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Introduction/Background

Ukraine

According to the Ukraine 2024 Humanitarian Needs Overview, it is estimated that there are 14.6 million people in need of assistance in Ukraine, of whom 2.9 million (20%) are children. Children and their caregivers are facing severe child protection risks and concerns, including violence, exploitation, abuse, neglect, discrimination, family separation, child-headed households, disability, disruption in education and routines, psychological distress, and grave violations of their rights in war, including children without parent, and children injured from explosive ordnance or other war-related injuries.

Gross violations against civilians have exposed millions to increased psychological trauma, stress and anxiety and impacted children’s wellbeing and education further aggravating their vulnerabilities. Children in Luhanska and Donetsk regions have experienced the psychological consequences of more than ten years of war.

Furthermore, since the escalation of war in Ukraine, 1,741 children have been killed or injured according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.¹

As per the OCHA December 2023 report², more than 3.3 million people – including 800,000 children – living along the front line require emergency assistance. Millions of people across Ukraine are dealing with mental health issues, rooted in the trauma caused by the war. Children are particularly affected, with over 1.5 million girls and boys requiring some form of assistance in managing stress, anxiety or other mental health issues, according to UNICEF.

As of the first quarter of 2024, the current humanitarian situation remains extremely concerning, and the prolonged effects of the war will further deepen the already severe protection crisis impacting the most vulnerable groups, particularly children.

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¹ <https://www.unicef.org/eca/press-releases/two-children-killed-24-hours-deadly-attacks-kharkiv-continue-unabated>
² OCHA UKRAINE Humanitarian Situation Snapshot December 2023 Issue

Moldova:

The escalation of the international armed conflict in Ukraine has forced people to flee their homes, seeking safety, protection, and assistance. Millions of refugees from Ukraine have crossed borders to neighboring countries, including in Moldova, and millions are internally displaced within Ukraine. Since 24 February 2022, 997,092 refugees (as of December 2023 – UNHCR) have arrived in the Republic of Moldova and approximately 115,000 remained in the country - accounting for around 4% of the total population.

Children comprise more than 40% of the refugee population (21% girls, and 23% boys). As of end December 2023, a total of 35,950 people have applied for temporary protection (TP), of whom 27,715 have received the status, including 8,326 children. In 2023, 1,067 unaccompanied and separated children were identified and referred to the Guardianship Authority³.

Refugee children in Moldova are mostly suffering from the traumatic experiences they had gone through because of the war and the displacement. In REACH Assessment⁴ (September 2023) refugee children expressed i) being worried for their families and friends remaining in Ukraine, ii) feeling isolated in the new context without their supporting networks, iii) facing language barriers, iv) difficulties in adapting to a new context, v) feeling anxiety concerning their unknown future and vi) willingness to return home.

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World Vision Accomplishments

According to World Vision's December 2023 Fact Sheet

1,608,202 people of whom 770,478 Children (48%)

were reached and supported through multisectoral response in Ukraine, Moldova, Romania, and Georgia. 89,096 children were supported with child protection programming across the four countries.

Ukraine. World Vision started working in Ukraine in March 2022. Six offices have been established and are currently operating across the country in Chernivtsi, Kyiv, Dnipro, Lviv, Mykolaiv and Kharkiv to deliver humanitarian aid and life-saving assistance reaching conflict-affected people in 24 oblasts across Ukraine. In Ukraine WVI is closely collaborating and implementing projects with 13 national and international partners (10 national NGOs, 3 international NGOs).

1. World Vision International has been implementing Child Protection Projects in 17 regions of Ukraine. More than 76,788 boys and girls benefited from child protection programming including recreational activities in Child Friendly Spaces, summer camps, referrals to service providers, case management and integrated mental health and psychosocial services.

2.



1,393
child protection kits
were distributed.

3. 4,975 people attended trainings on Protection prevention and response, including topics focused on child protection and safeguarding, stress management, psychosocial support (PSS), social and emotional learning (SEL), and bullying prevention.

4. World Vision International in collaboration with the Ukraine national level Child Protection Area of Responsibility partners developed the Child Friendly Space Guidelines to provide practical guidance on creating safe and inclusive spaces for children affected by humanitarian crises. The document covers a range of topics, including child protection, psychosocial support, and community engagement.

³ REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN January-December 2024

⁴ Education Assessment Key Findings MOLDOVA | August 2023, REACH

Moldova. Since the start of UCR response in Moldova, World Vision supported more than 263,631 people in need of which 120,695 (45%) children. World Vision has been implementing different child protection projects, including equipping child friendly spaces with materials and supplies allowing children to be involved in recreational activities, art therapy, homework support and structured and unstructured play.

1. World Vision has been supporting the needs of refugee and vulnerable host community children in schools, temporary refugee settlements, Refugee Accommodation Centers (RACs) and community centers. For example, with a local partner Step by Step through Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC) funding, children were able to receive non-formal education, mental health, and psychosocial support, as well as recreational activities including arts and crafts, puppet shows and robotics learning in most of the 32 districts across Moldova.
2. World Vision actively participated in the activities of the Child Protection Sub Working Group and the MHPSS Technical Working Group (TWG), involved in the service mapping exercise, review of the 2023 Refugee Response Plan (RRP) objectives and activities for child protection and MHPSS-UNHCR driven initiative.
3. World Vision launched and intensified its campaign for children's well-being with schools and educators in Moldova's districts like Anenii Noi and Stefan Voda. Working with Ukrainian and Moldovan children of different ages through the summer schools, educators were trained on educational practices for interventions against bullying and other protection-related issues.
4. World Vision conducted the first Problem Management Plus (PM+) training in Moldova. As part of the five-day course, 14 Moldovan social workers and psychologists were trained to address the psychosocial needs of adult Ukrainian refugees and host communities. The training was sponsored by Nachbar in Not (NiN) and the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), and organized by World Vision in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), representatives of the Moldovan-Swiss project MENSANA, and AVE Copiii, World Vision's local partner.

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Approaches And Models:

including Child Protection in Humanitarian Action interventions, ii) empowering children with resilience, life skills, and meaningful participation, and iii) launching and intensifying awareness raising campaigns among the concerned stakeholders to increase knowledge on child rights and child protection prevention and response.

CHILD PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY (CP&A). The project model in the Ukraine Crisis Response is combined with Child Protection in Humanitarian interventions to best address the child protection risks and root causes in this emergency context. It involves structured psychological support activities at Child Friendly Spaces engaging children, their families, and community groups in tailored programs for child well-being.

Besides, it focuses on enhancing the collaboration and interconnection between the formal and informal actors, whilst building the capacity of implementing partners, local authorities and other key stakeholders to address the root causes of violence against children and to increase their knowledge, capacity and skills to access and deliver services while adhering to the laws and acts relating to children rights, protection and participation.

PROBLEM MANAGEMENT + (PM+). In Moldova psychologists and mental health professionals are trained on the PM+ approach to provide psychological counselling to adults enrolled in targeted formal and non-formal learning. The Problem Management Plus (PM+) is a psychological intervention for adults which can help people with depression, anxiety and stress. The approach is implemented to help Ukrainian refugees and Moldovan vulnerable community members improve their management of practical (unemployment, interpersonal conflict) and common (depression, anxiety, stress or grief) mental health problems.

POSITIVE PARENTING. Conflict, loss, displacement and trauma have severe consequences for human well-being, especially for parents and caregivers who not only have to support and provide for themselves, but also for their families and children. In UCR the positive parenting approach supports conflict-affected parents and caregivers in regaining their parental confidence, learning new positive parenting skills, strengthening their parent-child relationships, building a support network among parents and processing their own needs and emotions.

IMPACT + . With the guidance of World Vision Global Center Adolescent Lead and an external IMPACT+ consultant, World Vision Moldova adapted the curriculum for the Moldovan context. The adapted curriculum is currently under translation into Ukrainian and Romanian languages. WVI UCR implements IMPACT + in Moldova and supports refugee and vulnerable community adolescent boys and girls in transitioning well into adulthood as active citizens empowered with competencies, values, confidence and social connectedness.

INTEGRATING CHILD PROTECTION, EDUCATION AND MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT. As WV UCR is child focused, the response moves towards greater program integration for Child Wellbeing, Child Protection, Education, MHPSS for a more integrated programming approach. This integrated approach includes live-saving information and protection knowledge into school curriculums and sessions in the temporary learning spaces.




LOCALIZATION Because of its highly educated population (99.4% of people over 15 years old able to read and write), 83% tertiary enrolment and a highly developed and fast-growing technology sector, coupled with a thriving civil society, Ukraine is a prime location to advance WVI localization agenda. Most of the Child Protection agenda is implemented through local partners: WV UCR has trained Child Protection partners in Child Protection and Safeguarding, Activity Catalogue for Child Friendly Spaces, Psychological First Aid, Case Management, Child Protection Referral system and the Child Protection in Humanitarian Action Minimum Standard.




4 Stakeholder Engagement Modalities

In Moldova WVI works closely with the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, Social Services authority, Protection Cluster, Child Protection Sub Working Group and local child protection partners. WV contributed to the development of the 2024 Refugee Response Plan.

In Ukraine WVI is an active member of the Ukrainian national Child Protection Area of Responsibility (AoR) and co-leads with UNICEF the Dnipro regional Child Protection Area of Responsibility. With the support from World Vision Global, more than 100 partners in the Child Protection Area of Responsibility will benefit from the Violence Prevention Training which is scheduled to be conducted in 2024.



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For more information, please email
Eleonora Mantoan
Child Protection Technical Advisor
eleonora_mantoan@wvi.org