

Research Terms of Reference

Refugee Population Profiling Assessment

MDA2401

Moldova

April 2024
V1

REACH Informing
more effective
humanitarian action

1. Executive Summary

Country of intervention	The Republic of Moldova				
Type of Emergency	<input type="checkbox"/>	Natural hazard	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Conflict	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>specify</i>)
Type of Crisis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sudden onset	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slow onset	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Protracted
Mandating Body/ Agency	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)				
IMPACT Project Code	67 AZF				
Overall Research Timeframe (<i>from research design to final outputs / M&E</i>)	01/02/2024 to 31/08/2024				
Research Timeframe <i>Add planned deadlines (for the first cycle if more than 1)</i>	1. Pilot/ training: 16/05/2024		5. Data sent for validation: 01/07/2024		
	2. Start collect data: 20/05/2024		7. Outputs sent for validation: 29/07/2024		
	3. Data collected: 07/06/2024		8. Outputs published: 16/08/2024		
	4. Data analysed: 28/06/2024		9. Final presentation: 20/08/2024		
Number of assessments	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single assessment (one cycle)			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multi-assessment (more than one cycle)			
Humanitarian milestones <i>Specify what will the assessment inform and when</i> <i>e.g. The shelter cluster will use this data to draft its Revised Flash Appeal;</i>	Milestone			Deadline (can be tentative)	
	X	<u>Donor plan/strategy:</u> ECHO will use the findings of the assessment to inform their strategic planning and programming related to meeting the needs of refugees from Ukraine in Moldova, particularly in regards to the prioritisation of needs to address and targeting the most vulnerable and underserved segments of this population.			31/08/2024
	X	<u>Inter-cluster plan/strategy:</u> The Refugee Coordination Forum will use the findings of the assessment to inform their strategic planning and programming related to meeting the needs of refugees from Ukraine in Moldova, particularly in regards to the prioritisation of			31/08/2024

		needs to address and targeting of the most vulnerable and underserved segments of this population.	
	X	<u>Cluster plan/strategy:</u> The estimates of the total refugee population will inform the Information Management Working Group, especially regarding the effectiveness of the methodology for mapping the refugee population in Moldova and potentially serve as a basis for an improved method for producing up-to-date and accurate estimates of this population in Moldova.	31/08/2024
	X	<u>NGO platform plan/strategy:</u> PLACE consortium partners will use data to inform their programmes/projects.	31/08/2024
Audience Type & Dissemination Specify who will the assessment inform and how you will disseminate to inform the audience	Audience type		Dissemination
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategic <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Programmatic <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Operational <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify]		<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 the 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 Resource Centre) <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify]
Stakeholder mapping Has a detailed stakeholder mapping been conducted during research design to identify all actors that could contribute to and/or benefit from the research?	X	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
General Objective	To inform efficient planning, adequate resource allocation and prioritisation of the refugee response in Moldova by providing more accurate, up-to-date and updatable estimates of the total number and geographic distribution of refugees from Ukraine ¹ that are currently residing in Moldova, and shed light on gaps in coverage and marginalised communities not accounted for in existing databases. To gain insights into their demographic profile, particularly of underserved segments of the refugee population, and identify where gaps remain in addressing the needs of this population according to the level of coverage of existing assistance nets and their self-perceived needs.		

¹ Throughout this Terms of Reference, the use of the terms 'refugees' and 'refugees from Ukraine' refers to all people displaced from Ukraine following the escalation of the conflict in February 2022, including third-country nationals (TCNs).

Specific Objective(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide more accurate, up-to-date and updatable estimates of the total number of refugees from Ukraine that are currently residing in Moldova. 2. Provide the geographic distribution at the settlement level of refugees from Ukraine who are currently residing in Moldova. 3. Identify gaps in coverage of refugees from Ukraine who are currently residing in Moldova in existing official databases and understand the factors behind these gaps. 4. Gain an understanding of the demographic profile of refugees from Ukraine who are currently residing in Moldova. 5. Identify and holistically assess the self-perceived needs of refugees from Ukraine who are currently residing in Moldova and their preferred sectors of assistance to inform the prioritisation of needs within the humanitarian response through a participatory approach. 		
Research Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the total number and geographic distribution of refugees from Ukraine that are currently residing in Moldova? 2. What are the characteristics of refugees from Ukraine that are currently residing in Moldova which are likely to be underrepresented and overrepresented in existing official databases and what factors contribute to this Underrepresentation/overrepresentation? 3. What is the demographic profile of refugees from Ukraine who are currently residing in Moldova (gender, age, nationality, legal status, employment status, length of stay in Moldova, number of people with disabilities)? 4. What are the self-perceived needs of refugees from Ukraine that are currently residing in Moldova? 5. What types of assistance would refugees from Ukraine who are currently residing in Moldova like to receive from humanitarian actors in priority to address their self-perceived needs? 		
Geographic Coverage	Nationwide Republic of Moldova		
Secondary data sources	<p>The following existing databases on refugees from Ukraine in Moldova will be used as secondary data sources to produce preliminary estimates which will then be complemented with key informant interviews to produce the final estimates of the total refugee population and their geographic distribution across the settlements in Moldova:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The General Inspectorate of Migration's (IGM) databases on Ukrainian nationals with legal status in Moldova (Temporary Protection, residency permits, asylum seekers, refugee status, humanitarian protection, and Moldovan citizenship) ▪ UNHCR Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance beneficiary database ▪ World Food Programme and Catholic Relief Services' databases on refugees living with Moldovan host households ▪ REACH Initiative Area Monitoring ▪ Acted and UNHCR RAC Monitoring <p>Please see section 3.3 for a detailed overview of the literature consulted through the secondary data review and their use in the research design.</p>		
Population(s) <i>Select all that apply</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> IDPs in camp <input type="checkbox"/> IDPs in host communities <input type="checkbox"/> Refugees in camp	<input type="checkbox"/> IDPs in informal sites <input type="checkbox"/> IDPs [Other, Specify] <input type="checkbox"/> Refugees in informal sites	

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Refugees in host communities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Refugees in Refugee Accommodation Centres
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Host communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	[Other, Specify]
Stratification <i>Select type(s) and enter number of strata</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Geographical #: __ Population size per strata is known? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Group #: __ Population size per strata is known? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
			<input type="checkbox"/>	[Other Specify] #: __ Population size per strata is known? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Data collection tool(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Structured (Quantitative)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Semi-structured (Qualitative)
		Sampling method		Data collection method
Structured data collection tool # 1 <i>Key informant interviews in outlier settlements</i>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Key informant interview (Target #): To be determined after Phase 1 of data collection (triangulation of existing databases on refugees) <input type="checkbox"/> Group discussion (Target #): ____ <input type="checkbox"/> Household interview (Target #): ____ <input type="checkbox"/> Individual interview (Target #): ____ <input type="checkbox"/> Direct observations (Target #): ____ <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify] (Target #): ____
Structured data collection tool # 2 <i>Individual survey of refugees reached through Viber</i>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify]	<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 #): ____ <input type="checkbox"/> Direct observations (Target #): ____ <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify] (Target #): ____
Target level of precision if probability sampling		__% level of confidence		__+/- % margin of error
Disaggregation by gender and age <i>Are you planning to conduct sex/age disaggregated analysis?</i>		Gender		Age
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes
	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
Data management platform(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	IMPACT	<input type="checkbox"/>	UNHCR
	<input type="checkbox"/>	[Other, Specify]		
Expected output type(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Situation overview #: __	<input type="checkbox"/>	Report #: 1
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Presentation (Preliminary findings) #: __	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Presentation (Final) #: 1
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Interactive dashboard #: 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Webmap #: __
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Methodology Note #: 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Profile #: __
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Brief #: 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Factsheet #:
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	R Script #: 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Map #: 1
Access	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public (available on REACH resource centre and other humanitarian platforms)		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Restricted (bilateral dissemination only upon agreed dissemination list, no publication on REACH or other platforms)		

Visibility Specify which logos should be on outputs	REACH
	Donor: European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)
	Coordination Framework: N/A
	Partners: N/A

2. Rationale

2.1 Background

Over two years have passed since the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine on 24 February 2022. Since then, there have been 1,050,430 recorded border crossings from Ukraine² and 116,857 refugees from Ukraine³ are currently recorded to be in the Republic of Moldova according to the monitoring of border crossings between the countries.⁴ Between 2022 and 2023, refugees from Ukraine were permitted to cross into Moldova without a passport⁵ which eased the process of seeking asylum in Moldova. However, this made it difficult to keep track of the movements of refugees in and out of the country.⁶

To facilitate and promote the regularisation of refugees in Moldova, Ukrainian nationals, and eligible third-country nationals (TCNs) have been able to apply for Temporary Protection (TP) in Moldova since March 2023 which grants them the right to stay until 1 March 2024, now extended to 1 March 2025. TP grants access to employment, education, healthcare, and social assistance services;⁷ as well as UNHCR cash assistance which has been made conditioned on having legal status in Moldova since March 2024.⁸ Despite this, only 53,426 Ukrainians have applied for TP status in Moldova, of which 44,028 have been granted this status, as of 15 April 2024. Another 10,820 are either in the asylum system or have secured some form of residency in Moldova or Moldovan citizenship.⁹ When compared to the figure from the Moldovan Border Police mentioned above, a potential remaining 62,009 refugees from Ukraine appear to still lack legal status in Moldova despite extensive outreach efforts conducted by the government and humanitarian organisations across the country.¹⁰

While accurate figures of the number of refugees living in the temporary Refugee Accommodation Centres (RACs)¹¹ across the country are available and regularly updated, refugees who are living in private accommodations such as rental housing or being hosted by Moldovan families are harder to keep track of. Furthermore, the frequent movement of refugees in and out, and across the country has made it difficult to maintain accurate and up-to-date population and demographic data on refugees in Moldova. Beneficiary databases and monitoring of refugee numbers by humanitarian organisations including REACH's own Area Monitoring assessments have produced conflicting figures of the total number of refugees in the country, and despite two years of ongoing humanitarian response in Moldova and the combined efforts of humanitarian organisations and government entities, there remain no confirmed figures of the total number of refugees in Moldova and their geographic distribution across the country.¹² This situation remains an unsolved problem for actors seeking to make informed decisions in the planning of humanitarian programmes targeting refugees and has prevented representative sampling for assessments of this population.

² UNHCR, [Operational Data Portal – Ukraine Refugee Situation: Republic of Moldova](#), last updated 7 April 2024.

³ Throughout this Terms of Reference, the use of the terms 'refugees' and 'refugees from Ukraine' refers to all people displaced from Ukraine following the escalation of the conflict in February 2022, including third-country nationals (TCNs).

⁴ UNHCR, [Operational Data Portal – Ukraine Refugee Situation: Republic of Moldova](#), last updated 10 March 2024.

⁵ [Visit Ukraine - Moldova: main information for refugees from Ukraine](#)

⁶ Since the beginning of 2024, the state of emergency has been lifted, and a passport is again required to cross the border between Ukraine and Moldova.

⁷ UNHCR, [Temporary Protection in - UNHCR Moldova](#), accessed on 16 April 2024.

⁸ UNHCR, [Cash assistance for refugees in - UNHCR Moldova](#), accessed on 16 April 2024.

⁹ IGM, [Statistica săptămânală a Inspectoratului General pentru Migrație | Inspectoratul General pentru Migrație \(gov.md\)](#), 15 April 2024.

¹⁰ UNHCR, [Temporary Protection in - UNHCR Moldova](#) accessed on 16 April 2024.

¹¹ Refugee Accommodation Centres: collective centres accommodating refugees from Ukraine since the beginning of the conflict.

¹² REACH Moldova, Area Monitoring Dataset – December 2023 (unpublished).

Considering these limitations and the large number of refugees still without legal status, it is likely that many refugees remain outside the coverage of existing humanitarian assistance nets. Similarly, while several assessments have been done on the demographic profile of the refugee population, most have relied on identifying respondents through beneficiary lists of support programmes for refugees or through locations where refugees commonly seek assistance.¹³ As such, there remains a lack of data on the demographic profile of refugees outside the coverage of existing humanitarian, social and legal assistance nets. A national census is being conducted this year in Moldova which would more comprehensively cover the total population, however, the final data is expected to only be ready in two years and it would only be capturing one moment in time and is not updatable, as well as not providing more specific understanding of demographic profiles and self-perceived needs of refugees in the country.¹⁴ Several assessments have also captured to some extent the needs of the refugee population in Moldova. However, they have primarily been structured according to the understanding and perception of needs by humanitarian actors or used a more basic and concise method of asking respondents to list their top three priority needs rather than providing a holistic overview of the refugees' self-perceived needs.¹⁵

This assessment as such, aims to address and fill the existing information gap regarding refugee profiling in Moldova. This will be achieved by providing up-to-date and updatable estimates of the refugee population and their geographic distribution, and through a more diversified demographic profiling by employing an alternative method for identifying respondents. Additionally, the assessment will shed light on the self-perceived needs of refugees, their current coping mechanisms, and what support they prioritise to receive in the future.

2.2 Intended impact

Through producing more accurate, up-to-date and updatable estimates of the total number of refugees and their geographic distribution across the settlements in Moldova, this assessment intends to inform efficient planning and adequate resource allocation of support programmes and the delivery of humanitarian aid to refugees living in all of the settlements in Moldova.

Through identifying and understanding the factors behind gaps in coverage of groups of refugees in existing databases, this assessment intends to produce findings that can be used to advocate for improved methods for monitoring the total number of refugees and their geographic distribution in Moldova. A better understanding of the information gaps in existing databases, particularly in the settlements where existing data is less reliable, will allow partners to take targeted measures to address these information gaps so that the accuracy of the estimates of the total refugee population can be improved upon over time, rather than necessitating a resource-intensive, nationwide data collection exercise which would only capture one moment in time. By addressing the gaps in the coverage of refugees in existing databases, partners would be better able to accurately target and cover the most vulnerable refugees in Moldova in their support programmes and meet the needs of underserved segments of this population.

Demographic data collected through this assessment will complement existing demographic data on refugees in Moldova with an alternative method. Specifically, Viber will be used to potentially achieve a broader coverage of the refugee population than past assessments which largely relied on reaching refugees covered in existing assistance nets. This demographic data and how it compares to existing demographic data on refugees will likewise inform the improved targeting of the most vulnerable refugees in support programmes in Moldova.

Finally, this assessment will use a participatory approach to assess the needs of refugees in Moldova similarly to inform the improved targeting and prioritisation of support programmes for refugees. The assessment will provide a better understanding of whether the needs of refugees are being adequately met by existing assistance programmes and of their

¹³ REACH MSNA 2023; OHCHR Protection Monitoring; UNHCR Protection Profiling.

¹⁴ [Recensământul Populației și Locuințelor 2024 \(gov.md\)](https://gov.md/recensamantul-populatiei-si-locuintelor-2024)

¹⁵ REACH MSNA 2023, REACH Rental Market Assessment 2023.

level of coverage of the most vulnerable refugees. This understanding will improve the ability of the humanitarian coordination structure in Moldova to meet the needs of this population.

This assessment will inform the programming of humanitarian and development actors involved in the refugee response in Moldova. Specifically, it will inform government entities involved in the response such as the General Inspectorate of Migration (IGM), the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MLSP) and the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). It will also inform the programming of IMPACT's PLACE consortium partners – Acted, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and People in Need (PiN) – aimed at meeting the needs of refugees from Ukraine across Moldova. By providing up-to-date information, it will notably inform the UNHCR, organisations part of the Refugee Coordination Forum, and the Information Management Working Group (IMWG).

3. Methodology

3.1 Methodology overview

To provide more accurate estimates of the refugee population, to identify the coverage gap in existing estimates, and to capture the demographic profiles and self-perceived needs of refugees in Moldova, the methodology of this assessment will combine three complimentary phases:

- 1) Triangulation of existing databases on refugees in Moldova and identification of discrepancies,
- 2) Structured key informant interviews (KIIs) in settlements identified as outliers (i.e. with major discrepancies),
- 3) Individual-level structured survey of refugees reached through the instant messaging service, Viber.

The assessment will use a quantitative methodology to provide the most relevant data about the scope and research objectives. For the first phase, REACH will gather existing databases on the population of interest from official sources including the government and humanitarian organisations and compare and triangulate them to produce more accurate and up-to-date estimates of this population at the settlement level. An R script will be developed to clean the databases and produce the estimates, which can be rerun on a regular basis to update the estimates whenever new data from these sources is available.

The following sources of data will be used for this component of the assessment:

- **The General Inspectorate of Migration's (IGM)** database of people displaced from Ukraine since February 2022 who have been granted or have applied for legal status in Moldova – Temporary Protection, permanent or temporary residency.
- **The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR)** Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) beneficiary database.
- **World Food Programme's (WFP)** database on refugees living with Moldovan host families based on their beneficiary case load of Cash assistance to Moldovan households hosting refugees.
- **Catholic Relief Services (CRS)** database on refugees living with Moldovan host families based on their beneficiary case load of Cash assistance to Moldovan households hosting refugees.
- **REACH** Area Monitoring assessment database.
- **Acted and UNHCR** Refugee Accommodation Centre (RAC) Monitoring database.

For settlements with large discrepancies in the number of refugees recorded across different databases, structured key informant interviews will be conducted as the second phase of the assessment. These interviews will provide a better understanding of the information and coverage gaps that have resulted in such discrepancies and will serve to complement the triangulation of data on the number of refugees in the settlement. Adjustments to the estimates and R script will be made according to the findings of the KIIs.

The final phase of this assessment will be an individual-level structured survey of the population of interest reached through existing Viber communities for refugees displaced from Ukraine to Moldova. Respondents will be invited to participate in the survey through the dissemination of a consent form in the Viber community, and those that agree will be interviewed via phone call. The Humanitarian Emergency Settings Perceived Needs Scale (HESPER) will be incorporated into the survey to assess the self-perceived needs of the population across a broad range of potential areas of concern.

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.
- **Third-country Nationals (TCNs):** Persons who have fled Ukraine but for whom Ukraine is not their country of origin, and who may be in need of international protection.¹⁶
- **HESPER Scale:** The Humanitarian Emergency Settings Perceived Needs (HESPER) Scale aims to provide a quick, holistic overview of the self-perceived serious needs of people affected by large-scale humanitarian emergencies, such as war, conflict, or major natural disasters.¹⁷
- **Self-perceived needs:** Needs which are felt or expressed by people themselves and are problem areas with which they would like help.¹⁸
- **Serious problem:** According to the HESPER Scale methodology, a serious problem is a problem which the person feels is serious (however they define this).¹⁷
- **AoK methodology:** is a data collection and analysis methodology for producing information on humanitarian conditions through quantitatively aggregated structured community Key Informant Interviews (KIIs).¹⁹
- **Region:** There are 3 regions in Moldova: North, Centre and South, excluding the Transnistria region. Considering the high prevalence of refugees in the city, the Municipality of Chişinău will be extracted from the Centre region in the framework of this assessment and become a territorial region unit itself, resulting in 5 regions under this assessment.
- **Raion:** Level 1 territorial-administrative unit. There are 35 raions in Moldova, including the Transnistrian region.
- **Settlement:** Level 2 territorial-administrative unit. It should be noted that 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 at a level below that of raions. In practice, settlements can be classified as villages (satul), communes (comuna), cities (oraşul), or municipalities (municipiul), and these terms are often used interchangeably. There are 983 administrative level 2 units in Moldova, which includes the 81 settlements situated within the Transnistrian region. The settlements in Transnistria, divided over 5 raions, will be covered in Phase 1 during the database triangulation process.

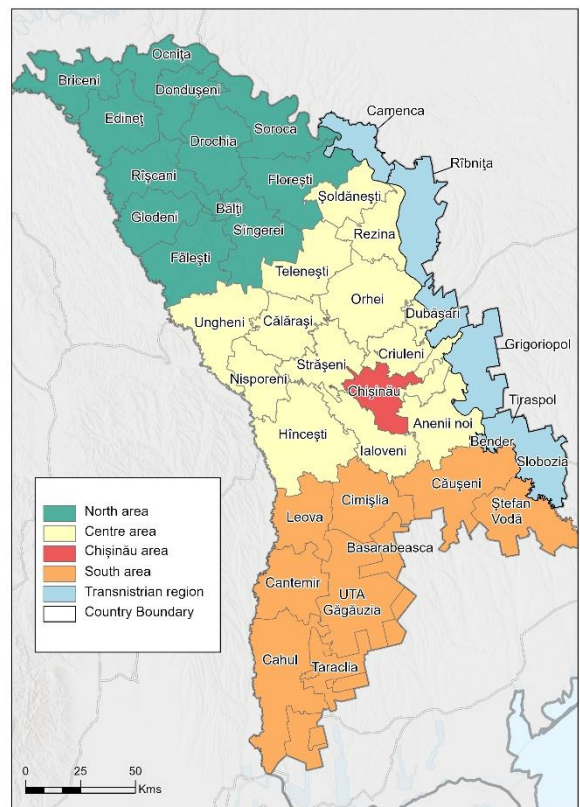


Figure 1: Map of Moldova

¹⁶ UNHCR (January 2024). Ukrainian Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan, January – December 2024. Geneva, Switzerland.

¹⁷ WHO. The humanitarian emergency settings perceived needs scale (HESPER): [9789241548236_eng.pdf \(who.int\)](https://www.who.int/publications-detail/9789241548236_eng.pdf), (April 2011).

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ IMPACT Area of Knowledge Toolkit (DRAFT), p. 7.

- **Temporary Protection:** Temporary Protection was first established in the Republic of Moldova on 1 March 2023 to provide immediate temporary protection to Ukrainian citizens and eligible TCNs who were forced to flee the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine, according to the Government Decision No 21/2023 on granting Temporary Protection to displaced persons from Ukraine. Temporary protection status offers: the right of legal residence on the territory of the Republic of Moldova until 1 March 2024, was extended until 1 March 2025; access to social assistance measures, financed by international organizations, other social services for families with children; access to compulsory education in the Republic of Moldova; access to the labour market; free access to emergency and primary health care, free medical examination for public health reasons; and the right to be accommodated in a placement centre.²⁰
- **Asylum seeker:** A foreign person who submitted an asylum application, not yet solved by the irrevocable decision. It is like a substate of the form of protection until it receives a form of protection. Any foreign citizen or stateless person who shows a desire to apply for a form of protection may apply for asylum. Asylum seekers benefit from approximately the same rights as Moldovan citizens (excluding electoral rights and others).
- **Refugee (legal status in Moldova):** This legal status is granted on application to a foreigner who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to place himself under the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his lawful and ordinary residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return.
- **Humanitarian protection:** Humanitarian protection is granted to an alien who does not qualify for refugee status but in respect of whom there are serious and substantial grounds for believing that, if returned to his or her country of origin, he or she would face a real risk of suffering serious harm and is unable or, owing to such risk, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country.²¹
- **Residency permit:** Foreign citizens may apply for permanent or temporary residency permits to stay in Moldova based on grounds which include family ties or employment.²²

3.2 Population of interest

Geographical coverage

The Refugee Population Profiling assessment will cover all settlements across the Republic of Moldova nationwide where refugees who have been displaced from Ukraine to Moldova following the escalation of hostilities on 24 February 2022 (including third-country nationals) are currently residing. Findings will be presented and aggregated by regions, defined as North, Centre, South (including the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia) and the Municipality of Chişinău. Additionally, the region of Transnistria will be included in the database triangulation process. This means that for Phase 1, the geographical coverage of this assessment covers the entire scope of the population of interest included in this research. Due to political sensitivities and access constraints, REACH cannot conduct data collection in the Transnistrian region, and it will therefore not be included in Phase 2.²³

Population assessed and unit of measurement

The population of interest includes all refugees who have been displaced from Ukraine to Moldova following the escalation of hostilities on 24 February 2022 (including TCNs) who are currently residing in Moldova. This encompasses refugees living in private housing, being hosted by Moldovan families or relatives, as well as those residing in accredited or non-accredited collective centres. Additionally, all members of this displaced population will be included regardless of their legal status in Moldova. As such, members of this population who are beneficiaries of Temporary Protection, are asylum seekers, have

²⁰ DECISION No 21 of 18-01-2023 on granting temporary protection displaced persons from Ukraine.

²¹ Law No 270/2008 on asylum in the Republic of Moldova.

²² [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Moldova \(gov.md\)](https://www.gov.md/en/ministry-of-foreign-affairs)

²³ Transnistria is a self-declared autonomous region.

the status of refugee or humanitarian protection, have permanent or temporary residence permits, have received Moldovan citizenship, or have no legal status at all will all be included within the scope of this assessment.

Regarding the unit of measurement, data in Phases 1 and 2 of this assessment will be collected at the settlement level, since figures shared by third parties are mainly at the settlement level. Additionally, the KIs that will be interviewed will provide information on the settlement that they are scoped for. Phase 3 will be at the individual level, focusing on refugees as defined in the section above, from 18 years old and above.

3.3 Secondary data review

From February to March 2024, a thorough review of secondary data was conducted to gain a comprehensive understanding of the available data on the number of refugees in Moldova, their geographic distribution and their demographic profile. The primary objective of this secondary data review was to identify existing databases on the number of refugees and assess the strengths and limitations of each database in terms of coverage and reliability.²⁴ Through this process, potential information and coverage gaps will be identified, and will inform the design of the second and third phases of the data collection, particularly in relation to refugees not covered in the databases, their demographic profile and their self-perceived needs.

Additionally, consultations have been conducted with partners involved in the refugee response in Moldova to ensure that the research objectives were tailored to partners' needs and to prevent duplication of efforts. Considering the existence of several organisations and agencies partially recording the number of refugees or their demographic profiles, the secondary data review played a crucial role in informing the research design of this assessment. It facilitated the alignment of research objectives to existing information gaps, identified the best and most feasible approach to address the research objectives, as well as potential challenges associated with collecting data on refugees at the scale targeted for this assessment.

The following list of resources were identified in the secondary data review process:

Source	Secondary Data	To inform
REACH Moldova	Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment Moldova 2023 Terms of Reference	Methodology, Sampling
REACH Moldova	Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment Moldova 2023 Situation Overview	Context, Methodology, Data Analysis Plan (DAP)
REACH Sudan	REACH SDN ToR Displaced-Population-Profiling-in-Ag-Geneina-West-Darfur January2022_external.pdf (impact-initiatives.org)	Methodology
NRC, REACH Sudan	Factsheet – Tertiary displacement: Geneina Locality, West Darfur, Sudan (May 2022). [unpublished]	Methodology
REACH Sudan	Factsheet – Area-Based Assessment of IDPs living in host community locations: Ag Geneina, West Darfur (March 2022). [unpublished]	Methodology
REACH Iraq	IRQ2110 ToRs and Annex Informal Sites Profiling and Intentions November-2021-1.pdf (impact-initiatives.org)	Methodology

²⁴ Identified databases are listed under Section 3.4 since they will serve as sources of data for the first phase of the methodology.

REACH Iraq	REACH IRQ Informal-Settlements-Profiling-Movement-Intentions_April2023_complete_v2.pdf (impact-initiatives.org)	Methodology
AGORA Afghanistan	AGORA AFG -TOR Mapping-and-Profiling-of-Mantegas-and-Nahyas_AFG2204_March2023-external.pdf (impact-initiatives.org)	Methodology
Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS)	Compiler's Manual on Displacement Statistics	Methodology
Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS)	International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics (March 2018)	Methodology
General Inspectorate for Migration (IGM)	Statistica săptămânală a Inspectoratului General pentru Migrație Inspectoratul General pentru Migrație (gov.md)	Context, Phase 1 methodology
UNFPA Moldova	UNFPA Moldova The population and housing census will take place between April 8th and July 7th, 2024	Methodology
National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)	Anunț privind consultarea publică a chestionarelor revizuite pentru Recensământul Populației și Locuințelor din anul 2024 Particip.gov.md	Methodology
A.O. "Laolaltă", UNHCR	Quarterly Social Listening Report (October – December 2023)	Context, Phase 3 methodology
Regional Refugee Response For Ukraine Situation, Government of the Republic of Moldova	UNHCR Operational Data Portal: Republic of Moldova	Context, Methodology
World Health Organisation, King's College London	The Humanitarian Emergency Settings Perceived Needs Scale (HESPER): Manual with Scale	Phase 3 methodology
REACH Yemen	Multi/cluster-sector initial & rapid assessment (MIRA) Community Level Assessment Form: Descriptive Analysis Plan – Coding (unpublished)	Phase 3 methodology
REACH Yemen	MIRA Community Level Assessment: Training Manual for Community Level Assessment Teams (May 2012) (unpublished)	Phase 3 methodology
IMPACT	Guidelines to measure self-perceived Needs using the Humanitarian Emergency Settings Perceived Needs (HESPER) Scale in the MSNA (unpublished)	Phase 3 methodology
IMPACT	[DRAFT] Area of Knowledge (AoK) Toolkit (unpublished)	Phase 2 methodology
Washington Group on Disability Statistics	WG Short Set on Functioning (WG-SS)	Phase 3 questionnaire
Oxfam	Seeking Safety: Roma Refugees in Moldova – Challenges and humanitarian needs (October 2022)	Phase 3 methodology
Ground Truth Solutions	Towards targeted and flexible aid delivery: Ukrainian refugees' perceptions about aid in Poland, Moldova and Romania (April 2023)	Phase 3 methodology
De Vetten-Mc Mahon et al. (International Journal of Mental Health Systems)	Assessing the need for a mental health services reform in Moldova: a situation analysis (2019)	Phase 3 methodology
Norwegian Refugee Council	Hope and uncertainty: A needs assessment of Ukrainian youth refugees in Romania and Moldova (May 2023)	Phase 3 methodology

In addition to the identified secondary literature, any pertinent studies, reports, and recent news released during data collection will contribute to the analysis stage, aiding in the contextualisation and triangulation of findings from the primary data collection.

3.4 Primary Data Collection

Data collection for this assessment will be done in three phases:

Phase 1: Triangulation of existing databases on refugees in Moldova

Method

Existing databases containing data on refugees currently living in Moldova up to settlement-level will be gathered from official sources including the government and humanitarian organisations in Moldova. Only the REACH Area monitoring database was already accessible, all other databases will be requested during Phase 1, ahead of the database triangulation. The triangulation of databases will be decided based on the received databases, and in extension therefore considering database that are not received. This can be because they are not accessible (for example due to data sharing agreements), not shared in time, or do not have the desagregations needed for the triangulations. After receiving all possible databasses, the triangulation process will begin and will aim to produce preliminary estimates of the total number of refugees in each settlement, and when possible their demographic profile according to age, gender, legal status, and vulnerability.

Settlements with large discrepancies between the different databases on the total number of refugees in them will be considered as settlements where there is greater uncertainty and gaps in information pertaining the total number of refugees living there. Once these settlements are identified, structured key informant interviews will be conducted to complement the preliminary estimates from existing databases as described under Phase 2 of primary data collection.

In order to triangulate the databases and produce estimates, each database will be separately evaluated for its validity and reliability according to the following criteria:

1. Coverage of the total population
2. The recency of the data
3. Accuracy of the data based on the data collection method and frequency of updates, including potential duplications
4. The extent of potential biases in the data
5. The extent of potential overlap with the other databases

The calculation of the preliminary estimates will be determined based on this evaluation, by allocating more weight to databases that are deemed to be more reliable and valid. The exact methodology followed to compute estimates will be described in a separate methodology note that will be published alongside the estimates database. Table 1 below describes each database that will be used in this assessment.

As mentioned, the sampling of settlements for the second phase of data collection will be determined through the identification of 'outlier' settlements that show large discrepancies in the total number of refugees living there between the databases. Large discrepancies will be determined according to pre-defined thresholds²⁵ which will be established once all databases have been received and evaluated, taking into consideration operational constraints and the feasible number of KIIs.

Additionally, to identify information gaps that will be covered by KIIs, certain assumptions need to be made. As Moldova has 902 administrative units excluding Transnistria, 902 potential settlements can be selected for KIIs. To ensure that the limited capacity available for carrying out the interviews will be utilized as efficiently as possible, settlements that are not included

²⁵ For instance, for difference of more than 20 percent between the Temporary Protection beneficiary database and the UNHCR Multipurpose Cash Assistance beneficiary database, the settlement will be identified as an outlier.

in any of the databases will be assumed to have no refugees and therefore will not be considered as information gaps. This decision is based on operational constraints and the understanding that these settlements are less likely to have a notable refugee population.

Table 1: Description of data sources and limitations

Source	Dataset	Last updated	Total # individuals	Granularity level	Geographic and population coverage	Limitations
General Inspectorate of Migration (IGM)	Temporary Protection (TP) beneficiaries	2024-03-26	40,250	Individual	TP beneficiaries nationwide	<p><u>Registration bias:</u> Only includes refugees that have registered for and received TP in Moldova.</p> <p><u>Accuracy:</u> Since September 2023, refugees could submit a self-declaration of their residence address as proof of residence in their TP application. Therefore, there is a risk of inaccuracy due to falsified residence information. Additionally, after receipt of TP, the beneficiaries' address of residence in Moldova are rarely updated or verified except by self-declaration of the beneficiaries, creating a risk of out-of-date residency data considering the frequent movements of refugees within the country.</p>
General Inspectorate of Migration (IGM)	Ukrainians who received permanent and temporary residency	2024-04-11	3,255	Individual	Nationwide	<p><u>Registration bias:</u> Only includes refugees that have registered for and received permanent residency in Moldova.</p> <p><u>Accuracy:</u> After receipt of the permanent residency, the beneficiaries' address of residence in Moldova are rarely updated or verified, creating a risk of out-of-date residency data considering the frequent movements of refugees within the country.</p> <p><u>Completeness:</u> Excludes third-country nationals since there is no way of determining if the TCNs were displaced from Ukraine.</p>
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR)	Multi-purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) beneficiaries	2024-04-12	34,856	Settlement	MPCA beneficiaries nationwide	<p><u>Eligibility criteria:</u> Since 2024, refugees must have secured legal status in Moldova (within two months of arriving in the country for new arrivals) to continue receiving MPCA.²⁶ Additionally, beneficiaries must fulfil one of the following criteria to be eligible: family headed by a single parent; family headed by a child (below 18); family with an unaccompanied or separated child; family headed by an older person (above 60); family</p>

²⁶ [Refugee Cash Assistance Updates in - UNHCR Moldova](#) (5 December 2023)

						<p>with one or more persons with specific needs, including a person with a disability, pregnant women, person with a serious medical condition, woman at risk, person with legal and physical protection needs, or LGBTI person.</p> <p>New refugees arriving to Moldova will receive two months of initial cash assistance based on vulnerability criteria. Following this period, it is necessary to secure legal status—temporary protection, refugee status, humanitarian protection, stateless status, or a residence permit (temporary or permanent).²⁷</p> <p><u>Registration bias:</u> The list of beneficiaries of the MPCA programme is not an exhaustive enumeration of the refugee population in Moldova as it only includes refugees who registered to receive assistance. Thus, figures for the refugee population may be underestimated.</p> <p><u>Duplicates:</u> Although the fingerprint system for registration to MPCA has proven effective in preventing duplication of the count of refugees within the country, it does not account for potential beneficiaries who may have been crossing the border from Ukraine. As a result, the cash beneficiaries' figures for settlements close to the border are expected to be inflated, which could pose operational challenges when attempting to identify and sample the appropriate number of households in those locations.</p>
World Food Programme (WFP)	Cash assistance for Moldovan households hosting refugees	2023-12	12,552	Settlement	All refugees living with Moldovan host households that registered on UAHelp.md. All raions except Transnistria,	<p><u>Registration bias:</u> Only includes refugees living with Moldovan host households that have registered on the UAHelp.md website. Does not cover all refugees living in Moldovan households.</p> <p><u>Accuracy:</u> A 100% door-to-door verification exercise was done in February 2024 for registered beneficiaries. However, hosts and refugees are asked to update their information twice a month by SMS</p>

²⁷ [Frequently asked questions about cash assistance - UNHCR Moldova](#)

					Hincesti, Ialoveni and Soroca.	and it is a self-registration platform. Therefore, there is a risk of inaccuracy due to falsified residence information. <u>Geographical coverage:</u> Does not cover Transnistria, Hincesti, Ialoveni and Soroca.
Catholic Relief Services (CRS)	Cash assistance for Moldovan households hosting refugees	2024-01-01	2,395	Household	All refugees living with Moldovan host households that registered on UAHelp.md. Covers Briceni, Chisinau, Donduseni, Edinet, Hincesti, Ialoveni, Ocnita, Soroca and Ungheni. Beneficiaries in Edinet, Ungheni and Donduseni may overlap with WFPs due to just handing over to them.	<u>Registration bias:</u> Only includes refugees living with Moldovan host households that have registered on the UAHelp.md website. Does not cover all refugees living with Moldovan households. <u>Accuracy:</u> A 100% door-to-door verification exercise was done in February 2024 for registered beneficiaries. Data will be updated every month for 30% of the case load. Households will be reverified every three months through a physical verification using an update form in their system. Therefore, the risk of inaccuracy is lower. <u>Geographical coverage:</u> Does not cover other raions besides Briceni, Chisinau, Donduseni, Edinet, Hincesti, Ialoveni, Ocnita, Soroca and Ungheni.
REACH Initiative	Area Monitoring	2023-12	7,745	Settlement	KIIs with the directors of territorial social assistance units (DASPF). All raions except Chişinău and Transnistria. Excludes refugees living in RACs.	<u>Registration bias:</u> DASPF communicate the refugees who came to register at the settlement's city hall. It is assumed that most refugees would register to enable their access to public services. Every member of the household is registered (including children) during the process. <u>Geographical coverage:</u> The City Halls of Chişinău do not provide data on registered refugees. Does not include Transnistria. <u>Completeness:</u> Expected to be underestimated according to the substantial gap in figures compared to the UNHCR cash beneficiaries listing and border monitoring.

						<p><u>Recency:</u> Last data collection was conducted in December 2023, so the data is most out of date compared to the other databases.</p>
Acted and UNHCR	RAC Monitoring	2024-03-25	2,277	RAC	<p>All refugees living in accredited RACs in all raions in Moldova except Transnistria. Data was collected on a bi-monthly basis by interviewing RAC managers and refugees through a structured Kobo tool.</p>	<p><u>Geographical coverage:</u> This does not include RACs in Transnistria.</p> <p><u>Completeness:</u> Data collection is not done for RACs that are in the process of being closed, such that there is no updated information on refugees in the process of being transferred to other RACs or private accommodation.</p>

Phase 2: Structured key informant interviews (KIIs) in outlier settlements

Method:

Following the triangulation of databases, structured KIIs will be conducted with the purpose of understanding and addressing the gaps in coverage in the settlements where there is a greater uncertainty and discrepancies regarding the total number of refugees living there. Conducting structured KIIs will enable a quantitative aggregation and to retain a single “consensus” response. This will provide a higher data precision and will enhance the ability to conduct a comparative analysis afterwards with the triangulated data in Phase 1. Furthermore, the quantitative approach will allow for a more time-efficient data collection and data analysis process, and a wider geographic coverage considering the existing resources constraints.

The REACH Moldova Field Team will conduct face-to-face interviews with KIs that have been scoped based on their relevance and oversight. This scoping phase is crucial since it highly affects the validity of the data, as KIs need to have the most accurate data and coverage possible to be able to fill the information gap that has been identified in Phase 1 (exact scoping criteria can be found in the sampling section). Three weeks have been set aside for the scoping and data collection phase, starting from mid-May. During this phase, the Research Team will closely monitor the scoping and data collection process and be available to offer support when needed. Prior to this phase, the KII tool will be piloted, and training will be given on what KIs will be deemed eligible, and informatively how the interview is structured.

The findings of the KIIs will be used to complement the findings of the first phase of this assessment by informing the adjustment of the preliminary estimates produced of the total number and demographic profile of refugees in each of the sampled settlements. The KIIs will cover the topics of under- and over-representation of refugees and movement patterns to understand the push-and-pull factors of refugees in settlements. Additionally, an R script will be developed from the findings of the first two phases which can be run regularly with new data from the selected databases to produce updated estimates.

Tool:

Since the information sought from key informants (KIs) such as refugee population figures and demographics is largely quantitative, and the priority of the assessment is to cover a greater number of settlements instead of doing an in-depth assessment of a smaller number of settlements, a quantitative structured tool will be used to conduct the KIIs. KIs will be asked regarding the total number of refugees per settlement, aiming to cover those who are not included in the databases to be triangulated in Phase 1. Additionally, the interviews contain questions on demographic composition, movement patterns, and over- and underrepresentation of groups of refugees per settlement. Using a similar approach as the Area of Knowledge (AoK) methodology, questions are designed based on whether the information generated by the responses is likely to yield, will have a minimal degree of reliability and will be concretely useful to decision-makers. To reduce the risk of overgeneralisation, questions regarding trends or movement patterns are asked for different population groups within the scope of the population of interest.²⁸

Sampling:

Settlements that have been identified as outliers in Phase 1 will be selected for sampling in Phase 2. Outliers will be defined as settlements that demonstrate large discrepancies between different databases, surpassing a predetermined threshold.²⁹ KIIs in each settlement will be purposively selected based on their knowledge and oversight of the situation, in line with the scoping criteria describe below. One to three KIs will be interviewed per sampled settlement depending on the size of the settlement, where more KIs will be interviewed for larger settlements and vice versa. This is because the larger the unit of observation, the smaller the reliability of the KI. Having multiple KIs per settlement will thus allow the opportunity to triangulate results and increase the validity of the information. Additionally, another reason why fewer KIs will be selected for smaller settlements is the feasibility of scoping KIs from different agencies, which is more challenging in smaller settlements. Due

²⁸ IMPACT Area of Knowledge Toolkit (DRAFT), p. 23.

²⁹ Large discrepancies will be determined according to pre-defined thresholds which will be established once all databases have been received and evaluated, taking into consideration operational constraints and the feasible number of KIIs. The determination of thresholds will be detailed in the Methodology Note.

to the information sought through the KIs, KIs need to have a clear overview of the refugee population in their settlement, their movement patterns, as well as the presence of refugees not covered in the databases used in this assessment.

In this assessment, the size of the settlement is determined by the number of refugees that are registered in the databases that have been triangulated in Phase 1. A settlement is considered 'small', when the number of identified refugees is in between 10 and 49, 'average' when the number is between 50 and 200, and 'large' when the number is more than 200. Stratifying the settlement in different sub-categories is needed to determine the number of KIs conducted and the scoping criteria for selecting KIs.

Scoping criteria 'small' settlements

- **Target number of KIs: 1**
- **Main scoping criteria:** Has oversight over the majority of the total population of refugees in the settlement of interest → Enumerators to ask possible KIs when scoping: Do you have oversight over the majority of refugees in [name settlement], including those outside of existing assistance nets?
- **Potential KIs:**
 - **Local NGO/CSO Staff:** Those working regularly in or visiting the settlement.
 - **Community Leaders:** Individuals who play significant roles within the settlement and have a good understanding of the population.
 - **Representatives of Religious Institutions:** Similar to community leaders, someone with significant oversight over the community.

Scoping criteria 'average' settlements

- **Target number of KIs: 2**
- **Main scoping criteria:**
 - Has oversight over the majority of the total population of refugees in the settlement of interest → Enumerators to ask possible KIs when scoping: Do you have oversight over the majority of refugees in [name settlement], including those outside of existing assistance nets?
 - Has their own database that has been recently updated of refugees inside the settlement, outside of the received databases in Phase 1. → Enumerators to ask possible KIs when scoping: Do you have your own database and has it been entirely updated in the last six months?
- **Potential KIs:**
 - **International NGO Staff:** Regular workers or visitors to the settlement.
 - **Social Workers:** Those regularly working in or visiting the settlement.
 - **Community Centre Staff:** Those working in centres that host activities for refugees.
 - **Local NGO/CSO Staff:** Those working regularly in or visiting the settlement.
 - **Community Leaders:** Individuals who play significant roles within the settlement and have a good understanding of the population.

Scoping criteria 'large' settlements

- **Target number of KIs: 3**
- **Main scoping criteria:**
 - Has oversight over the majority of the total population of refugees in the settlement of interest → Enumerators to ask possible KIs when scoping: Do you have oversight over the majority of refugees in [name settlement], including those outside of existing assistance nets?
 - Has their database that has been recently updated of refugees inside the settlement, outside of the received databases in Phase 1. → Enumerators to ask possible KIs when scoping: Do you have your own database and has it been entirely updated in the last three months?
- **Potential KIs:**
 - **Local NGO/CSO Staff:** Those working regularly in or visiting the settlement.
 - **International NGO Staff:** Regular workers or visitors to the settlement.

- **Social Workers:** As in average settlements but with a more extensive database requirement.
- **Community Leaders:** Individuals who play significant roles within the settlement and have a good understanding of the population.
- **Ukrainian Embassy in Chisinau:** Those working in the Ukrainian embassy, with access to accurate data on refugees in Moldova, especially those living in Chisinau.

Through additional questions in the KII tool, each KI will be evaluated according to their level of oversight of the total refugee population in their settlement in order to determine the accuracy and reliability of the information and figures they provide us.

Phase 3: Viber survey

Method:

The final phase of data collection involves an individual-level structured survey of refugees living in Moldova conducted through the instant-messaging service, Viber. This platform has been chosen as there already is an existing partnership in place between IMPACT and Viber Global, which has demonstrated its efficiency compared to other platforms. Additionally, Viber is widely used amongst Ukrainian refugees, as specific and separate channels have been created for Ukrainian refugees, which aligned with the population of interest for this assessment. The data collection will be conducted through the support of the REACH Ukraine Field Team, who will allocate 7 of their enumerators to conduct phone calls in the last week of May. Their capacity allows for around 350 interviews within this time frame. Prior to this data collection phase, a pilot and training will be given to the REACH Ukraine Field Team to ensure a successful data collection. The Viber survey aims to gather demographics of refugees from Ukraine who are currently living in Moldova. Additionally, the survey will provide a holistic overview of areas where refugees perceive having a serious need, and where they would like to receive additional support from humanitarian actors in priority. This method aims to reach refugees in Moldova who may not be covered by existing assistance nets or come under the oversight of the KIs that will be interviewed in Phase 2. Additionally, it uses an alternative method for assessing the demographic profile of refugees in Moldova that aims to provide a holistic overview of refugees' self-perceived needs.

Sampling:

The self-perceived needs of refugees in Moldova will be collected through convenience sampling, by using the refugee communities on Viber. Sampling criteria are included in this survey, to only include displaced persons from Ukraine that have been displaced after the escalation of the conflict in February 22, that is currently residing in MDA, that is above 18 years old. be With the support of Viber, respondents for the survey will be made aware of the survey through the dissemination of an invitation to participate in this assessment in the existing official Viber channel for refugees from Ukraine in Moldova, or through targeted advertising to refugees from Ukraine in Moldova. This remains to be discussed with Viber. Refugees can choose to participate by filling in the disseminated consent form with their name and contact information. For the Viber assessment, only refugees that are 18 and above will be interviewed, something that will be filtered in the consent form, and again in the questionnaire. When the consent forms are collected, refugees will be contacted through phone calls to participate in the survey. The phone calls will be facilitated by REACH enumerators in Ukraine, who are experienced in conducting surveys through Viber. Based on previous experience from the Ukraine field team, the allocated time and resources available, the target number of interviews will be 350. However, the final amount of interviews might vary based on the level of participation and self-enrollement in the survey. A minimum of 200 interviews will be required to have a successful and completed data. If the minimum number of interviews is not reached through the Viber dissemination and data collection, the field team of REACH Moldova will conduct extra surveys on Telegram, a platform also widely used in Moldova which has separate communities for Ukrainian refugees, as a mitigation measure.

Tool:

The content of the survey will include questions on demographics of the respondents, the HESPER scale framework that will provide quantifiable results on self-perceived needs of refugees currently residing in Moldova, and questions on their

preferred sectors of assistance. Demographic data that will be collected through this questionnaire include age, gender, location of residence, nationality, legal status in Moldova, length of stay in Moldova, and employment status of the respondents. The Washington Group Short Set on Functioning³⁰ will also be used to indicate respondents with disabilities. The HESPER scale framework is used to capture the most prevalent needs and concerns of refugees in Moldova. Small changes to the framework will be applied to adjust to the context and to match the scope of the larger objectives of the research.

3.5 Data Processing & Analysis

Datasets gathered from partners will be cleaned, processed, and triangulated to generate estimates using an R script developed by the REACH Assessment Officers and Data Officer. This process will be informed by an internal evaluation of the reliability and limitations of each database and will follow a similar methodology as the one developed by the IMWG in Moldova.³¹ A separate methodology note will be developed to provide more details about the triangulation and estimation process, which will be published alongside the database.

All primary quantitative data from the **structured KIs and Viber survey** will be collected using the Kobo Toolbox platform. Manual checks and cleaning of the raw data will be conducted during the initial days of data collection by the REACH Assessment Officers to account for any issues with the Kobo tools. With the assistance of an R script, REACH Assessment Officers and Data Officer will conduct daily checks and cleaning to identify duplicate and similar (potentially duplicate) entries, outliers, and data quality issues to be further investigated. All data collection and cleaning will be in accordance with the Minimum Standard Data Cleaning Checklist developed by IMPACT HQ. This checklist guides the processes of data checking, cleaning, and consolidation, including indicator-specific parameters.

Regarding the KI responses, the unit of analysis will be the settlement. In settlements with multiple KIs, results will be aggregated to obtain a single response per indicator per settlement. For single nominal response questions, the most prevalent answer will be reported, and 'no consensus' will be coded in the event there is no majority. Regarding multiple response questions, all KI responses will be retained, to provide a comprehensive overview of all reported options. Single ordinal and interval response questions will be weighted and aggregated, and the average of the answers will be reported. This weighting will be used in situations where more than one KI is interviewed per settlement, vis a vis in the medium and large settlements. Weighting will imbalance the results of respondents, to get a more accurate aggregation of results at settlement level, based on the assessed knowledge of the KI to talk about the covered topics in a specific settlement. Therefore, KI considered more qualified and reliable based on a set of criterias (see table below) will have more weights in the aggregation of the results at the settlement level.

The **weighting of the AoK results** will account for the accuracy of the database and coverage of the KI when compiling the KI responses. More specifically, the numeric information provided by the KIs will be weighted based on their knowledge of over- and underrepresented refugees in the settlement (proxy for oversight). Regarding the accuracy of the data that they provide from their database, the method of verification used for updating the database will be considered. This will be weighted under the assumption that in-person verification is most accurate, phone verification is less accurate and online self-registration is least accurate. Lastly, the time that the database was last entirely updated is considered in the weighting, assuming that databases that have been updated more recently are more accurate (Table 2). The coding for these weighting criteria will be done on R to ensure a timely and efficient data analysis period.

Table 2: Weighting KI Criteria

³⁰ [WG Short Set on Functioning \(WG-SS\) - The Washington Group on Disability Statistics \(washingtongroup-disability.com\)](https://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/)

³¹ In 2023, the IMWG attempted to produce estimates of the minimum confirmed refugee population in each settlement by triangulating and adjusting the UNHCR Cash beneficiary list with Temporary Protection data at the raion level, and with REACH Area Monitoring at the settlement level. The objective of this assessment is to enhance the existing methodology by incorporating additional sources of data at the settlement level, improving the triangulation process, and implementing a more robust approach for necessary adjustments.

Section	Criteria	Answers	Scoring
Coverage	Level of oversight over the settlement regarding refugees, based on the number of underrepresented groups mentioned	9-10 groups mentioned	1
		7-8 groups mentioned	0.8
		5-6 groups mentioned	0.6
		3-4 groups mentioned	0.4
		1-2 groups mentioned	0.2
		0 groups mentioned	0
	Level of oversight over the settlement regarding refugees, based on the awareness of overrepresented refugees within official databases	Mentions there are overrepresented refugees	1
		Mentions there are no overrepresented refugees	0.8
		Does not know if there are overrepresented refugees	0.6
Accuracy	Last complete update of the database	Between 1 and 7 days ago (last week)	1
		Between 8 and 14 days ago (1-2 weeks)	0.9
		Between 15 and 30 days ago (2-4 weeks)	0.8
		Between 31 and 60 days ago (1-2 months)	0.7
		Between 61 and 90 days ago (2-3 months)	0.6
		Between 91 and 180 days (3-6 months)	0.4
		More than 180 days (6+ months)	0.2
		We don't update the entire database	0
	Method used for verification of database	In-person verification	1
		Phone verification	0.8
		Online self-reporting	0.6
		No verification	0

A more detailed description of the final aggregation methodology and weighting will be published in the methodology note.

Following the data cleaning process, the Data Officer and Assessment Officers will conduct statistical analysis on the cleaned datasets in line with the data analysis plan created during the research design phase using relevant software such as R and Excel. The data analysis will be conducted in compliance with IMPACT's Minimum Standards Checklist for Quantitative Data Analysis.

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

3.6 Planned outputs

Following the data analysis, REACH will prepare a series of outputs for public and/or bilateral dissemination with key partners. This will include:

- 1 **Methodology note** explaining the methodology for triangulation of the databases.
- 1 **Dataset** of estimates of the total number of refugees from Ukraine currently in Moldova and their geographical distribution across the settlements.
- 1 **R script** for updating the estimates (available upon request)³².
- 1 **Map** showing the estimated geographic distribution of refugees from Ukraine currently living in Moldova.
- 1 **Brief** on gaps in coverage of existing databases on refugees from Ukraine currently living in Moldova (based on database triangulation and KIIs).
- 1 **Situation Overview** on self-perceived needs of refugees from Ukraine currently living in Moldova.
- 1 **Dashboard** with estimates of the total number of refugees from Ukraine currently in Moldova and their geographical distribution across the settlements
- 1 **Key findings presentation** of the entire assessment.

3.7 Limitations

Data collection methodology

1. Only settlements listed in existing databases as having refugees will be included in the sampling frame for the KIIs

Since the data collection for Phase 2 and the final estimates produced through this assessment depend on the geographical coverage of existing databases gathered and triangulated during Phase 1, settlements not recorded to have refugees from Ukraine in the databases will be assumed to have no refugees for this assessment. Due to limited capacity, REACH cannot conduct KIIs in all settlements where there may be a lack of information regarding the presence of refugees and must rely on secondary data from existing databases to determine if refugees are present in a settlement. As such, this assessment and the final estimates produced will not be able to accurately cover settlements in which there may currently be refugees from Ukraine but none of them have been covered or registered in the gathered databases for the assessment.

2. The accuracy of final estimates depends on the sampling of the KIIs

KIIs will be selected based on their ability to provide an accurate overview of the settlement that they are being interviewed about. To determine this, questions on the accuracy of the data they have on refugees and their perceived level of oversight of the situation in the settlement have been integrated into the KI scoping and KI questionnaire to better assess the overall validity of the information they provide. However, the validity of the findings from the KIIs and the final estimates that will be produced from the incorporation of these findings to adjust the preliminary estimates from Phase 1 still depends on the scoping of KIIs of which not all of them will likely have a comprehensive overview of the settlement to fill the identified information gaps. Additionally, the determination of the validity of the information provided by the KIIs through the questionnaire will be influenced by respondent bias as KIIs may perceive themselves to have a greater oversight than they do or may be keen on giving the impression that they have more accurate data than they do. As such, though the KIIs may

³² REACH will provide the R script to the IMWG and potential future refugee population task force who will be responsible for providing frequent updates of the estimates.

provide valuable information in terms of covering groups of refugees not included in the databases gathered for Phase 1 and providing an understanding of the information gaps, the findings from Phase 2 will affect the accuracy of the final estimates of the total refugee population.

3. The findings of Phase 2 will become less relevant over time

For the data collection in Phase 2, only one round of KIIs will be held. Nevertheless, one aspect of the objectives of the assessment is to create room for the possibility of the estimates being regularly updated in the future. The R script will be designed to clean databases and generate initial estimates based on factors like refugee movement patterns. However, to maintain accuracy over time, regular follow-up KIIs will be essential. These interviews will help update the estimates as the relevance of existing data decreases.

4. The findings of Phase 3 will only be indicative and subject to sampling and selection bias

The data for the self-perceived needs questionnaire will be collected through the instant-messaging service Viber, which will reach a maximum number of respondents through a different method of identification of respondents. However, Viber is not widely used amongst all refugee groups, which will cause the results to not provide a comprehensive representation of the total population. Additionally, since this data collection phase uses a convenience sampling approach and low response rates are expected, the demographic data and findings on self-perceived needs and preferred sectors of assistance are only indicative of the wider refugee population in Moldova.

5. Quality of data for Phase 3 will be affected by phone-based data collection

During the data collection phase, data accuracy is limited as interviews will be conducted over the phone. This increases the risk of misunderstandings from both the interviewee and the interviewer, which will affect the quality of the data compared to conducting interviews face-to-face.

Data analysis methodology

1. Subjectivity of weighting criteria

Regarding the data analysis for Phase 2, following the completion of the KIIs, results from settlements with more than one KI will be aggregated through the support of the weighting criteria. These weighting criteria are aimed at assisting in the evaluation of the coverage of the KIs and the accuracy of their database, to add weight to their response and aggregate with the scoring of each KII in mind. The limitations of this are the assumptions that are made during the design of the weighting matrix. These assumptions include that in-person verification is better than other types of database updates, and that the accuracy of the database is directly related to when this database was last updated completely. Additionally, the percentage of coverage of KIs to estimate the total number of refugees in the settlement is self-reported, which is sensitive to over- and under estimations. However, this subjectivity and reliance on the technical judgement of the Assessment Officers is determined as necessary in order to take into account the potential differences in reliability of data between KIs in a settlement which can have a major impact on the final estimates of the total population of refugees in the settlement.

3.8 Risk mitigation

The assessment includes a phase relying on collaboration with an external partner (Viber), necessitating a contingency plan to mitigate potential risks associated with external responsibilities. Since this collaboration is new for REACH in Moldova and there are currently no active communication channels established with Viber, REACH Ukraine's knowledge and connections with Viber will be leveraged to mitigate this risk in the first instance. In case the collaboration with Viber does not succeed in a timely manner, alternative platforms like Telegram and Facebook will be used instead to reach respondents. Instead of relying on an intermediate moderator, REACH will independently conduct direct dissemination of invitations to participate in the assessment through pre-identified community groups/channels created for refugees from Ukraine in Moldova on these platforms.

4. Key ethical considerations and related risks

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

<i>The proposed research design...</i>	Yes/ No	Details if no (including mitigation)
... Has been coordinated with relevant stakeholders to avoid unnecessary duplication of data collection efforts?	Yes	
... Respects respondents, their rights and dignity (<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 expose data collectors to any risks as a direct result of participation in data collection?	Yes	
... Does not expose respondents / their communities to any risks as a direct result of participation in data collection?	Yes	
... Does not involve collecting information on specific topics which may be stressful and/ or re-traumatising for research participants (both respondents and data collectors)?	Yes	
... Does not involve data collection with minors i.e. anyone less than 18 years old?	Yes	
... Does not involve data collection with other vulnerable groups e.g. persons with disabilities, victims/ survivors of protection incidents, etc.?	No	Phase 3 may involve surveying vulnerable groups if they agree to participating in the survey but does not specifically target these groups. The HESPER Scale questionnaire includes sensitive questions on mental health, disability, and physical or sexual violence against women in their community. As such, enumerators will be trained on how to appropriately and ethically deal with potential interviewees of Phase 3 that are members of vulnerable groups. Additionally, the simplicity of the HESPER Scale questions is such that specific or personal details regarding the 'serious problems' identified by respondents are not asked, so that no sensitive data is collected from the respondents.
... Follows IMPACT SOPs for management of personally identifiable information ?	Yes	

5. Roles and responsibilities

Task Description	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
Research design	Assessment Officers	Associate Research Manager	HQ Research Department, GIS Officer, Data Officer, Field Team, Ukraine Longitudinal Study Team, ECHO TA, IMWG Lead, Acted, NRC, PiN	National Bureau of Statistics, WFP, CRS, Liason Officer, Projects and Fundraising Officer
Supervising data collection	Field Officer, Assessment Officers	Senior Field Manager	Associate Research Manager	ECHO
Data processing (checking, cleaning)	Assessment Officers, Data Officer	Assessment Officers (project lead)	Associate Research Manager, HQ Research Department	ECHO
Data analysis	Assessment Officers, Data Officer	Associate Research Manager	HQ Research Department	ECHO
Output production	Assessment Officers	Associate Research Manager	HQ Research Department	ECHO
Dissemination	Assessment Officers	Associate Research Manager	Projects and Fundraising Officer, HQ Communications & Advocacy Unit, Country coordinator	ECHO, PLACE Consortium, IM Working Group
Monitoring & Evaluation	Assessment Officers	Country Coordinator	Associate Research Manager, Projects and Fundraising Officer, HQ MEL Unit	ECHO
Lessons learned	Assessment Officers, Field 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 can be found here: [REACH MDA2401 Refugee Population Profiling Assessment 2024 DAP.xlsx](#)

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 Centre	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		x Yes
		# of visits to x webmap/x dashboard	Country request to HQ		x Yes
IMPACT activities contribute to better program implementation and coordination of the humanitarian response	Number of humanitarian organisations utilizing IMPACT services/products	# references in HPC documents (HNO, SRP, Flash appeals, Cluster/sector strategies)	Country team	Reference_log	2025 Ukrainian Regional Refugee Response Plan (to be confirmed if there will be one for 2025)
		# references in single agency documents			UNHCR Moldova Country Strategy
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, cluster/agency strategic	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 2024 for all 2024 activities, targeting at least 10 partners.
		Perceived usefulness and influence of IMPACT outputs			
		Recommendations to strengthen IMPACT programs			
		Perceived capacity of IMPACT staff			
		Perceived quality of outputs/programs			

	plans, etc.) directly informed by IMPACT products	Recommendations to strengthen IMPACT programs			
Humanitarian stakeholders are engaged in IMPACT programs throughout the research cycle	Number and/or percentage of humanitarian organizations 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

