

Research Terms of Reference

Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) Assessment

MDA2504

Republic of Moldova

August 2025

Version 1

REACH Informing
more effective
humanitarian action

1. Executive Summary

Country of intervention	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 GFO B2G				
Overall Research Timeframe (<i>from research design to final outputs / M&E</i>)	01/04/2025 to 31/12/2025				
Research Timeframe	1. Pilot/ training: 21/08/2025		6. Situation Overview sent for validation: 24/11/2025		
	2. Start collect data: 25/08/2025		7. Situation Overview published: 31/12/2025		
	3. Data collected: 26/09/2025		8. Key findings presentation: 31/12/2025		
	4. Data analysed: 31/10/2025				
	5. Data sent for validation: 03/11/2025				
Number of assessments	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single assessment (one cycle)			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multi assessment (more than one cycle) <i>[Describe here the frequency of the cycle]</i>			
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)		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Donor plan/strategy	_ _ / _ _ / _ _ _ _		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inter-cluster plan/strategy	_ _ / _ _ / _ _ _ _		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cluster plan/strategy: Moldova: Accountability to Affected Populations Task Force	31/12/2025		
	<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 refugees displaced from Ukraine in Moldova.	31/12/2025		

Audience Type & Dissemination <i>Specify who will the assessment inform and how you will disseminate to inform the audience</i>	Audience type		Dissemination	
Stakeholder mapping <i>Has a detailed stakeholder mapping been conducted during research design to identify all actors that could contribute to and/or benefit from the research?</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
General Objective	To inform human-centered approaches to humanitarian programming, and strengthen the accountability of humanitarian actors to affected populations residing in the Republic of Moldova by providing an evidence base on affected populations' perceptions of humanitarian assistance			
Specific Objective(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand perceptions of affected populations regarding the relevance and fairness of the current humanitarian interventions and beneficiary targeting models 2. Explore affected populations' attitudes and experiences connected to their participation and inclusion in decision-making processes and to their engagement (or lack thereof) with existing feedback and complaint mechanisms 3. Understand to what extent and in what ways humanitarian actors have been engaging with affected communities in decision-making processes, and identify key lessons learned to inform future programming 4. Explore and identify affected populations' needs related to integration into the host communities and their expectations of how humanitarian aid can best support their integration 			
Research Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the perceptions of affected populations on the current types of humanitarian interventions and beneficiary targeting models? What are the perceptions of affected populations regarding the level of fairness in current humanitarian service delivery? 2. What are the attitudes and lived experiences of affected populations in relation to their participation in decision-making processes and their engagement with feedback and complaint mechanisms? 3. What mechanisms are in place to involve affected populations in planning or decision-making? What key lessons have humanitarian organisations learned from their experiences engaging with these populations? 			

	4. What are the needs of affected populations for integration into host communities, and what types of humanitarian aid do they perceive as most helpful in supporting the integration?			
Geographic Coverage	Nationwide Republic of Moldova, excluding the Transnistrian region			
Secondary data sources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UNHCR, Ukraine Situation: Republic of Moldova Participatory Assessment Report 2024, 28 February 2025 2. Internews, UNHCR, Information Ecosystem Assessment 2023 - 2024, June 2024 3. IMPACT Initiatives, UNHCR, Situation Overview - Socio-Economic Insights Survey (SEIS) 2024, December 2024 4. REACH Initiative, Refugee Population Profiling (RPop) Assessment – Refugee Estimates and Trends Database, September 2024 <p>The full list of secondary data sources can be found in Section 3.3.</p>			
Population(s) <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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Refugees in host communities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Refugees in Refugee Accommodation Centres (RACs)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Host communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	[Other, Specify]
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Stratification <i>Select type(s) and enter number of strata</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Geographical #: 2 1. Municipality of Chişinău 2. Rest of Moldova, excluding the Transnistrian region	<input type="checkbox"/>	Group #: ___ Population size per strata is known? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Beneficiary/Non-beneficiary of humanitarian aid respondents #: 2
Data collection tool(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Structured (Quantitative)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Semi-structured (Qualitative)
	Sampling method		Data collection method	
Structured data collection tool # 1 <i>Structured survey with members of the refugee community, currently residing in Moldova</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 #): 305 <input type="checkbox"/> Direct observations (Target #):_ _ _ _ _ <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify] (Target #):_ _ _ _ _	
Semi-structured data collection tool (s) # 1 <i>Key informant interviews (KIIs) with humanitarian actors</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Purposive <input type="checkbox"/> Snowballing <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify]		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Key informant interview (Target #): 8-10 <input type="checkbox"/> Individual interview (Target #):_ _ _ _ _ <input type="checkbox"/> Focus group discussion (Target #):_ _ _ _ _ <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify] (Target #):_ _ _ _ _	

Semi-structured data collection tool (s) # 2 <i>In-depth Individual Interviews with members of the refugee community, currently residing in Moldova</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Purposive <input type="checkbox"/> Snowballing <input type="checkbox"/> [Other, Specify]		<input type="checkbox"/> Key informant interview (Target #):_____			
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual interview (Target #): 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Focus group discussion (Target #):_____			
Disaggregation by gender and age	Gender		Age			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes For the In-depth Individual Interviews, disaggregation by age will be applied.		
	<input checked="" 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 #: 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Report #: __	<input type="checkbox"/>	Profile #: __
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Presentation (Preliminary findings) #: __	<input type="checkbox"/>	Presentation (Final) #: __	<input type="checkbox"/>	Factsheet #: __
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Interactive dashboard #: _	<input type="checkbox"/>	Webmap #: __	<input type="checkbox"/>	Map #: __
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	[Other, Specify] #: 1 Quantitative dataset and analysis results table 1 Qualitative data analysis				
Access	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public (available on REACH resource center and other humanitarian platforms)				
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Restricted (bilateral dissemination only upon agreed dissemination list, no publication on REACH or other platforms)				
Visibility	REACH					
	Donor: ECHO					
	Coordination Framework: N/A					
	Partners: N/A					

2. Rationale

Over three years have elapsed since the military offensive commenced in Ukraine on 24 February 2022. Through the monitoring of border crossings between the two countries, 133,311 refugees from Ukraine were recorded to be in the Republic of Moldova as of 30 June 2025.¹ 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 2023.² Initially, TP status allowed refugees to stay in Moldova until 1 March 2024, and has since been extended to 1 March 2026. This status offers refugees a more secure legal standing and grants them access to vital services within a formal

¹ UNHCR, [Country - Republic of Moldova](#), accessed on 11 August 2025. 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.

² Government of Republic of Moldova (Guvernul Republicii Moldova), [Decision no.21/2023](#), accessed on 11 August 2025.

institutional framework, thereby facilitating their integration into the national welfare systems. As of 4 August 2025, 77,999 individuals were granted this protection, out of which 18,636 were children.³

As the conflict persists, the humanitarian response has prompted a transition toward a more development-oriented approach based on long-term and sustainable solutions to support the integration of refugees and address their evolving needs in Moldova. Even in this continuously evolving context, accountability to affected populations (AAP) remains an active commitment to effective programming, ensuring that interventions are transparent, inclusive and responsive to the needs and voices of the people it aims to serve. In reflection of this commitment, several initiatives and coordination mechanisms have been established in Moldova since 2022.

AAP coordination in Moldova is facilitated through the AAP Task Force (AAPTF), with the objective of implementing comprehensive, system-wide accountability processes. The task force works in partnership with international, national and community-based organizations, community leaders and mediators, authorities and the United Nations (UN) system.⁴ Assessment and monitoring activities have likewise been implemented to align with this commitment. Since 2022, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has conducted annual Participatory Assessments using participatory methodologies to gather insights directly from affected populations. Created in 2022, Laolaltă InfoUnit has supported this effort by conducting online social listening and disseminating findings through the AAP Task Force, as well as publicly available reports.⁵

The Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA) conducted in 2022 and 2023, rebranded as the Socio-Economic Insights Survey (SEIS) in 2024, aimed to provide up-to-date data that accurately reflects the evolving needs and vulnerabilities of refugees displaced from Ukraine in Moldova, thereby informing the Refugee Response Plans (RRP) and other strategic planning processes. The 2024 SEIS collected data on the AAP indicators, such as types of aid received, satisfaction levels, and perceptions of aid workers' behaviour. Based on the assessment findings, 24% of respondents reported that they had never used or attempted to use the channels to obtain information, seek assistance or report issues, pointing to a reluctance or lack of trust in the existing mechanisms, as well as other barriers to engagement.⁶ The 2023-2024 Information Ecosystem Assessment in Moldova, conducted by Internews and UNHCR, complements the findings by exploring changes to or new information needs, gaps and barriers of the refugees and host community, as well as dynamics, behaviours and barriers related to engagement in AAP mechanisms. The assessment shows that 89% of refugee respondents indicated that since arriving in Moldova, they have never made or wanted to make a complaint or suggest changes to a refugee service they received, with 74% reporting they had no feedback or complaints to share.⁷ These findings suggest that the existing complaint and feedback mechanisms (CFMs) may not be serving their intended purpose, particularly in fostering a culture of dialogue and empowerment for affected populations. In addition, targeted assessments and monitoring activities have been carried out to gather deeper insights into the needs, perceptions, and intentions of the affected populations in the specific sectors.

Despite the range of assessments conducted on affected populations, key AAP indicators, such as perceptions of the relevance and fairness of the current service delivery, participation in decisions that impact them, and the relevance of feedback mechanisms in place, have not been comprehensively captured. The 2024 SEIS included a limited and general set of AAP indicators, relying solely on a quantitative methodology lacking the capacity for deeper exploration. The 2025 SEIS⁸ proceeds with an even more limited set of AAP indicators, further constraining the understanding of refugees'

³ The General Inspectorate for Migration (IGM), [International protection and documentation of Ukrainians in the Republic of Moldova](#), accessed on 11 August 2025.

⁴ Accountability to Affected People (AAP) Task Force Refugee Coordination Forum, [Terms of Reference \(2025\)](#), accessed on 11 August 2025.

⁵ Please refer to [InfoUnit: information unit within Laolalta](#).

⁶ REACH, UNHCR, [Situation Overview — Socio-Economic Insights Survey \(SEIS\) \(December 2024\)](#), accessed on 11 August 2025. The total sample size for this indicator consists of 388 respondents.

⁷ Internews and UNHCR, [Information Ecosystem Assessment 2023 - 2024, Moldova](#), accessed on 11 August 2025. The total sample size for this indicator consists of 622 respondents.

⁸ Please refer to the [Data Analysis Plan of the 2025 SEIS](#).

perspectives on accountability. Moreover, existing assessments have largely focused on the experiences and perceptions of the affected populations, while offering limited insight into the experiences, challenges, and gaps from the delivery side.

In light of the ongoing shift toward a more development-oriented response and changes in the delivery of humanitarian assistance⁹, there is a growing need to better understand how the affected populations perceive and experience their engagement with humanitarian actors, and to identify and explore their needs regarding their integration into the host country. Equally important is to understand how these actors and service providers engage with the affected populations, and the challenges and gaps encountered by them. The AAP assessment aims to bridge this gap by employing a mixed-method approach to collect both quantitative and qualitative data on the accountability mechanisms currently in place and how these are perceived by those affected. The findings of the assessment will provide evidence to inform the humanitarian response regarding community perceptions of service delivery, helping to shape a more community-centered response that is inclusive and aligned with the needs and expectations of the people they are intended to support.

2.1 Intended impact

The objective of the AAP assessment is to strengthen the accountability of humanitarian actors to affected populations residing in the Republic of Moldova by providing an evidence base on affected populations' perceptions of humanitarian assistance, thereby informing human-centered approaches to humanitarian programming. The assessment aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions, needs and challenges faced by affected populations when interacting with humanitarian service delivery organisations, and other humanitarian stakeholders. Furthermore, the assessment seeks to provide a better understanding of how experiences, perceptions, needs, challenges, and expectations vary between the Municipality of Chişinău and the rest of Moldova. Evaluating these aspects in different settings will provide a clearer picture of the requisite support according to the specific region where refugees reside.

The AAP assessment will employ a mixed-methods approach to understand affected populations' experiences with humanitarian service delivery, their perceptions of the relevance, fairness and targeting of the current humanitarian assistance, and the extent to which they are included and heard in their engagement with humanitarian providers. The assessment also aims to identify the factors that contribute to the low engagement of affected populations in the CFM of humanitarian providers and explore their needs for effective integration into the host country. This approach will enhance understanding of affected populations' perceptions and experiences and assist humanitarian aid and development programmes in enhancing their effectiveness. In addition, the results will inform national authorities for internal policies and programmes.

3. Methodology

3.1 Methodology overview

The AAP assessment will use a mixed-methods approach. The quantitative and qualitative findings will complement each other and allow to gain a deeper understanding of the accountability of humanitarian actors to affected populations residing in Moldova, capturing both community and institutional experiences and perspectives.

The quantitative component, consisting of structured individual surveys with two refugee profiles: beneficiaries of humanitarian aid and non-beneficiaries, will allow to capture perceptions of the relevance and fairness of the current aid, participation in decision-making, engagement with feedback mechanisms, and expectations for future assistance.

⁹ Please refer to [Transition from Emergency Cash Assistance: Strategic Adaptations](#) and [FAQ – Changes to UNHCR Cash Assistance in Moldova](#).

The qualitative component will include in-depth individual interviews with the same two refugee profiles. The in-depth individual interviews will deepen the understanding of personal attitudes, lived experiences, motivations and challenges related to the relevance and fairness of the current humanitarian services, participation and engagement with the feedback mechanisms in place. Additionally, the qualitative component will include key informant interviews (KIIs) with high-ranking humanitarian workers and governmental officials in Moldova, which will provide insights into institutional engagement practices, coordination efforts, perceived challenges, and key lessons learned to inform future programming. Therefore, the findings collected from two different perspectives, the affected population and the humanitarian actors, will allow for triangulation and provide an evidence base for improving accountability frameworks.

Key definitions:

- **Affected populations:** For the purpose of this assessment, “affected populations” or “affected communities” refers to refugee communities. As such, the terms “affected populations” or “affected communities” and “refugees” will be used interchangeably throughout the assessment.
- **Refugee:** For the purpose of this assessment, a person who has been displaced from Ukraine following the escalation of hostilities in February 2022, including third-country nationals. The definition of refugee in this assessment is not limited to the legal-status designation.
- **Third-country national (TCNs):** A person who has fled Ukraine but for whom Ukraine is not their country of origin, and who may be in need of international protection.
- **Non-beneficiary of humanitarian aid:** individual who has not received any kind of humanitarian aid within three months prior to data collection. This includes individuals who last received humanitarian aid more than three months prior to data collection or have never received humanitarian aid since their arrival in Moldova.
- **Beneficiary of humanitarian aid:** individual who is receiving, or has received within the past three months, any kind of humanitarian assistance at the time of data collection.
- **Humanitarian aid** includes cash assistance or vouchers, humanitarian distributions (non-food items, clothing, food), humanitarian protection services, and social support services provided by humanitarian organisations (NGOs, CSOs, UN agencies, etc.).
- **Humanitarian organisations:** For the purpose of this assessment, include United Nations (UN) Agencies, International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs), International Organisations (IOs), National Non-Governmental Organisations (NNGOs), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), private organisations, specialised governmental entities and local authorities.

3.2 Population of interest

Geographical coverage

The geographic scope of the assessment includes the municipality of Chişinău and the rest of Moldova, excluding the Transnistria region. Transnistria is a self-declared autonomous region located on the left bank of the Dniester River, along the border with Ukraine. Due to political sensitivities and access constraints, IMPACT will not administer the data collection in the Transnistrian region.

Geographical terms:

- **Region:** There are 3 regions in Moldova: North, Centre, and South. Considering the high concentration of refugees in the Municipality of Chişinău it will be extracted from the Centre region in the framework of AAP and become a territorial region unit itself, resulting in a total of 4 regions under this assessment.

- **Municipality of Chişinău:** A second-level administrative-territorial unit, which includes first-level administrative-territorial units.¹⁰ The municipality is composed of the city of Chişinău, seven cities, eleven communes and villages.¹¹

Population of interest and unit of measurement

The population of interest for this assessment includes all individuals displaced from Ukraine to the Republic of Moldova following the escalation of hostilities in February 2022, who are currently residing in the country. This population encompasses refugees living in private housing, those hosted by Moldovan families or relatives, as well as individuals residing in accredited or non-accredited collective centres, commonly known as refugee accommodation centres (RACs). Furthermore, all displaced individuals will be included in this assessment regardless of their legal status in Moldova. This includes individuals under Temporary Protection, asylum seekers, those with refugee or humanitarian protection status, holders of temporary or permanent residence permits, those who have received Moldovan citizenship, or those without any legal status. Both beneficiaries of humanitarian aid and non-beneficiaries are included, allowing for a diverse range of experiences to be captured. The unit of measurement for the quantitative component and in-depth individual interviews from the qualitative component will be the individual level. In the key informant interviews, the unit of measurement will be the organisational level, while the analysis will aggregate and interpret findings to inform conclusions at the national level.

3.3 Secondary data review

The secondary data review was conducted from April to July 2025 to identify key findings related to AAP indicators, highlight information gaps, avoid duplicating ongoing assessments, and ensure alignment with the needs of affected populations and the humanitarian response. This review involved examining a wide range of sources, including UNHCR reports and publications, reports from National and International NGOs, and academic publications. It provided insights into the context, theoretical frameworks and facilitated mapping out information gaps for further exploration.

To ensure the assessment is aligned with partner priorities and does not duplicate other ongoing efforts, consultations were held with key partners, including UNHCR, Laolaltă, INTERSOS, People in Need (PiN), the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Acted, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MLSP). Additionally, to gain direct insight into the perspectives of affected communities and ensure that the relevance and appropriateness of the research questions, a focus group discussion (FGD) consultation with refugees residing in the municipality of Chişinău was conducted (see Annex 1). These consultations were pivotal in refining the general objective and specific objectives of the assessment and in shaping the corresponding research questions.

Table 1: Identified sources for secondary data review

Resource	To inform
Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), IASC Collective AAP Framework , 22 December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the Theoretical framework • Understanding of the Accountability to Affected Populations concept
IASC, IASC Revised Commitments on Accountability to Affected Populations and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, 2017 (including Guidance Note and Resource List) , 1 November 2017	
Sphere, The Sphere Handbook. Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response , 2018	
Core Humanitarian Standard, Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability , 2024	

¹⁰ 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 11 August 2025.

¹¹ 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 11 August 2025.

UNHCR, Regional Refugee Response Plan 2025-2026 , January 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contextual understanding • Research gaps • Research design
UNHCR, Ukraine Situation: Republic of Moldova Participatory Assessment Report 2024 , 28 February 2025	
UNHCR, Sectoral Working Groups Documents , 2024/2025, July 2025	
IMPACT Initiatives, UNHCR, Situation Overview - Socio-Economic Insights Survey (SEIS) 2024 , December 2024	
Internews, UNHCR, Information Ecosystem Assessment 2023 - 2024 , June 2024	
IMPACT, Research Terms of Reference – Socio-Economic Insights Survey (SEIS) 2025 , May 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research design • Data analysis plan
REACH Initiative, Research Terms of Reference - Accountability to Affected Populations: Community Perceptions of Humanitarian Assistance in South Sudan , January 2019	
REACH Initiative, Research Terms of Reference - Accountability to Affected Population (AAP) Assessment in Nigeria , February 2020	
REACH Initiative and IASC, REACH and the IASC AAP PSEA Task Team present menu of AAP questions for needs assessments , June 2018	
REACH Initiative, Refugee Population Profiling (RPOP) Assessment – Refugee Estimates and Trends Database , September 2024	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sampling design

Any new reports, factsheets, or briefings will be monitored for potentially useful information to enhance the assessment's background or compare collected data with that from other sources.

3.4 Primary Data Collection

Structured individual survey with refugees from Ukraine, currently residing in Moldova

Method

The quantitative data collection for this assessment will be collected through a structured, individual-level survey of with two refugee profiles currently residing in Moldova: beneficiaries of humanitarian aid and non-beneficiaries. Including both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of humanitarian aid allows for a comprehensive understanding of how different groups of the refugee population experience and perceive participation and accountability mechanisms. This approach helps identify gaps in access, coverage, and inclusion, ensuring the assessment captures diverse needs and perspectives.

Interviews will be carried out via phone call or in-person. A portion of the surveys might be conducted by phone to enhance accessibility and ensure a more inclusive approach. Phone interviews allow individuals who may otherwise be unable to participate in person, such as working adults, single parents with small children, persons with limited mobility, or those living in remote areas, to engage in the assessment at a time and setting that is convenient for them. The data collection will be conducted by the IMPACT Field Team, who will be responsible for conducting surveys with individuals who have provided informed consent in advance.

Given the saturation of participation in assessments observed during previous IMPACT assessments conducted in Moldova this year, and building on the results and efficiency of previous scoping methods employed, the AAP assessment will apply three complementary scoping strategies to identify eligible respondents. These include dissemination of the consent form through social media channels, engagement with partner organisations and coordination with the host country social assistance network. These combined approaches aim to ensure the maximum diversity and representation of the sample and minimise reliance on any single scoping method. Additionally, pre-registration through informed consent offers a key advantage by ensuring that individuals who have already expressed interest in participating are contacted, which improves logistical and time efficiency.

All scoping activities will be conducted by the IMPACT Moldova Field Team, with the support of the Research Team, in advance of data collection, to ensure sufficient time to reach the required sample. Refugee respondents will be asked to complete a consent form in advance of the expected in-person or phone survey. This consent form will thus serve as a screening tool to ensure that only eligible participants are surveyed. Each of the three scoping strategies is described in more detail below.

- a) **Social-media channels:** Social-media platforms commonly used by refugees from Ukraine in Moldova, such as Viber, Facebook groups, and Telegram, will be used to disseminate consent forms. Once consent forms have been gathered and verified, the consenting participants will be contacted by a Field Team member to conduct the survey. All refugees who consent to participate will be called at least once as a polite gesture for having taken the time to complete the consent form. Since geographic self-registration on these platforms cannot guarantee regional stratification, respondents' locations will be requested in the consent form and closely monitored during the consent-gathering phase. To prevent regional overrepresentation, submissions through the open consent form will be monitored in real time. Once the target number of participants from a specific region is reached, individuals from that region who continue to submit consent forms will be placed on a supplementary list. The supplementary list may be used as a replacement pool in case of non-responses or refusals among initially contacted people. In case of underrepresentation, remaining individuals will be scoped by the Field Team, using their existing connections and by applying the snowballing method.
- b) **Cooperation with partner organisations:** Partner organisations will be invited to support outreach efforts by displaying informational posters with details about the project, and a QR code in their public-facing spaces, and by sharing the IMPACT consent form through their social media platforms. This will direct interested people to the consent form and will enable them to express their interest in participating. Consent forms will be collected by the Data Officer and converted into a universally unique identifier (UUID), ensuring the safe storage of personally identifiable information (PII) with a password-protected file. Efforts will be made to assess the profiles of individuals reached through partner channels to prevent unintended overrepresentation of particularly vulnerable groups of refugees.
Furthermore, participants of the FGD consultation who have consented to receive further communication will be provided with relevant updates at the scoping stage. Those wishing to participate can complete the consent form and share information about the assessment within their communities, thereby supporting broader outreach and engagement.
- c) **Social-assistance network:** Through the connections forged by the IMPACT Field Team, the Field Team will invite social workers from the social assistance agencies and their subordinate territorial social assistance structures to support outreach. Social workers will be asked to share information about the survey among refugees on their caseloads. This approach is expected to help identify individuals who may not be reached through digital or partner organisations-led outreach channels.

Sampling

For this assessment, a non-probabilistic, stratified, purposive sampling strategy will be employed. For the quantitative component of the assessment, two stratifications will be used: the municipality of Chişinău and the rest of Moldova, excluding the Transnistrian region. The sample sizes were calculated using the estimates from the REACH Refugee Population Profiling Assessment (RPoP) as of June 2024. According to the RPoP, the estimated number of refugees in the Municipality of Chişinău is 17314, while the rest of Moldova, excluding the Transnistrian region, has 9,863 refugees.¹² The number of individual surveys required for this assessment is calculated using a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 8%, based on the population figures from the RPoP assessment. However, as respondents will be selected through a non-probability purposive sampling approach, the findings will not be statistically representative of the refugee population. Based on the calculations, a total of 149 surveys would be required in the Municipality of Chişinău, and 148 in the rest of Moldova.

¹² REACH Initiative, [Refugee Population Profiling \(RPoP\) Assessment Key Findings Presentation – Refugee Estimates and Trends](#), September 2024, accessed on 11 August 2025.

To account for possible inaccuracies in the collected surveys and deletions, a buffer of 3% will be added. These adjustments bring the final number of required surveys to 153 in the Municipality of Chişinău, and 152 in the rest of Moldova.

Furthermore, the sample will be divided by refugee profile, specifically beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of humanitarian aid, in order to more accurately capture and compare the experiences, perceptions, challenges and expectations of these two groups. Due to the absence of a centralised, unified database of recipients of humanitarian aid, the total population of both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries is unknown. Certain assumptions were made to enable the stratification of the sample by respondent profile. The target sample for individual surveys with beneficiaries of humanitarian aid will be doubled to reflect the higher levels of engagement observed among this group in previous assessments. This approach also addresses potential challenges in reaching non-beneficiaries of humanitarian aid.

As the rest of Moldova stratum consists of three geographical regions, a fixed maximum cap is established for the number of surveys to be conducted in any single region. Specifically, no more than 50% of the total surveys allocated to this stratum, a maximum of 76 surveys, will be collected from any one region. Accordingly, the mixed maximum cap is applied for the refugee profiles, a maximum of 50% of the allocated surveys for each profile, a maximum of 51 surveys for beneficiaries of humanitarian aid, and a maximum of 26 surveys for non-beneficiaries, will be collected from any single region. Scoping and data collection will be monitored continuously, and once a region reaches its cap, efforts will shift to the remaining regions to ensure diversity in responses and geographic coverage. This approach aims to balance operational feasibility with equitable regional representation and to address previous challenges encountered by IMPACT in participant engagement during previous assessments using similar scoping strategies.

Table 2. Overall sample for the quantitative component

Stratification	Estimated refugee population ¹³	Buffer	Target Individual surveys ¹⁴	Refugee profile
Municipality of Chişinău	17,314	3%	153	102 beneficiaries
				51 non-beneficiaries
Rest of Moldova (excluding the Transnistrian region)	9,863	3%	152	101 beneficiaries
				51 non-beneficiaries
TOTAL	27,177		305	

Tool

Data will be collected through a structured household survey using the Kobo Collect application (for in-person interviews) or the Enketo webform (for phone interviews). A single survey tool will be developed for interviewing both beneficiaries of humanitarian aid and non-beneficiaries, as about two-thirds of the questions are relevant to both groups.

The tool will include core questions applicable to both populations of interest, covering demographic information and perception and lived experiences with the humanitarian actors and services. Questions will be asked on the perceptions of the relevance and fairness of the current humanitarian interventions, experiences and views on participation in decision-making processes, access to safe and responsive CFMs, and attitudes toward these mechanisms. Lastly, some questions will be asked to identify the needs and perceptions of how humanitarian programming could support their integration into the host communities. The questionnaire will be designed to ensure clarity and accessibility for the target population and will be translated into relevant languages.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ For planning purposes, the sample size was calculated using a 95% confidence level and an 8% margin of error, based on RPoP population figures. As respondents are selected through a non-probability purposive sampling approach, the findings will not be statistically representative.

In-depth individual interviews (IIs) with refugees from Ukraine, currently residing in Moldova

The qualitative component of this assessment consists of in-depth individual interviews (IIs) with the same two refugee profiles and key informant interviews (KIIs) with high-ranking humanitarian workers and governmental officials in Moldova.

Method

In-depth individual interviews will be conducted using a semi-structured qualitative survey. Respondent scoping for in-depth individual interviews will take place at the end of the quantitative survey, where participants will be asked whether they would be willing to participate in a qualitative interview. It is further envisaged that the responsibility for conducting interviews will be with the Field Team, with the support of the Research Team. Interviews will be conducted in person, and in cases of participant unavailability or logistical constraints that make in-person interviews impractical, interviews will be conducted via a video call.

Sampling

A non-probabilistic, stratified, purposive sampling strategy will also be applied to guide the selection of participants for in-depth individual interviews. Participants for in-depth individual interviews will be randomly selected from among those who participated in the quantitative individual surveys and expressed their willingness to participate in the interview. A total of 12 in-depth interviews will be carried out: 6 in the municipality of Chişinău and 6 in the rest of Moldova. The sample will be equally divided based on refugee profile, ensuring balanced representation of both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of humanitarian aid. Specifically, 3 interviews with beneficiaries and 3 with non-beneficiaries will be conducted in each stratum. To further ensure diversity in perspectives, disaggregation by age will also be applied. Within each set of three interviews per profile, at least one interview will be conducted with a respondent from an older age group, aged 60 and above. This approach allows for an in-depth exploration of perceptions and experiences related to accountability across different refugee profiles, geographic contexts, and age cohorts, while ensuring comparability and diversity in qualitative insights.

Tool

In-depth IIs will be conducted through a qualitative semi-structured survey tool. A single semi-structured interview guide will be developed for interviewing both beneficiaries of humanitarian aid and non-beneficiaries, as about two-thirds of the questions are relevant to both groups. The tool will include a set of core questions applicable to both populations of interest, along with a small number of tailored questions specific to the respondent's profile.

The questionnaire will mirror the same main topics as the structured survey but will allow for deeper exploration. It will include probes that give the respondents the opportunity to elaborate, and the interviewer to ask for more specific information as relevant. The tool aims to capture in greater depth the experiences, challenges, motivations, and perceptions of affected populations in their interaction with humanitarian organisations.

It will seek to explore people's perceptions of the relevance and fairness of the current humanitarian service delivery, their opportunities for participation in decisions impacting them, and their views on the available CFMs. The in-depth IIs will also aim to understand the underlying reasons behind individuals' engagement with these mechanisms, shedding light on barriers, trust levels, and overall effectiveness of accountability practices. Furthermore, the tool will explore the affected populations' needs to support their integration into the host country.

Key informant interviews with high-ranking humanitarian workers and governmental officials in Moldova

Method

Key informant interviews will be conducted using a semi-structured qualitative survey. A total of 8 to 10 interviews will be conducted by members of the IMPACT Field Team and Research Team, who have been leading this assessment. Scoping and identification of suitable key informants (KIs) will be carried out by members of the Research Team. Scoping will begin early, and interviews will be scheduled in advance to avoid a capacity overload. It is further envisaged that responsibility for conducting interviews will be divided between the Field Team and Research Team, based on the preferred interview

language of the interviewee: English and Romanian interviews being conducted by the Research Team, and Romanian or Russian interviews being carried out by the Field Team, where capacity allows.

Sampling

A purposive sampling approach will be applied to identify the most relevant and knowledgeable key informants, with priority given to persons able to speak on behalf of their organisation or institution. In the scoping, several considerations will be taken into account to ensure that only key informants with the most expertise are selected to participate. This approach is adopted to ensure the depth and quality of responses. KIs will be selected according to the following criteria. KIs ideally should be involved in coordination in the refugee response in Moldova for at least one year by the time of data collection, and should have knowledge of national strategies and policies related to refugee and humanitarian accountability. KIs should furthermore have a certain level of national oversight within their organisation or institution, should have operational knowledge of refugee-related programming across different regions of the country, and should be aware of their organisation's past and present policies and strategies. KIs should also show contextual awareness of the changing circumstances of the refugee crisis in Moldova and must be willing to provide details about how their organisation or institution will strategically adapt to align with the changing refugee crisis to address the connected research question and objectives. KIs must be willing to provide detailed and reflective responses on institutional engagement with affected populations, particularly about decision-making, participation, and feedback mechanisms.

Tool

This component of the research will be conducted through a qualitative semi-structured survey tool. The tool will cover structured topics, with probes that give the respondents the opportunity to elaborate, and the interviewer to ask for more specific information as relevant.

The tool aims to examine how humanitarian actors engage with affected populations, specifically how they involve them in the decision-making processes, collect and respond to community feedback, and apply accountability mechanisms to monitor the use and impact of humanitarian aid after its delivery. Furthermore, the tool will include questions designed to explore challenges faced, best practices, and lessons learned from past engagement with affected populations. Additionally, the tool will include questions on planned humanitarian policies and organisational strategies, with a focus on how these aim to support the integration of affected populations into local communities.

Enumerator training

Prior to piloting the tool and conducting data collection, a training on data collection for this assessment will be conducted for enumerators from the IMPACT Moldova Field Team. Two separate sessions will be organised: one focused on the quantitative component of the assessment, and a second one on the qualitative component, which will take place after the completion of quantitative data collection. The training sessions will be conducted by the Assessment Team (Senior Assessment Officer and Assessment Officer). The topics that will be covered include the contextual background, objectives and rationale behind the assessment, the populations of interest of the assessment, the target sample, and going through the tools in-depth, including clarification and discussion on questions that may be confusing, and logical checks that will be conducted during quantitative data cleaning so that enumerators can minimise such logical mistakes.

3.5 Data Processing & Analysis

The primary quantitative data for the AAP Assessment will be collected using the Kobo Collect application (for in-person interviews) or the Enketo webform (for phone interviews). Once collected, the Senior Assessment Officer and Assessment Officer will clean the raw data daily to account for any duplicates or issues during data collection, as well as to ensure that the correct methodology was followed. The data will be anonymized and cleaned in accordance with REACH's [Data Cleaning Minimum Standard](#) and the [Management of Personally Identifiable Information](#). Following the data cleaning process, the Data Officer, the Senior Assessment Officer and the Assessment Officer will conduct descriptive statistical analysis on the cleaned data set in line with the data analysis plan created during the research design phase using relevant software such

as R and Excel. The quantitative refugee survey data analysis will be conducted in compliance with REACH's [Minimum Standards Checklist for Quantitative Data Analysis](#).

The qualitative KIIs and In-depth IIs will be recorded (when consent is given), and interviewers will take notes during the interviews. The recordings will be transcribed by the interviewers and translated into English for data analysis. All qualitative data will be processed in accordance with REACH's [Management of Personally Identifiable Information](#). The research team will conduct a thematic analysis of the qualitative data using a combined inductive and deductive approach. The team will first develop a broad, initial codebook based on the key research questions and the KII and In-depth IIs guides and iteratively adjust the codebook based on patterns and trends emerging in the data. The analysis will be conducted in accordance with REACH's [Minimum Standards Checklist for Semi-Structured \(Qualitative\) Data Processing and Analysis](#).

All data cleaning and analysis will be reviewed by the IMPACT HQ Research Quality Assurance Unit before the 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 the estimated refugee figures from the RPoP database as of June 2024. Furthermore, the sampling of respondents is based on a non-probability purposive sampling approach, which also impacts the representativeness of the results. Therefore, the findings of this assessment will not be statistically representative of the entire population and should be considered indicative only.

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 AAP will not cover the Transnistrian region.

Respondent bias: The sample of this assessment will likely be biased towards respondents who have greater unmet needs or had more negative experiences and feedback to provide on the humanitarian aid delivery, as these individuals tend to be more willing to express their concerns. To address this, the assessment will employ a mix of three scoping strategies (via social media, partner networks, and the social assistance network) to help diversify the participant pool and mitigate the risk of a homogenised sample.

Respondent identification and participation: While the use of both phone and in-person interviews aims to enhance inclusivity and flexibility for participants, actual participation may still be unpredictable. Despite prior registration, respondents may not attend scheduled interviews. To mitigate this, extensive pre-scoping will be conducted, supported by a clear consent form that facilitates location and profile tracking while minimising respondent burden. Additionally, posters and digital materials (including operational QR codes) will be designed and disseminated in advance to encourage participation and allow registration to be monitored in real time.

Overrepresentation of certain regions in the rest of Moldova stratum: Despite efforts to ensure balanced geographic coverage, including regional caps and continuous monitoring, there remains a possibility of slight overrepresentation of certain regions within the rest of Moldova stratum. This may result from uneven response rates to self-registration forms and varying levels of accessibility and engagement across regions.

Subjectivity of self-reported perceptions: The AAP assessment is primarily based on the perceptions and lived experiences of respondents. As such, the findings reflect subjective viewpoints that may be influenced by individual expectations, recall biases or limited awareness of available mechanisms.

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 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)?	No	<p>The survey will include questions about respondents' lived experiences in relation to their interaction with humanitarian aid and actors. While the survey will not contain any sensitive questions related to protection issues, some questions about past experiences may inadvertently trigger emotional distress or recall of difficult situations.</p> <p>As part of the informed consent process, enumerators will explain to respondents that they can withdraw from participating in the interview or decline to answer questions at any point. Furthermore, the IMPACT Moldova Field Team has been trained on how to interview individuals in the most sensitive and respectful manner.</p>
... 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	<p>Since participation in the individual survey will be advertised widely on social media channels and public spaces, respondents may include vulnerable groups such as older individuals, people with disabilities, and</p>

		<p>victims/survivors of protection incidents that are interested in participating in the survey.</p> <p>The IMPACT Moldova Field Team has been trained on how to interview individuals in the most sensitive and respectful manner. Enumerators will also be trained on and made aware of referral channels and procedures to follow if they encounter any specific vulnerable cases.</p>
... Follows IMPACT SOPs for management of personally identifiable information ?	Yes	

5. Roles and responsibilities

Task Description	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
Research design	Senior Assessment Officer, Assessment Officer	Senior Assessment Officer	HQ Research Department, UNHCR, Laolaltă, PLACE Consortium partners (INTERSOS, PiN, NRC, and Acted), MLSP, refugee community FGD	AAP Task Force, Projects and Fundraising Officer, Country Coordinator, ECHO Technical Assistant
Supervising data collection	Field Officer	Field Officer	Assessment Officer, Senior Assessment Officer, Data Officer	ECHO
Data processing (checking, cleaning)	Assessment Officer, Senior Assessment Officer, Data Officer	Senior Assessment Officer	HQ Research Department	ECHO
Data analysis	Assessment Officer, Senior Assessment Officer, Data Officer	Senior Assessment Officer	HQ Research Department	ECHO
Output production	Assessment Officer, Senior Assessment Officer	Senior Assessment Officer	HQ Research Department	ECHO
Dissemination	Assessment Officer, Senior Assessment Officer	Senior Assessment Officer	Projects and Fundraising Officer, HQ Communications & Advocacy Unit, Country coordinator	ECHO, PLACE Consortium, AAP Task Force

Task Description	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
Monitoring & Evaluation	Senior Assessment Officer	Country Coordinator	Projects and Funding Officer, HQ MEL Unit	ECHO
Lessons learned	Assessment Officer, Senior Assessment Officer, Field Officer	Senior Assessment Officer	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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
		# of downloads of x product from Relief Web	Country request to HQ		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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, sending Blue, bit.ly	Country team		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
		# of visits to x web map/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 utilizing IMPACT services/products	# references in HPC documents (HNO, SRP, Flash appeals, Cluster/sector strategies)	Country team	Reference_log	<i>ECHO UNHCR Moldova Country Strategy Working Group/Sector Strategy</i>
		# 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	Perceived relevance of IMPACT country-programs	Country team	Usage_Feed back and Usage_Survey template	<i>General partner usage survey to be conducted at the end of 2025 for all 2025 activities, targeting at least 10 partners.</i>
		Perceived usefulness and influence of IMPACT outputs			
		Recommendations to strengthen IMPACT programs			
		Perceived capacity of IMPACT staff			
		Perceived quality of outputs/programs			

	Number of humanitarian documents (HNO, HRP, cluster/agency strategic 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

ANNEX 1: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION CONSULTATION WITH THE AFFECTED POPULATIONS

This annex presents a summary of the main takeaways from the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) consultation conducted in July 2025 with members of the affected population, refugees who left Ukraine following the escalation of the conflict in February 2022, as part of the Accountability to Affected Populations Assessment. At the time of the discussion, all participants were beneficiaries of humanitarian aid. The discussion, which included four participants (three women and one man) residing in the municipality of Chişinău, aimed to inform, review and refine the preliminary research specific objectives and questions, specifically research questions (RQs) 1 to 4 and 6, ensuring their relevance and alignment with community perspectives. RQ 5 was excluded, as it pertains to the perspectives from humanitarian actors.

The preliminary research questions were developed on the basis of secondary data review findings. Following the consultation phase, they were refined and adjusted.

Preliminary Research Questions

1. What is the level of awareness among the affected populations about the humanitarian service delivery to which they are entitled? What is the level of awareness among the affected populations about the awareness of the entitlements under their legal status in the host country?
2. What is the perception of affected populations on types of humanitarian interventions and beneficiary targeting models?
3. What is the perception of affected populations regarding the level of fairness in current humanitarian service delivery?
4. To what extent and in what ways do affected communities participate in decisions that impact them? How do they perceive these opportunities for participation?
5. *What mechanisms are in place to involve affected populations in planning or decision-making? What challenges have humanitarian organisations encountered in engaging with these populations?*
6. What is the perception of affected populations regarding the feedback mechanisms being used in their communities? What factors contribute to their use or engagement with these mechanisms?

The following table presents the main community inputs reported during FGD. The points are structured around the initially drafted research questions and reflect participants' perceptions and experiences. The table illustrates how these insights informed refinements to the research design, particularly the finalisation of the research questions.

Table 3. Integration of FGD consultation outcomes into research design

Community Input	Implications in Research Design
<p>Participants highlighted inconsistencies with targeting models and eligibility criteria and age restrictions in particular. One participant, a mother of school-aged children, explained that she was interested in training programmes but was excluded because they were limited to people under 35. She noted that other mothers in similar situations faced the same barrier.</p> <p>Some participants mentioned concerns about perceived favoritism, describing situations where some beneficiaries repeatedly received aid while perceived newcomers were excluded. According to participants, this created perceptions of inequity and led to calls for more regular reviews of beneficiary lists.</p>	<p>These inputs informed and contributed to the refinement of preliminary questions on targeting models and fairness (RQ 2 and RQ 3), supporting the focus of final Research Question 1 on community perceptions of the relevance and fairness of humanitarian interventions.</p>

<p>In addition, clear eligibility rules were reported by participants as improving the perception of fairness, while lack of transparency as creating mistrust.</p>	
<p>Participants reported a high level of awareness regarding their entitlements in the host country.</p>	<p>Participants' reported awareness contributed to the refinement of the research focus, leading to deprioritisation of the first preliminary research question and allowing greater focus on other research gaps.</p>
<p>Participants reported perceiving that some humanitarian organisations are acting on feedback. For example, one participant mentioned that access to psychologists was reinstated following repeated requests from beneficiaries. However, respondents also explained that in many other cases, their feedback did not lead to any visible adjustments, which created frustration among those who had invested time in providing input. Participants nevertheless expressed gratitude that organisations asked for feedback, but some perceived the process as tokenistic when their contributions did not translate into tangible change.</p>	<p>These insights contributed to the refinement of preliminary questions on feedback and complaint mechanisms and participation (RQ 4 and RQ 6), guiding final RQ 2 to focus on participants' attitudes and lived experiences regarding decision-making and engagement with feedback and complaint mechanisms.</p>
<p>Participants mentioned challenges with employment and livelihoods, particularly unclear labour contracts (employment vs service provision) and limited access to social protection mechanisms. In addition, participants reported that cash assistance, language courses, and psychosocial support were the most useful types of aid to support integration into the host country.</p>	<p>These inputs informed and contributed to the development of a new research question on integration of the refugees from Ukraine into the host country (final RQ 4).</p>
<p>Participants reported that they perceive having limited influence on programme design, noting that decisions are largely shaped by humanitarian actors without community input.</p>	<p>Preliminary RQ 4 was refined into final RQ 2 to explore attitudes toward participation and perceptions of inclusion in decision-making processes.</p>

The FGD consultation provided essential insights into affected populations' perceptions of humanitarian interventions, targeting, fairness, participation, feedback, and integration needs. Together with stakeholder consultations and secondary data review, this approach ensured that the research design is grounded on affected populations' perspectives and needs, enhancing the relevance, focus, and accountability of the assessment.