance and services to those affected by the crisis. Experience and evidence highlight that cash assistance increases protection outcomes, facilitates inclusion and solutions, and improves efficiency and effectiveness in programme delivery. Cash also contributes to the local economy and fosters positive relations with host communities. Further, cash provides refugees and persons of concern greater dignity of choice in meeting their multiple needs.

Protection will be mainstreamed throughout cash assistance, to ensure protection risks are effectively mitigated and protection dividends maximized.

Activities:

Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance during the stay in the center, meeting basic needs not covered by in-kind and assistance provided by the centers (calculated per family per week of stay).

Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance at departure from the center, aiming at covering needs for transportation, food and other basic needs during the journey (calculated as a one-off transfer per person).

Activities include monitoring by WeWorld CVA (Cash&Voucher Assistance) and M&E experts.

The centers are expected to function as temporary accommodation, with an average stay of 4 weeks per family, before their departure (to return to Ukraine or another host country).

3. Funds and funding needs

WeWorld has secured funds with own resources for the kick-off phase including the initial need assessment.

In the following table, the funding needs per sector for a six month (March-August 2022) response based on the actual situation and UN projections.

	USD	Total Beneficiaries
Food and Non-Food Items	500.000	5.000
Multi-purpose Cash	1.000.000	5.000
Protection & Education	400.000	10.000
Resilience & Livelihoods	500.000	1.000
Total	2.400.000	21.000



4. Next steps

The situation will be constantly monitored and, in case, needs will be revised in term of sectors of type of intervention and funding.