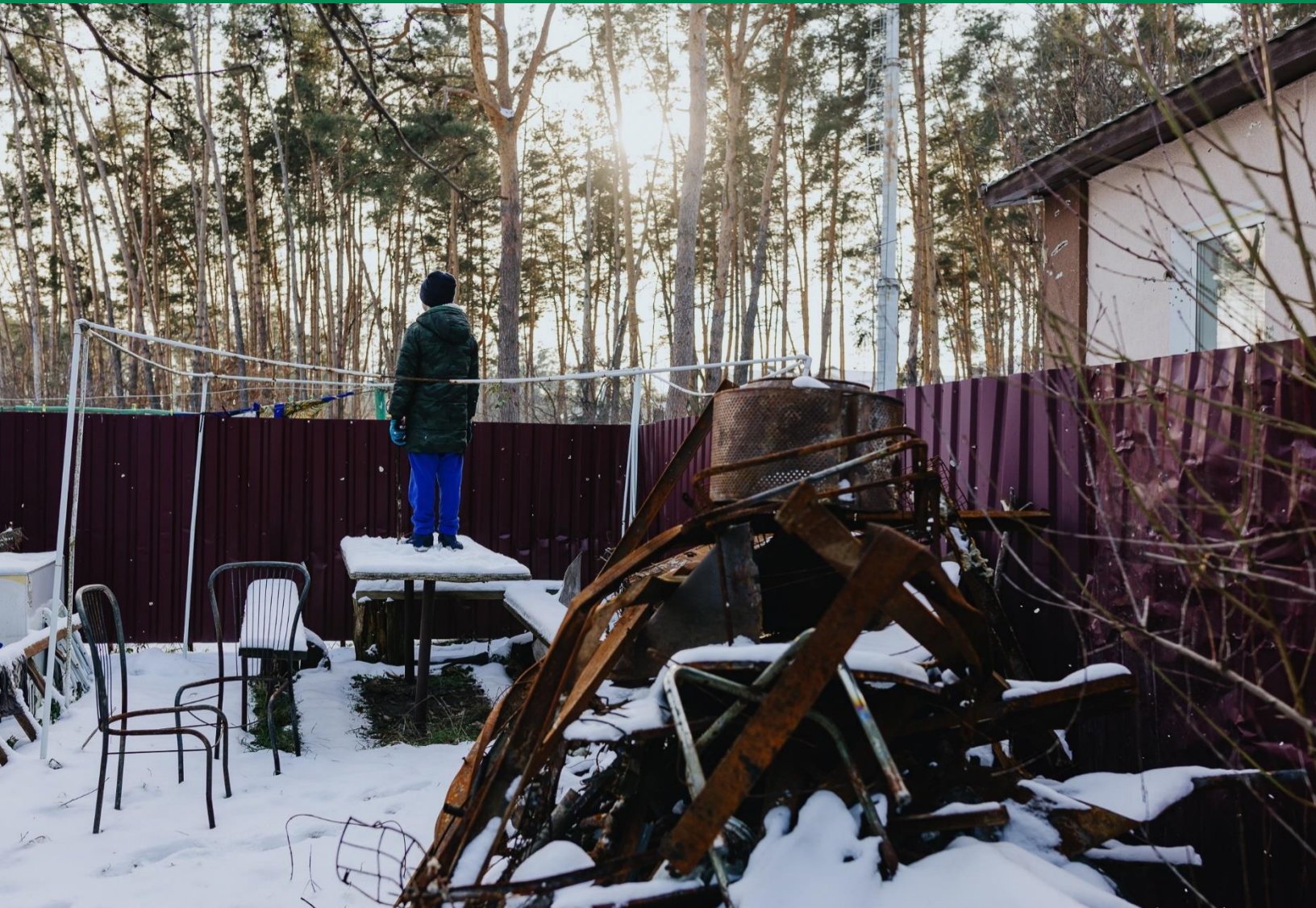


Humanitarian Response in Ukraine & Moldova

War Escalation and Winterization

September 2024



Country/Location Ukraine and Moldova

Title of the emergency War Escalation and Winterization Response

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Situation Report No. 4

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General overview

As of September 2024, two and a half years after the large-scale Russian invasion, the situation for the Ukrainian population remains critical. According to UN-OCHA, **40% of the population (14.6 million people) still requires humanitarian assistance**, including 2.9 million children and 4.6 million women. Despite severe humanitarian needs reaching critical levels, only 44% of the funding required by the 2024 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) has been met so far.

Recent months have seen a rise in violence against civilians, with the OHCHR reporting that **between March and July 2024, 819 civilians were killed and 3,527 injured due to the conflict**. In May, over half of the casualties resulted from a Russian offensive in the Kharkiv region, which led to a significant increase in internal displacement too. The southeastern and eastern border areas continue to suffer the most from the violence and destruction caused by the war. In Kherson, Kharkiv, Donetsk and Dnipropetrovsk regions, a multitude of **houses, buildings and infrastructures have been destroyed** by strikes and the railway facilities have been damaged, affecting the transport of essential services. Throughout 2024, **36 health facilities have been destroyed or damaged**, and in the eastern regions, nearly half of the healthcare facilities are either partially or completely non-operational.

However, **the energy infrastructures have been the most severely affected by Russian attacks and bombings**, with 172 incidents reported in the first five months of 2024. In the imminent future, this trend is expected to persist and escalate. The attacks are causing severe energy shortages, which could lead to **power outages of up to 20 hours per day during the upcoming winter**. This will **disrupt** water supply, sewage systems, and **urban heating**, while also driving-up energy prices, thereby exacerbating conditions for the Ukrainian population, especially for displaced individuals in border areas. With winter temperatures ranging from -4.8 to 2 °C and potentially dropping to -20 °C, the extreme cold will increase health risks and injuries, significantly impacting civilians' well-being.

Currently, according to UNHCR and IOM estimates, there are **3,314,669 internally displaced persons (IDPs)** in Ukraine, **including about 1 million children**.

According to the latest recommendations from the UN-OCHA Sectorial Clusters, IDPs often reside in privately rented or substandard housing, which not only lacks adequate thermal insulation but is also further deteriorated by conflict-related damage, such as leaking roofs, broken windows, and wrecked walls. Returnees and non-displaced individuals face similar issues, especially in border areas.

The overall humanitarian situation in the country represents a severe protection crisis, with particularly dire impacts on vulnerable populations and children. In the past two and a half years, nearly **2,000 children have been killed or injured**. Those who survived have faced school closures, the destruction of childcare centers and the loss of medical facilities. The current school enrollment rates are ranging between 40-50%, and a large number of children and youth are at risk of missing out on education for a third consecutive year. Additionally, **the closure of 2,321 schools in conflict zones** has left nearly 2 million students relying on online or blended education, which contributes to feelings of isolation and instability, and hampers their ability to engage in community interactions.

Furthermore, approximately **1.5 million children have suffered conflict-related psychological trauma with potential long-term effects**. Gender-based violence, including the exploitation of girls, is experiencing a concerning increase. It is imperative to provide comprehensive psychological support and to integrate these children into structured healing programs to address their trauma and facilitate their recovery and well-being.

Finally, widespread contamination by explosive remnants of war (ERW) poses a severe danger to the entire population. Since February 2022, **ERW incidents have increased nearly ninefold, with over 1,200 incidents reported, 75% affecting civilians and causing over 550 deaths**. Approximately one-third of Ukraine is contaminated by mines, with the Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Kherson regions being the most affected.

Neighboring countries have similarly been impacted from the ongoing conflict.

Throughout 2024, the **Republic of Moldova** has been grappling with the repercussions of the conflict in Ukraine, currently hosting approximately **123,000 Ukrainian refugees**, with the majority being young people (45%) and women (38%). Notably, there is an increasing trend of Ukrainian refugees choosing to remain in Moldova rather than moving to third countries (UNHCR, July 2024). Moldova's role in welcoming refugees has placed significant pressure on its economic, social, and health infrastructure. Most of the refugees in Moldova (80%) are housed in private accommodations, while 20% reside in Refugee Accommodation Centers (RACs) set up by the Moldovan government. This influx has added strain to Moldova's already stretched resources, particularly in the health and social sectors. People are facing a set of challenges related to the harsh winter months. Refugees and local residents alike are in **urgent need of winter support**, particularly in community facilities such as kindergartens, schools, and cultural centers. These facilities, require essential interventions like **heating repairs, gas connections, and window replacements**, to ensure they can withstand the winter.

Such support is crucial not only for **maintaining educational and protection services** but also for fostering solidarity and cultural exchange between refugees and the Moldovan host community. The economic impact of the conflict is evident. The price surges in fuel, utilities, food, toiletries, and housing expenses are affecting both refugees and the Moldovan population, necessitating prompt humanitarian interventions and **livelihood support measures**. Efforts are needed to integrate more refugees into the workforce, particularly by enhancing **access to childcare** to facilitate women's participation in the labor market. Additional support for **Romanian language classes and vocational training** is also essential to ensure long-term self-sufficiency and economic resilience.

Data from the Moldovan Ministry of Education and Research indicate that **out of the 49,000 Ukrainian children residing in the country, only about 5% are enrolled in Moldovan schools**. The remaining 95% primarily access online education through the Ukrainian Ministry of Education platform. Barriers to enrollment include administrative obstacles, language challenges, fear of discrimination, and uncertainties about the validity of school certificates upon returning to Ukraine. This non-enrollment has led to significant distress among youth, manifesting in sadness, fear, increased aggression, and difficulty integrating into Moldovan society. Addressing these issues requires **creating a more inclusive educational environment**, promoting school enrollment, and **encouraging participation in cultural and recreational activities**.

The **psychological distress experienced by refugees** underscores the need for adequate psychosocial support, particularly for the most vulnerable people. Significant segments of the refugee population have not received the **Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)** they require, exacerbating their trauma and further complicating their integration into local communities.

Moldova's humanitarian response faces critical challenges as winter approaches. The Moldova Refugee Response Plan indicates that around **65,000 refugees require assistance to meet their essential needs**, with 10,000 among them categorized as extremely vulnerable. Within the host community, 57,000 individuals have been recognized as needing support to meet their basic needs. As winter advances, the number of people requiring humanitarian assistance is expected to increase, necessitating an augmentation in the supply of winter and sleeping kits.

Overview of WeWorld, ChildFund Deutschland and ChildFund Alliance Response

WeWorld and ChildFund Deutschland have been providing humanitarian aid in Ukraine since March 2022, with an integrated approach covering the sectors of Protection, Child Protection, MHPSS, Shelter, NFI, WASH, Education and Cash Assistance.

Currently, WeWorld directly operates in several Oblasts (Kharkiv, Donetsk, Kherson, Mykolaiv, Odessa) through its team deployed in offices in Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, Kyiv and Lviv. While ChildFund Deutschland provides aid in almost all oblasts that are in need e. g. Kharkiv, Kherson, Krivyi Rih, Kyiv, Lviv, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Rivne, Tarnopil, Zakarpattia, Zaporozhia, Zhitomyr. The activities are managed and overseen by its office in Lviv and carried out by local partners.

Since the beginning of the war **WeWorld response reached around 300,000 vulnerable people in Ukraine**, 25% of whom children, through an intervention composed by an integrated approach with a specific attention to children, women, elderly and people with disabilities.

In 2023, **the joint winterization response of ChildFund Alliance members reached over 3,000 families**. This initiative provided essential winterization support to vulnerable individuals in the Kharkiv region and offered protection assistance in the Odessa region. The most vulnerable families were supported such as large families with young children, single-parent families (particularly those headed by single women), and those including persons with disabilities and elders. They received warm sets, comprising shoes, jackets, pullovers and other items. Additionally, families were supported through the provision of heating supplies, such as wood or pellets, to help them keep their houses warm during the winter months, including in the event of power outages and gas outages. Finally, vulnerable families were supported through the distribution of tailored hygiene products. Through this initiative, **WeWorld and ChildFund Deutschland were actively contributing to the UN-OCHA Winter Response Plan 2023/2024 and are planning to continue action according to the new Winter Response Pan 2024/2025**.

In preparation of that, ChildFund Deutschland partnered up with several organizations and was able to provide humanitarian aid to around 80,000 people. The assistance aims to ensure that people most impacted by the intensified hostilities are adequately protected and prepared to cope with harsh weather conditions in the upcoming month.

Winterization efforts during the upcoming winter period have to focus on a combination of in-kind and cash assistance service.

In Moldova, WeWorld operates adopting an **integrated approach in the sector of protection, education, health, food and non-food assistance, livelihoods and inclusion**, also partnering with several ChildFund Alliance members. The interventions carried out since the outbreak of the conflict reached **more than 43,000 beneficiaries** (children and women refugees) through the provision of psychosocial support, educational and recreational activities primarily conducted at our Community Centers. Additionally, food and other essential goods were distributed to refugee families, with particular attention given to children.

Next Steps

The teams of WeWorld and ChildFund Deutschland in Ukraine are committed to provide essential humanitarian support to the population in need. In accordance with the Ukraine HNRP and the UN-OCHA Winter Response Plan (2024/2025), the main objective of these interventions is to provide principled and timely multisectoral lifesaving assistance to three vulnerable population groups impacted by the escalation of hostilities: **people remaining in front-line areas, those who are displaced, and those in conflict-affected urban areas**. Vulnerable groups like children, elderly and people with disabilities will be prioritized.

The interventions, which target both Ukraine and Moldova, aim to provide immediate relief and enhance resilience in communities severely impacted by conflict, displacement, and refugee crisis. This will be accomplished by **distributing essential winter and hygiene supplies, repairing or reactivating heating systems in collective sites and health care facilities, and providing PSS, primarily targeting children and women**.

The response strategy is informed by last year's experiences, lessons learned, and stakeholder feedback. The Government of Ukraine leads winterization initiatives, while humanitarian agencies play a complementary role. In summary, the intervention will include the following activities which will be implemented in both countries of intervention, **Ukraine and Moldova**:

Protection (Child Protection, MHPSS, Mine Action)

- Restoration and upgrade of two Child and Adolescents Friendly Spaces (CFS/AFS), and provision of psychosocial support both individually and through group sessions
These spaces can provide psychological, recreational and material support, enhance overall resilience, and assist children and young people in coping with war-related losses and trauma. Their needs in terms of personnel, materials, and infrastructural improvements will be assessed and addressed. Psychosocial services within the CFS/AFS will be organized and supported to more effectively assist vulnerable populations, including IDPs, children, women, and adolescents.
- MHPSS support for children and women in community centers and community spaces/women safe spaces
In Moldova, MHPSS will be provided to Ukrainian refugees and local communities, with a particular focus on women and children. This support will be delivered through a community center in Chisinau and Community Spaces/Women Safe Spaces in northern areas.
- Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE)
Awareness campaigns will be launched for both children and adults, focusing on the dangers of mines and explosive remnants of war, as well as strategies and techniques to avoid accidents.
- Provision of educational and recreational activities to children and adolescents
In Moldova, in the established community centers and safe spaces, will be offer educational and recreational activities, including language and IT courses. These activities are designed to help children cope with the trauma of displacement while fostering social integration with host communities. Providing these activities during the winter is crucial for maintaining psychosocial well-being, ensuring continuity in education, and protecting children from potential harm.

Shelter and NFI

- Distribution of winter household items
A kit made up of essential winter related items will be provided to assist families in coping with the cold. The composition of the kit is tailored to address specific needs of vulnerable groups (children, women, elderly, people with disabilities). This winterization response will be performed in Ukraine and Moldova.
- Distribution of solid fuel
The provision of solid fuel (e.g., wood, fuel briquettes) is crucial for households in areas where traditional energy sources are either unavailable or unreliable. Each household will receive sufficient solid fuel to meet with their heating needs throughout the winter. WeWorld will utilize existing framework contracts to facilitate this provision.
- Distribution of food and hygiene basic goods
In Moldova, Ukrainian refugees and vulnerable community members in Chisinau and the northern districts will receive support through the distribution of fresh food and essential hygiene products.

WASH

- Distribution of tailored hygiene kits
Hygiene kits will be distributed to promote good health and hygiene practices. Kits will be tailored on the characteristics of the beneficiaries, with a particular focus on children and women needs.
- Repair and reactivation of heating systems in collective sites and health care facilities

Heating systems or insulation will be repaired or reactivated, following a thorough assessment in collective sites and healthcare facilities. This assessment will identify systems and infrastructures that can be repaired, reactivated or improved.

- Distribution of portable heating appliances and training on their use

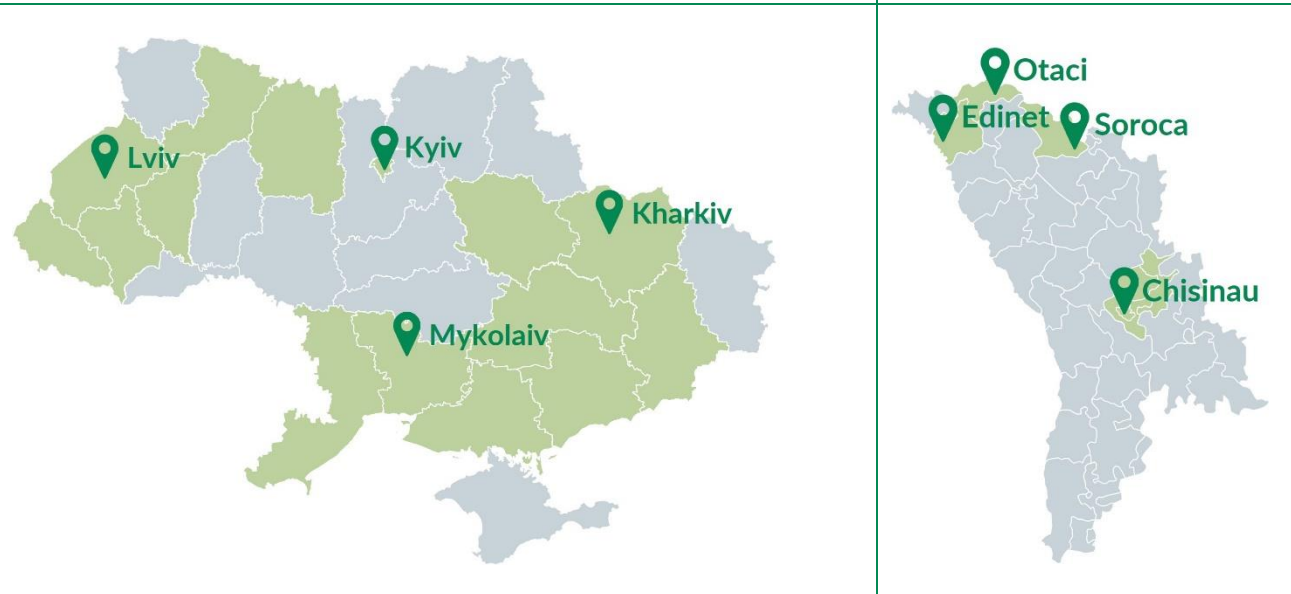
In areas where existing heating systems cannot be repaired, portable heaters will be distributed. The devices will include electric heaters, gas heaters, and wood stoves, selected according to local energy resources. Beneficiaries will receive training on the safe use of the delivered equipment.

Field presence and offices

 Offices  Activities (Oblasts, Districts)

Ukraine

Moldova



In **Ukraine**, thanks to field presence and offices in Kharkiv, Kherson and Mykolaiv, as well as Kyiv and Lviv, WeWorld and ChildFund Deutschland will be able to continue providing support to both frontline communities and major cities.

In **Moldova**, WeWorld will continue responding in Chisinau and in the northern districts, with offices in Otaci, Edinet and Soroca

All interventions will be based on **needs assessments** of households, disaggregated by sex and age, in accordance with the HNRP 2024. These efforts will adhere to the principle of **deduplication** to ensure that beneficiaries are not already receiving adequate state subsidies.

The intervention will be coordinated with **UN-led sectorial clusters** and other relevant bodies. This includes regular participation in cluster meetings, information-sharing sessions, and joint planning. Additionally, partnerships will be established with local organizations and community leaders, and collaborations will be pursued with national and local government agencies.

Sector of intervention	Required actions	Funding Appeal	Beneficiaries	Already committed
Protection (Child Protection, MHPSS, Mine Action)	Rehabilitation of CFS/AFS, and provision of psychosocial support MHPSS support for children and women Educational and recreational activities for youth and children Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE)	1,000,000 USD	20,000, including 10,000 children (15,000 in Ukraine and 5,000 in Moldova)	700,000 USD
Shelter and NFI	Distribution of winter household items Distribution of solid fuel Distribution of foods and hygiene basic goods	600,000 USD	10,000, including 2,500 children (5,000 in Ukraine and 5,000 in Moldova)	
WASH	Distribution of tailored hygiene kits Rehabilitation of heating systems Distribution of portable heating appliances	400,000 USD	50,000, including 12,500 children (all in Ukraine)	300,000 USD
		2,000,000 USD	80,000 beneficiaries, including 25,000 children (70,000 in Ukraine and 10,000 in Moldova)	1,000,000 USD

Even though WeWorld has already committed 50% of the needed resources, amounting to 1,000,000 USD, this integrated programming needs to be scaled up and implemented through swift action. This **immediate effort will facilitate reaching a total of 80,000 beneficiaries**. To continue responding to their needs and ensure safe and adequate access to basic services, an additional 1,000,000 USD is urgently needed.

1,000,000 USD is needed

20 September 2024