

# Research Terms of Reference

Older Individuals Needs Assessment (OINA)

MDA2407

Republic of Moldova

September 2024

**REACH** Informing  
more effective  
humanitarian action

## 1. Executive Summary

<b>Country of intervention</b>	The Republic of Moldova					
<b>Type of Emergency</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Natural hazard	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Conflict	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other ( <i>specify</i> )
<b>Type of Crisis</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sudden onset	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slow onset	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Protracted
<b>Mandating Body/ Agency</b>	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)					
<b>IMPACT Project Code</b>	67 AZF FII					
<b>Overall Research Timeframe</b> ( <i>from research design to final outputs / M&amp;E</i> )	22/04/2024 to 15/01/2025					
<b>Research Timeframe</b> <i>Add planned deadlines</i>	1. Pilot/ training: 25/09/2024			6. Key findings presentation sent for validation: 02/12/2024		
	2. Start collect data: 30/09/2024			7. Fact sheet #1 sent for validation: 09/12/2024		
	3. Data collected: 25/10/2024			8. Fact sheet #2 sent for validation: 16/12/2024		
	4. Data analysed: 08/11/2024			9. Situation overview sent for validation: 30/12/2024		
	5. Data analysis sent for validation: 08/11/2024					
<b>Number of assessments</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single assessment (one cycle)				
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multi assessment (more than one cycle)				
<b>Humanitarian milestones</b> <i>Specify <b>what</b> will the assessment inform and <b>when</b></i> <i>e.g. The shelter cluster will use this data to draft its Revised Flash Appeal;</i>	<b>Milestone</b>			<b>Deadline</b>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Donor plan/strategy			__/__/__	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inter-cluster plan/strategy			__/__/__	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cluster plan/strategy: Moldova: Disability and Age Task Force			31/12/2024	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	NGO platform plan/strategy			__/__/__	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify): Humanitarian, development, and local/governmental actors will use the data to develop programming targeting older refugees displaced from Ukraine to Moldova and older individuals (60+ years old) in Moldova.			31/12/2024	

<b>Audience Type &amp; Dissemination</b> <i>Specify <b>who</b> will the assessment inform and <b>how</b> you will disseminate to inform the audience</i>	<b>Audience type</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategic <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Programmatic <input type="checkbox"/> Operational <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify]		<b>Dissemination</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General Product Mailing (e.g. mail to NGO consortium; HCT participants; Donors) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cluster Mailing (Education, Shelter and WASH) and presentation of findings at next cluster meeting <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Presentation of findings (e.g. at HCT meeting; Cluster meeting) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Website Dissemination (Relief Web & REACH/IMPACT Resource Centre) <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify]	
<b>Stakeholder mapping</b> <i>Has a detailed stakeholder mapping been conducted during research design to identify all actors that could <b>contribute</b> to and/or <b>benefit from</b> the research?</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
<b>General Objective</b>	To inform humanitarian and development programming targeting older refugees <sup>1</sup> displaced from Ukraine to Moldova and older individuals (60+ years old) in Moldova, by providing a comprehensive understanding of the needs and challenges faced within the livelihoods and socio-economic inclusion sector. To identify and understand the factors contributing to the continued vulnerability of older refugees and older individuals in Moldova.			
<b>Specific Objective(s)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the priority needs of older refugees and older individuals in Moldova within the livelihoods and socio-economic inclusion sector, focusing on the following dimensions: access to employment opportunities, income sources and financial stability, humanitarian assistance and social support, financial inclusion, and access to and quality of healthcare and housing.</li> <li>2. Measure the extent to which the needs and challenges in the livelihoods and socio-economic inclusion sector vary across Chişinău, urban, and rural areas.<sup>2</sup></li> <li>3. Identify the coping strategies employed by older refugees and older individuals in Moldova to deal with financial hardship.</li> <li>4. Identify the contextual and structural challenges related to livelihoods and socio-economic inclusion in Moldova by gathering input from both the refugee and host populations.</li> <li>5. Based on the contextual and structural challenges identified, assess the factors driving the continued vulnerability of older refugees and older individuals in Moldova.</li> <li>6. Determine how changes in humanitarian assistance could have impacted the livelihood and financial well-being of older refugees.</li> </ol>			
<b>Research Questions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the priority needs of older refugees and older individuals in Moldova in terms of access to employment opportunities, income sources and financial stability, humanitarian assistance and social support, financial inclusion, and access to and</li> </ol>			

<sup>1</sup> The terms “refugees” and “refugees from Ukraine” refer to all people displaced from Ukraine following the escalation of the conflict in February 2022, including third-country nationals (TCNs).

<sup>2</sup> Urban and rural areas will be categorised according to the Government of Moldova’s classifications outlined in [Law No. 764](#), last updated on 21 June 2024,

	<p>quality of healthcare and housing? How do needs vary among those living in Chişinău, urban areas (excluding Chişinău), and rural areas?</p> <p>2. What are the coping strategies employed by older refugees and older individuals in Moldova to deal with financial hardship?</p> <p>3. What factors and structural challenges within the livelihoods and socio-economic inclusion sector contribute to the continued vulnerability of older refugees and older individuals in Moldova?</p> <p>4. How could changes in humanitarian assistance have impacted the livelihood and financial well-being of older refugees?</p>					
<b>Geographic Coverage</b>	<p>16 settlements in Moldova, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chişinău</li> <li>• 5 in urban areas (excluding Chişinău): Bălţi, Ceadăr-Lunga, Comrat, Ocnita, Cahul</li> <li>• 10 in rural areas: Calarasovca, Tudora, Cairaclia, Baurci, Congaz, Palanca, Ciorescu, Tîrnova, Copceac, Etulia</li> </ul>					
<b>Secondary data sources</b>	Please see section 3.3.					
<b>Population(s)</b> <i>Select all that apply</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	IDPs in camp	<input type="checkbox"/>	IDPs in informal sites		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	IDPs in host communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	IDPs [Other, Specify]		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refugees in camp	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refugees in informal sites		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Refugees in host communities	X	Refugees [Other, specify]: refugees displaced from Ukraine to Moldova after February 24th, 2022, aged 60 years old and above, outside of Refugee Accommodation Centres (RACs)		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Host communities	X	[Other, Specify] older individuals in Moldova, aged 60 years old and above		
<b>Stratification</b> <i>Select type(s) and enter number of strata</i>	X	<p>Geographical #: 3</p> <p><b>Chişinău</b></p> <p><b>Urban:</b> Bălţi, Ceadăr-Lunga, Comrat, Ocnita, Cahul</p> <p><b>Rural:</b> Calarasovca, Tudora, Cairaclia, Baurci, Congaz, Palanca, Ciorescu, Tîrnova, Copceac, Etulia</p> <p>Population size per strata is known? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes X No (estimates of the population size per strata is drawn from the triangulation of the data sources described in Section 3.4)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Group #: __</p> <p>Population size per strata is known? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (estimates of the population size per strata is drawn from the triangulation of the data sources described in Section 3.4)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>[Other Specify] #: __</p> <p>Population size per strata is known? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>

<b>Data collection tool(s)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structured (Quantitative)	<input type="checkbox"/> Semi-structured (Qualitative)
	<b>Sampling method</b>	<b>Data collection method</b>
<b>Structured data collection tool # 1</b> <i>Individual interviews with older refugees (aged 60+)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Purposive <input type="checkbox"/> Probability / Simple random <input type="checkbox"/> Probability / Stratified simple random <input type="checkbox"/> Probability / Cluster sampling <input type="checkbox"/> Probability / Stratified cluster sampling <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Convenience sampling <input type="checkbox"/> Quota	<input type="checkbox"/> Key informant interview (Target #):_____ <input type="checkbox"/> Group discussion (Target #):_____ <input type="checkbox"/> Household interview (Target #):_____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual interview (Target #): 150 <input type="checkbox"/> Direct observations (Target #):_____ <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify] (Target #):_____ 
<b>Structured data collection tool # 2</b> <i>Individual interviews with older individuals in Moldova (aged 60+)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Purposive <input type="checkbox"/> Probability / Simple random <input type="checkbox"/> Probability / Stratified simple random <input type="checkbox"/> Probability / Cluster sampling <input type="checkbox"/> Probability / Stratified cluster sampling <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Convenience sampling <input type="checkbox"/> Quota	<input type="checkbox"/> Key informant interview (Target #):_____ <input type="checkbox"/> Group discussion (Target #):_____ <input type="checkbox"/> Household interview (Target #):_____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual interview (Target #): 150 <input type="checkbox"/> Direct observations (Target #):_____ <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify] (Target #):_____ 
<b>Target level of precision if probability sampling</b>	__% level of confidence	__+/- % margin of error
<b>Disaggregation by gender and age</b> <i>Are you planning to conduct sex/age disaggregated analysis?</i>	Gender	Age
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Data management platform(s)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IMPACT	<input type="checkbox"/> UNHCR
	<input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify]	
<b>Expected output type(s)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Situation overview #: 1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Presentation (Preliminary findings) #: 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Interactive dashboard #: __ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify] #: 1 clean dataset	<input type="checkbox"/> Report #: __ <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation (Final) <input type="checkbox"/> Webmap #: __ <input type="checkbox"/> Profile #: __ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Factsheet #: 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Map #: __
<b>Access</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public (available on IMPACT resource centre and other humanitarian platforms) <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted (bilateral dissemination only upon agreed dissemination list, no publication on REACH or other platforms)	

<b>Visibility</b> Specify which <b>logos</b> should be on outputs	<b>REACH</b>
	<b>Donor:</b> ECHO
	<b>Coordination Framework:</b> N/A
	<b>Partners:</b> N/A

## 2. Rationale

### 2.1 Background

Over two years have passed since the beginning of the military offensive in Ukraine on 24 February 2022. Through the monitoring of border crossings between the two countries, 125,888 refugees from Ukraine were recorded to be in the Republic of Moldova as of 11 August 2024.<sup>3</sup> As the conflict persists, the humanitarian response is transitioning toward a more development-oriented approach based on long-term and sustainable solutions to support the integration of refugees in Moldova and more broadly addressing the needs of vulnerable groups in Moldova.

To help facilitate the integration of refugees, the Government of Moldova granted Ukrainian nationals and eligible third-country nationals (TCNs) the right to apply for Temporary Protection (TP) in March 2023.<sup>4</sup> TP status originally granted refugees the right to stay in Moldova until 1 March 2024, and has since been extended to 1 March 2025. TP status grants refugees several rights, including access to employment and social assistance services.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, it provides refugees with heightened legal certainty and access to vital services, helping facilitate their integration into national welfare systems. As of 12 August 2024, 70,339 Ukrainians have applied for TP status in Moldova, of which 56,323 have been granted this status.<sup>6</sup> While TP status provides refugees with greater legal security and access to essential services, certain groups remain particularly vulnerable.

Older individuals are one such vulnerable group which comprises a significant portion of both the refugee and host population in Moldova. Among refugees, they are estimated to make up 18% of the population as of March 2024.<sup>7</sup> Among Moldovans, those aged 60 years and above constitute nearly 24% of the total population as of 1 January 2024.<sup>8</sup> Through secondary data review and consultations, older individuals have been identified as one of the most vulnerable groups in Moldova, with acute needs but limited available information.

Although the 2024 Socio-Economic Insights Survey (SEIS) and previous Multi-Sector Needs Assessments (MSNAs) disaggregate data by age, the specific needs of older refugees, particularly those relating to their livelihoods, have not been comprehensively documented. Moreover, data collection for these assessments relies on household interviews, which may lead to potential underrepresentation or misrepresentation of the unique needs and challenges faced by older refugees. According to an assessment conducted by HelpAge Moldova, 85% of assessed older refugees relied on cash assistance and were vulnerable to financial strain, while only 2% reported receiving a salary.<sup>9</sup> While this likely reflects that most refugees aged 60 and above are retired and unwilling or unable to work, some do want to work but may be facing difficulties securing employment. This is especially considering that pensions have been reported to be insufficient as a sustainable sole source

<sup>3</sup> UNHCR, [Country - Republic of Moldova](#), accessed on 22 August 2024. Due to limitations identified in this method of monitoring the number of refugees in Moldova, including the inability to account for the border crossing of refugees with more than one passport, this figure is expected not to accurately reflect the total number of refugees from Ukraine currently in Moldova.

<sup>4</sup> Government of Republic of Moldova (Guvernul Republicii Moldova), [Decision no.21/2023](#), p. 4, accessed on 17.07.2024.

<sup>5</sup> Government of Republic of Moldova (Guvernul Republicii Moldova), [Decision amending Government Decision no. 21/2023](#), accessed on 17.07.2024.

<sup>6</sup> General Inspectorate for Migration (IGM). [Statistica săptămânală a Inspectoratului General pentru Migrație – Săptămâna 75 - Inspectoratul General pentru Migrație | Ministerul Afacerilor Interne \(gov.md\)](#), accessed on 4 September 2024.

<sup>7</sup> UNHCR, [Ukraine Situation: Moldova - Operations Update \(March 2024\)](#), p. 4, accessed on 16 July 2024.

<sup>8</sup> National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova, [Older individuals in Moldova in 2022](#), accessed on 18 July 2024.

<sup>9</sup> HelpAge, [Moldova: Needs Assessment of Older Ukrainian Refugees \(14 September 2022, Moldova\)](#), accessed on 18 July 2024.

of income due to inflation and other increases in cost.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, 82% of older interviewees had at least one health condition, with 51% having multiple conditions. The escalation of conflict has impacted most older refugees emotionally due to loneliness, disagreements with relatives or friends, and loss of loved ones.<sup>11</sup> Most persons with disabilities identified by Centre for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) are women and elderly persons.<sup>12</sup> Finding accessible housing for older refugees with mobility disabilities remains a significant challenge. The combination of health conditions, mobility issues, financial vulnerabilities, and livelihoods needs exacerbates the overall vulnerability of older individuals, making it harder to integrate into Moldova.

Older Moldovans also face socio-economic and financial vulnerabilities, with their primary source of income being their pension.<sup>13</sup> Few studies have been done to assess the specific needs of older Moldovans in the areas of livelihoods and socio-economic inclusion despite their significant share of the national population and higher vulnerability. Assessing the livelihood needs of older individuals in both the refugee and host community is crucial for better understanding the local context and structural challenges that affect displaced older refugees. Additionally, through improving the understanding of the needs of older Moldovans, this assessment seeks to inform development programming in Moldova which could more broadly improve the livelihoods and living conditions of vulnerable groups in Moldova, specifically that of older individuals, and support the country's integration in the European Union. By assessing the experiences of older refugees and older individuals in the host community, this assessment seeks to gain a comprehensive understanding of challenges and needs faced by both groups and facilitate the creation of more effective, and inclusive aid strategies and programmes.

This assessment aims to address and fill the information gap on older refugees and older individuals in Moldova. This will be achieved by conducting individual-level interviews with older refugees and Moldovans to identify their needs across employment, income and financial stability, humanitarian assistance and social support, financial inclusion, healthcare and housing access and quality, and coping mechanisms used to deal with financial hardship.

## 2.2 Intended impact

The objective of the OINA is to inform humanitarian and development programming targeting the livelihoods and socio-economic vulnerabilities of older refugees and older individuals in Moldova. The assessment aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the needs and challenges faced by older refugees and older Moldovans within the livelihoods and socio-economic inclusion sector, and the factors contributing to their continued vulnerability. The assessment will focus on key dimensions within the livelihoods and socio-economic inclusion sector, specifically employment access and challenges, income and financial stability, humanitarian assistance and social support, healthcare and housing access and quality, and financial coping strategies employed by older individuals.

Furthermore, the assessment seeks to provide a better understanding of how needs and challenges vary between Chişinău, urban, and rural areas. Evaluating the needs and challenges in different settings will provide a clearer picture of the requisite support according to the specific area where older individuals reside.

The REACH assessment also aims to identify the contextual needs, structural challenges, and gaps in support services that may impact the socio-economic inclusion and quality of life of older individuals, by gathering input from both the refugee population and individuals from Moldova. This approach will enhance understanding of contextual factors and assist humanitarian aid and development programmes in enhancing their effectiveness. The results will inform national authorities for internal policies and programmes.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> HelpAge, [Moldova: Needs Assessment of Older Ukrainian Refugees \(14 September 2022, Moldova\)](#), accessed on 18 July 2024.

<sup>12</sup> Norwegian Refugee Council, [Republic of Moldova: Needs assessment of Ukrainian refugees with disabilities \(January 2023\)](#), accessed on 18 July 2024.

<sup>13</sup> R. Ivaşcu, N. Covrig, and A. Buzu, Unequal Moldova. [Analysis of the most relevant inequalities in Moldova \(Moldova inegală. Analiza celor mai relevante inegalităţi din Republica Moldova\)](#), Chişinău, 2021, accessed on 18 July 2024.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Methodology overview

This assessment will employ a quantitative methodology by conducting in-person, structured individual-level surveys with older individuals (aged 60 and above) among those displaced from Ukraine to Moldova following the escalation of hostilities in February 2022, and the host population in Moldova. By using a quantitative methodology, this assessment seeks to complement existing qualitative research on older refugees in Moldova and gain an understanding of the prevalence of needs and challenges faced by older individuals in Moldova through having a wider geographical coverage of this population.

#### Key definitions

- **Refugees:** Persons or groups of persons who have been displaced from Ukraine following the escalation of hostilities on 24 February 2022, including third-country nationals. Therefore, the definition of refugee in this assessment is not limited to the legal status designation.
- **Older individuals:** Individuals aged 60 and above.
- **Vulnerability:** The concept is based on the premise that some people are more susceptible to harm, relative to others, as a result of exposure to one or more forms of risk.<sup>14</sup>
- **Livelihood:** The capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living.<sup>15</sup>
- **Socio-economic inclusion:** The process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups, regardless of their socio-economic background, take part in society – improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity.<sup>16</sup> In the context of displaced persons from Ukraine, it supports refugees, stateless persons, third country nationals and other forcibly displaced persons moving from Ukraine, in integrating into the economies and social fabric of host countries and communities.<sup>17</sup> Socio-economic inclusion entails equitable access to education, employment, healthcare, and other essential services.

### 3.2 Population of interest

#### Geographical coverage

The OINA will cover 16 settlements across the Republic of Moldova, excluding the Transnistrian region, with the highest numbers of older refugees displaced from Ukraine after the escalation of conflict in February 2022. This includes the city of Chişinău, 5 settlements in urban areas, and 10 settlements in rural areas. Although the Government of Moldova classifies Chişinău as an urban area, it will be covered separately due to the high concentration of older refugees and Moldovans residing there (approximately 36% of the total 60+ refugee population and 17% of the total 60+ Moldovan population).<sup>18</sup> Findings will be presented by settlement type.

#### Geographical terms:

- **Village:** Administrative-territorial units that comprise the rural population united by the territory, geographical conditions, economic, social-cultural relations, traditions and customs, in which the majority of the workforce is concentrated in agriculture, forestry, fishing, offering a specific and viable way of life to its inhabitants, and which,

<sup>14</sup> International Organization for Migration, [Determinants of migrant vulnerability](#), accessed on 17 July 2024.

<sup>15</sup> R. Chambers, Gordon R. Conway, [Sustainable rural livelihoods: practical concepts for the 21st century](#), IDS Discussion Paper 296, accessed on 29.07.2024.

<sup>16</sup> World Bank, [Social Inclusion \(worldbank.org\)](#), accessed on 5 September 2024.

<sup>17</sup> Regional socio-economic inclusion working group, [Guidance and studies on socio-economic inclusion by thematic area](#), accessed on 29.07.2024.

<sup>18</sup> The percentage of older refugees living in Chisinau was calculated using UNHCR's Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance list, as of July 2024. The percentage of older Moldovans was calculated using the Government of Moldova's National Bureau of Statistics list of Moldovans aged 60 and above.

through modernisation policies, will preserve its rural specificity in the future.<sup>19</sup> The village, if it is not part of a commune, is the first-level administrative-territorial unit.

- **Commune:** Administrative-territorial unit, composed of two or more villages, comprising the rural population united by a community of interests and traditions, according to economic, social-cultural, geographical and demographic conditions.<sup>20</sup> The commune is the first-level administrative-territorial unit.
- **Rural areas:** Villages and communes.
- **City:** Administrative-territorial unit in which the majority of labor resources are employed in non-agricultural activities with a diversified level of endowment and equipment, exerting a significant socio-economic influence on the surrounding area. Under the terms of the law, some cities can be declared municipalities.<sup>21</sup>
- **Raion:** An administrative-territorial unit consisting of villages (communes) and cities, connected through territory, economic relationships, and socio-cultural ties. The city where the raion council is headquartered is designated as the raion centre city, and the raion is named after this city. The administrative boundaries of the raion encompass the area of its localities and align with the borders separating it from neighbouring raions.<sup>22</sup>
- **Municipality:** A locality of urban type with a special role in the economic, social-cultural, scientific, political and administrative life of the country, with important industrial, commercial structures and institutions in the field of education, protection of health and culture.<sup>23</sup>
- **Chişinău:** This refers to the city of Chişinău, an admin 2 level administrative-territorial unit.<sup>24</sup> The city of Chişinău is composed of 5 sectors.<sup>25</sup>
- **Urban areas (excluding Chişinău):** Municipalities and cities.
- **Settlement:** Settlements are not officially recognised as a formal administrative unit, but rather a term selected by REACH to enable more granular data and differentiate between urban and rural settlements. In practice, settlements can be classified as villages (sate), communes (comune), cities (oraşe), or municipalities (municipii), and these terms are often used interchangeably. There are 983 settlements in Moldova, which includes 81 settlements situated within the Transnistrian region.

## Population assessed and unit of measurement

The first group of interest consists of refugees who have been displaced from Ukraine to Moldova after February 24th, 2022, aged 60 years or older, residing outside of Refugee Accommodation Centres (RACs). Refugees living in RACs are excluded from this assessment, as they have access to humanitarian assistance and social support services that may not be available to those living outside of RACs. Furthermore, the needs of refugees living in RACs have been assessed through other methods.<sup>26</sup> The data will be collected and analysed at the individual level to understand the specific needs and experiences of older individuals. The second group of interest consists of the Moldovan population who are aged 60 years or older. Similar to the first group, data will be collected at the individual level.

<sup>19</sup> Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, [Law No. 764 of 27-12-2001 on the Administrative-Territorial Organization of the Republic of Moldova, amended by LP112 of 16.05.24, MO216-218/21.05.24 art.318; in force 21.06.24](#), accessed on 02.08.2024.

<sup>20</sup> Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, [Law No. 764 of 27-12-2001 on the Administrative-Territorial Organization of the Republic of Moldova, amended by LP112 of 16.05.24, MO216-218/21.05.24 art.318; in force 21.06.24](#), accessed on 02.08.2024.

<sup>21</sup> Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, [Law No. 764 of 27-12-2001 on the Administrative-Territorial Organization of the Republic of Moldova, amended by LP112 of 16.05.24, MO216-218/21.05.24 art.318; in force 21.06.24](#), accessed on 02.08.2024.

<sup>22</sup> Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, [Law No. 764 of 27-12-2001 on the Administrative-Territorial Organization of the Republic of Moldova, amended by LP112 of 16.05.24, MO216-218/21.05.24 art.318; in force 21.06.24](#), accessed on 02.08.2024.

<sup>23</sup> Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, [Law No. 764 of 27-12-2001 on the Administrative-Territorial Organization of the Republic of Moldova, amended by LP112 of 16.05.24, MO216-218/21.05.24 art.318; in force 21.06.24](#), accessed on 30.07.2024.

<sup>24</sup> Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, [Law No. LP136/2016 of 17.06.2016 amended by LP37 of 17.02.22, MO68-71/11.03.22 art.96; in force 11.03.22](#), accessed on 02.08.2024.

<sup>25</sup> Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, [Law No. 764 of 27-12-2001 on the Administrative-Territorial Organization of the Republic of Moldova, amended by LP112 of 16.05.24, MO216-218/21.05.24 art.318; in force 21.06.24](#), see Annex 2, accessed on 02.08.2024.

<sup>26</sup> REACH, [Moldova Refugee Accommodation Centres \(RACs\) Monthly Needs Monitoring](#), Update as of 31.12.2023

The survey will cover 150 older refugees living in Chişinău and settlements in rural and urban areas across the Republic of Moldova. Additionally, 150 individual surveys will be conducted with the older Moldovan population in the same settlements to more comparably capture structural needs and challenges facing older individuals in Moldova.

### 3.3 Secondary data review

The secondary data review was conducted from April to July 2024, focusing on vulnerable segments of the refugee population in the Republic of Moldova. The review aimed to identify vulnerable groups with pressing needs but limited information, avoid duplicating ongoing assessments, and align with response needs. A wide array of sources was examined, including UN reports (UNHCR, UN Women, UNICEF, WHO), reports from International NGOs, statistical data from the Government of the Republic of Moldova, and academic publications, providing insights into the context and specific vulnerabilities faced by different refugee groups in the Republic of Moldova, and theoretical frameworks. The findings from the secondary data review and consultations with partners including UNHCR, UNICEF and HelpAge International were pivotal in shaping the chosen population of interest. After conducting the secondary data review, it was determined that there is limited research and information on the needs of older refugees, particularly in the socio-economic inclusion and livelihoods sector. The consultations were also done to ensure that the assessment would address remaining information gaps not covered by existing research and that there was no duplication of efforts.

**Table 1: Identified sources for secondary data review**

Resource	To inform
UNHCR, <a href="#">Regional Refugee Response for the Ukraine Situation</a> , February 2023.	Context, Methodology
UNHCR, <a href="#">Ukraine Refugee Situation – Regional Response Plan 2024</a> , January 2024.	Context, Methodology
HelpAge International, <a href="#">Moldova: Needs Assessment of Older Ukrainian Refugees</a> , September 2022.	Context, Methodology
HelpAge International, <i>[DRAFT] Assessment on the needs and access to services for older refugees from Ukraine, located on the territory of Moldova</i> , July 2024. Unpublished	Context, Methodology
Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, <a href="#">Law No. 764 of 27-12-2001 on the administrative-territorial organization of the Republic of Moldova</a> , amended by LP112 of 16.05.24, MO216-218/21.05.24 art.318; in force 21.06.24	Methodology
UNHCR, <i>Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) list of beneficiaries</i> , July 2024. Unpublished, <b>restricted access</b>	Sampling design
REACH, <i>Refugee Population Profiling (RPOP) Assessment</i> , compiled June 2024. Unpublished	Sampling design
National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova, <i>Number of population with usual residence, by selected age groups, at the first level of territorial administrative unit (village/town, city/municipality), at the beginning of 2024</i> , January 1, 2024. Unpublished, <b>restricted access</b>	Sampling design
Acted, <i>List of active refugee accommodation centers (RACs) in Moldova and their locations</i> , July 2024. Unpublished, <b>restricted access</b>	Sampling design

Additionally, any new reports, studies, factsheets, or briefings, relevant to this assessment, released during data collection will be used to enrich the assessment's background and triangulate findings from the primary data collection.

### 3.4 Primary Data Collection

#### Method

Primary data collection will be conducted through structured individual-level surveys of the populations of interest. Individual-level surveys will be conducted instead of household-level surveys due to the diverse composition of refugee and Moldovan

households, and the need to specifically assess the needs and challenges of those that are aged 60 and above rather than those of other members in their household that may be younger.

The IMPACT Moldova Field Team will conduct face-to-face interviews with respondents. In cases where respondents are unable to answer the survey directly (due to health conditions or disabilities), interviews will be conducted with the respondents' caregivers. Data collection will be conducted from the end of September to mid-October 2024 for a period of three weeks, with an additional buffer of 1 week to accommodate unforeseen situations or operational challenges. Enumerators will be trained several days prior to data collection, followed by conducting a pilot of the tool before the start of data collection. Debriefing with enumerators will be done on a regular basis throughout data collection.

### Databases and adjustments

Since the onset of the conflict, there has been no nationwide record of the precise numbers and geographic dispersion of the refugee population in Moldova. Given the lack of precise data and to corroborate existing estimates of the refugee population in Moldova, REACH consulted two databases to prepare the sample for this assessment:

- **UNHCR's Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA)** database of beneficiaries across Moldova, as of July 2024. The MPCA database consists of 29,284 beneficiaries including 5,306 beneficiaries that are 60 and above (excluding those residing in Transnistria).
- **REACH Refugee Population Profiling Assessment 2024 (RPoP)** estimates on the total number of refugees from Ukraine living in Moldova. The RPoP database was compiled in June 2024 using a variety of sources estimating the refugee population in Moldova, including UNHCR's MPCA database. The RPoP database estimates there are 27,177 refugees currently residing in Moldova, excluding the Transnistrian region. Age-disaggregated data is unavailable.

For the Moldovan population, REACH consulted the Government of Moldova's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) database of Moldovans aged 60 and older, which as of 1 January 2024, estimated there were 610,684 Moldovans in this age group.

The MPCA database was selected as the primary database because it provided more cohesive and up to date data than the RPoP database, which was based on a compilation of several databases that had differing dates when they were last updated, and included age-disaggregated data by settlement. However, based on field observations and known database limitations, the figures for cash beneficiaries in settlements near the Ukraine border are likely to be inflated. Although the MPCA's fingerprint registration system has proven effective in preventing duplication of the count of refugees within the country, it does not account for potential beneficiaries who may have crossed the border from Ukraine. This could present operational challenges in determining the appropriate number of surveys in these settlements. To mitigate the risk of sampling settlements without older refugees, the RPoP database was used to adjust settlements with an expected high overrepresentation of refugees. Since the RPoP database does not have age-disaggregated data, REACH compared the total settlement populations in the MPCA and RPoP database. In settlements where the population differed by 100% or more, the estimate in the RPoP database was used, as it is considered to be more reliable in showing the confirmed number of refugees in a settlement.

To ensure that refugees residing in RACs are excluded from the sampling frame, REACH subtracted the total number of refugees living in RACs in each settlement according to the Acted and UNHCR RAC Monitoring database from the adjusted total population for each settlement. The Acted and UNHCR RAC Monitoring database monitors the total number of refugees living in accredited RACs across Moldova, excluding the Transnistrian region. As of July 2024, which was the data used for the purpose of sampling for this assessment, 1,432 refugees were living in accredited RACs.

To calculate the adjusted population for refugees aged 60 and above, REACH applied the proportion of the 60+ population from the MPCA database to the adjusted total population after subtracting the number of refugees living in RACs.

## Sampling

Due to the lack of complete and accurate data on the refugee population, a probability sampling approach was not possible. The OINA will therefore implement a non-probability convenience sampling approach. While results obtained from this approach will not be statistically representative or generalisable to the entire older refugee or Moldovan populations, they will provide indicative insights into their respective situations.

The sample will be stratified by settlement type (Chişinău, rural, and urban). Although the majority of refugees and older Moldovans live in Chişinău, the remaining population is geographically dispersed across Moldova. Stratification ensures that the sample reflects a variety of settlement types, thereby capturing a broader range of perceptions and needs among older refugees and older Moldovans. REACH sampled Chişinău, as well as the top 5 urban settlements and the top 10 rural settlements based on the number of refugees aged 60 and above.<sup>27</sup> Settlements were sampled based on the population of older refugees rather than older Moldovans, due to the smaller number of older refugees and expected greater difficulty in finding older refugee respondents compared to older Moldovans. The population of older Moldovans in the sampled settlements was cross-checked to ensure they also had high concentrations of older Moldovans which could be sampled for this assessment.

Given their smaller population, the number of sampled rural settlements was doubled to ensure sufficient interviews will be operationally feasible in these areas. Based on the sampling strategy and considering time and resource constraints, 300 interviews will be conducted across the 16 sampled settlements. 150 interviews will be conducted with the older refugee population, with 50 interviews each in Chişinău, rural and urban settlements, the sample size being equal so that findings can be compared between the three strata. 150 interviews will also be conducted with the older Moldovan population, with 50 interviews in each stratum. To maintain comparability of findings, the same interview target per stratum and the same settlements will be used for the survey of Moldovans aged 60 and above.

The number of interviews in each settlement was assigned proportionally based on the population size of each stratum. For the refugee population, the estimated 60+ population from the adjusted MPCA database was used to determine the number of interviews, while the estimated 60+ population from the NBS database was used to allocate the number of interviews for the Moldovan population.

Tables 2 and 3 below summarise the target number of interviews to conduct across each settlement type, with corrective adjustments applied.

**Table 2: Sampling summary table – 60+ refugee and Moldovan population**

Settlement Type	Refugee Interviews		Moldovan Interviews	
	Estimated 60+ Refugee Population	Target Refugee Individual Surveys	Estimated 60+ Moldovan Population	Target Moldovan Individual Surveys
Chişinău	1,830	50	105,794	50
Urban	581	50	35,610	50
Rural	128	50	9,542	50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,539</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>150,946</b>	<b>150</b>

<sup>27</sup> Based on the methodology, Valcinet, Baltata, and Baraboi were originally sampled rural settlements. Through prior assessments and initial scoping, field enumerators found the number of refugees residing in these settlements was lower than estimated. As a result, these settlements were removed from the sample and replaced with Tirnova, Copceac, and Etulia, which represent the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth largest rural settlements by 60+ population size.

Table 3: Target number of interviews per settlement

Strata	Admin 1	Admin 2	Respondent type	Estimated 60+ Population per admin 2 and respondent type	Sample per admin 2 and respondent type	Sample per admin 2
Chişinău	Chişinău	Chişinău	Refugees	1,830	50	100
			Moldovans	105,794	50	
Urban settlements (excluding Chişinău)	Bălţi	Bălţi	Refugees	238	21	48
			Moldovans	19,022	27	
	UTA Gagauzia	Ceadîr-Lunga	Refugees	120	10	16
			Moldovans	4,027	6	
	UTA Gagauzia	Comrat	Refugees	86	7	13
			Moldovans	4,504	6	
	Ocniţa	Ocniţa	Refugees	77	7	9
			Moldovans	1,846	2	
	Cahul	Cahul	Refugees	60	5	14
			Moldovans	6,211	9	
Rural settlements	Ocniţa	Calaraşovca	Refugees	29	11	14
			Moldovans	496	3	
	Ştefan Vodă	Tudora	Refugees	14	6	8
			Moldovans	418	2	
	Taraclia	Cairaclia	Refugees	13	5	7
			Moldovans	362	2	
	UTA Gagauzia	Baurci	Refugees	11	4	10
			Moldovans	1,201	6	
	UTA Gagauzia	Congaz	Refugees	11	4	16
			Moldovans	2,239	12	
	Ştefan Vodă	Palanca	Refugees	11	4	6
			Moldovans	389	2	
	Chişinău	Ciorescu	Refugees	11	4	11
			Moldovans	1,262	7	
	Donduşeni	Tîrnova	Refugees	10	4	8
			Moldovans	799	4	
	UTA Gagauzia	Copceac	Refugees	9	4	12
			Moldovans	1,520	8	
	UTA Gagauzia	Etulia	Refugees	9	4	8
			Moldovans	856	4	
TOTAL				300		

### Respondent scoping

Due to limited information on the exact location of older refugees and older Moldovans, respondents will be identified through two primary channels:

1. **Local authorities and social workers:** Enumerators will solicit support from local authorities and social workers within the sampled settlements, as they have data on the refugee and Moldovan populations by age. Enumerators will then travel to these locations to conduct interviews with older refugees and older Moldovans.
2. **Public locations:** Where possible, enumerators will visit public spaces where older refugees and older Moldovans are most likely to be present, such as aid distribution centres (for the refugee population), hospitals, churches, and community centres. Enumerators will compile a list of these locations prior to data collection.

Older individuals may be harder to access due to health conditions and mobility issues. Refugees in this age group can be particularly difficult to reach, due to additional factors such as short stays, relocation to other settlements, and relocation to other countries. As a result, enumerators anticipate potential challenges in identifying respondents aged 60 and above. To mitigate this risk, enumerators will conduct extensive scoping for respondents in this age group, including coordinating with local authorities, social workers, and partner organisations in Moldova that work with refugees and older Moldovans. If after several attempts, enumerators are unable to meet the interview target in a settlement, the remaining interviews will be randomly allocated among the other settlements in the stratum.

## **Tool**

A structured quantitative survey will be prepared in Kobo Toolbox. There will be two surveys: one for the refugee population and a second for the Moldovan population. The surveys will be largely similar to maintain comparability across the two groups, with modifications as necessary to ensure the questions asked are relevant to each population. For example, the Moldovan population will not be asked questions about receiving humanitarian assistance, as they are not applicable.

The surveys will include questions on demographics of the respondents and self-perceived needs of older refugees and older individuals in Moldova within the livelihoods and socio-economic inclusion sector. Demographic data will be collected on respondents' age, gender, location of residence, and employment status. Additionally, the refugee population will be asked about their legal status and length of stay in Moldova. Data will also be collected on respondents' income sources, access to employment opportunities, financial inclusion and access to formal financial institutions, access to and quality of healthcare services, accessibility of housing, and capacity to cope with financial hardship.

## **3.5 Data Processing & Analysis**

All primary quantitative data will be collected using the Kobo Toolbox platform. There will be two questionnaires: one for the refugee population and one for the Moldovan population. The Assessment Officers and Data Officer will clean the raw data daily with the assistance of an R script to address any duplicates or data quality issues during data collection. All data collection and cleaning activities will adhere to IMPACT's minimum standards requirements and checklist developed by IMPACT HQ. The cleaned datasets for each population will be reviewed by the Senior Assessment Officer.

After the data cleaning process, the Data Officer and Assessment Officers will conduct statistical analysis on the cleaned quantitative data set using R script and Excel for each group. Analysis will be conducted with disaggregation by areas of residence and age group for both data sets. The data analysis will be carried out in compliance with IMPACT's Minimum Standards Checklist for Quantitative Data Analysis. The analysed dataset will be reviewed by the Senior Assessment Officer followed by the Associate Research Manager.

The secondary data will be collected and reviewed by the Assessment Officers and Senior Assessment Officer. Any new reports, studies, fact sheets, or briefings relevant to this assessment released during data collection will be used to triangulate findings from the primary data collection.

All data cleaning and analysis will be reviewed by the IMPACT Research Department's Africa & Europe Unit before output production.

### 3.6 Limitations

**Representativeness:** There is no official nationwide record of the exact number and geographic dispersion of refugees from Ukraine across the Republic of Moldova. As a result, the sampling framework was based on available lists such as the MPCA and RPoP databases. The findings of this assessment will not be statistically representative of the entire population and should be considered indicative only. Similarly, due to basing the sampling of settlements on the older refugee population, the findings will not be representative and only indicative of the Moldovan older population as well.

**Geographical coverage:** Transnistria is a self-declared autonomous region located between the Dniester River and the Ukrainian border. This region is not controlled by the government of the Republic of Moldova. Due to political sensitivities and access constraints, the OINA will not cover the Transnistrian region.

**Respondent bias:** Enumerators may encounter respondents who are unable to answer the survey directly due to health conditions or disabilities. In these cases, interviews may need to be conducted with respondents' caregivers. Caregivers' responses may not accurately reflect respondent experiences, perceptions, and needs within the livelihoods and socio-economic inclusion sector, which may affect the reliability and validity of the data collected.

**Respondent identification:** The Field Team may encounter challenges locating respondents 60 years and older within both populations of interest, as this age group is considered hard to access. As a result, it is possible enumerators will not meet the target number of interviews in each settlement. To mitigate the potential impacts of this limitation, REACH sampled settlements with the highest population of refugees and Moldovans aged 60 and above, thereby increasing the likelihood of identifying respondents in this age group.

## 4. Key ethical considerations and related risks

The proposed research design meets / does not meet the following criteria:

<i>The proposed research design...</i>	<i>Yes/ No</i>	<i>Details if no (including mitigation)</i>
... Has been coordinated with relevant stakeholders to <b>avoid unnecessary duplication</b> of data collection efforts?	Yes	
... <b>Respects respondents, their rights and dignity</b> ( <i>specifically by: seeking informed consent, designing length of survey/ discussion while being considerate of participants' time, ensuring accurate reporting of information provided</i> )?	Yes	
... Does not <b>expose data collectors to any risks as a direct result</b> of participation in data collection?	Yes	
... Does not <b>expose respondents / their communities to any risks as a direct result</b> of participation in data collection?	Yes	
... Does not involve <b>collecting information on specific topics which may be stressful and/ or re-traumatising</b> for research participants (both respondents and data collectors)?	Yes	
... Does not involve <b>data collection with minors</b> i.e. anyone less than 18 years old?	Yes	

<i>The proposed research design...</i>	<i>Yes/ No</i>	<i>Details if no (including mitigation)</i>
... Does not involve <b>data collection with other vulnerable groups</b> e.g. persons with disabilities, victims/ survivors of protection incidents, etc.?	No	Respondents to the individual survey are older Ukrainian refugees and older individuals from the host country, Moldova, some of whom may have disabilities or have experienced protection incidents. However, the surveys do not include questions about protection-related incidents. Furthermore, the IMPACT MDA Field Team has been trained in Psychological First Aid to mitigate this. This is further mitigated in cases where caregivers will be interviewed instead of the older refugee or Moldovan themselves.
... Follows IMPACT SOPs for management of <b>personally identifiable information</b> ?	Yes	

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

<i>Task Description</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Accountable</i>	<i>Consulted</i>	<i>Informed</i>
Research design	Assessment Officers	Senior Assessment Officer	Associate Research Manager, HelpAge International, UNHCR, Senior Field Officer, ECHO Technical Assistant, PLACE Consortium, Disability and Age Task Force, <i>Protection Working Group</i>	Projects and Fundraising Officer
Supervising data collection	Field Assistants	Senior Field Officer	Assessment Officers, Senior Assessment Officer,	ECHO
Data processing (checking, cleaning)	Assessment Officers, Data Officer	Senior Assessment Officer	Associate Research Manager, HQ Research Department	ECHO
Data analysis	Assessment Officers, Data Officer	Senior Assessment Officer	Associate Research Manager, HQ	ECHO

<b>Task Description</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Accountable</b>	<b>Consulted</b>	<b>Informed</b>
			Research Department	
Output production	Assessment Officers	Senior Assessment Officer	Associate Research Manager, HQ Research Department	ECHO
Dissemination	Assessment Officers, Senior Assessment Officer	Senior Assessment Officer	Associate Research Manager, Projects and Fundraising Officer, HQ Communications & Advocacy Unit, Country coordinator	ECHO, PLACE Consortium, Disability and Age Task Force
Monitoring & Evaluation	Senior Assessment Officer	Country Coordinator	Associate Research Manager, Projects and Funding Officer, HQ MEL Unit	ECHO
Lessons learned	Assessment Officers, Field Officer	Senior Assessment Officer	Associate Research Manager, Country Coordinator, ECHO	HQ MEL Unit

**Responsible:** the person(s) who executes the task

**Accountable:** the person who validates the completion of the task and is accountable of the final output or milestone

**Consulted:** the person(s) who must be consulted when the task is implemented

**Informed:** the person(s) who need to be informed when the task is completed

## 6. Data Analysis Plan

The Data Analysis Plan (DAP) is published separately. Click [here](#) to view the DAP.

## 7. Monitoring & Evaluation Plan

IMPACT Objective	External M&E Indicator	Internal M&E Indicator	Focal point	Tool	Will indicator be tracked?
Humanitarian stakeholders are accessing IMPACT products	Number of humanitarian organisations accessing IMPACT services/products  Number of individuals accessing IMPACT services/products	# of downloads of x product from Resource Center	Country request to HQ	User_log	X Yes
		# of downloads of x product from Relief Web	Country request to HQ		X Yes
		# of downloads of x product from Country level platforms	Country team		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
		# of page clicks on x product from REACH global newsletter	Country request to HQ		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
		# of page clicks on x product from country newsletter, sendingBlue, bit.ly	Country team		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
		# of visits to x webmap/x dashboard	Country request to HQ		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
IMPACT activities contribute to better program implementation and coordination of the humanitarian response	Number of humanitarian organisations utilising IMPACT services/products	# references in HPC documents (HNO, SRP, Flash appeals, Cluster/sector strategies)	Country team	Reference_log	UNHCR Moldova Country Strategy
		# references in single agency documents			
Humanitarian stakeholders are using IMPACT products	Humanitarian actors use IMPACT evidence/products as a basis for decision making, aid planning and delivery  Number of humanitarian documents (HNO, HRP,	Perceived relevance of IMPACT country-programs	Country team	Usage_Feed back and Usage_Survey template	General partner usage survey to be conducted at the end of 2025 for all 2025 activities targeting at least 10 partners.
		Perceived usefulness and influence of IMPACT outputs			
		Recommendations to strengthen IMPACT programs			
		Perceived capacity of IMPACT staff			

IMPACT Objective	External M&E Indicator	Internal M&E Indicator	Focal point	Tool	Will indicator be tracked?
	cluster/agency strategic plans, etc.) directly informed by IMPACT products	Perceived quality of outputs/programs			
		Recommendations to strengthen IMPACT programs			
<b>Humanitarian stakeholders are engaged in IMPACT programs throughout the research cycle</b>	Number and/or percentage of humanitarian organisations directly contributing to IMPACT programs ( <i>providing resources, participating to presentations, etc.</i> )	# of organisations providing resources (i.e.staff, vehicles, meeting space, budget, etc.) for activity implementation	Country team	Engagement_log	X Yes
		# of organisations/clusters inputting in research design and joint analysis			X Yes
		# of organisations/clusters attending briefings on findings;			X Yes