



IOM's implementing partner, Women's Initiatives, at the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence campaign in the Transnistrian region. IOM 2023

SITUATION OVERVIEW

The fourth edition of the Moldova Support Platform convened in October 2023, aiming to mobilize, concentrate, and coordinate the political, technical, and financial support of the developed countries by generating immediate political, financial, and material assistance, as well as in-depth expertise for democratic reform progress.

Moreover, a significant milestone towards European Union (EU) accession was achieved, as the European Council decided to open accession negotiations with Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova. While the country advances through the accession process, IOM remains committed to addressing evolving needs, providing capacity-building support to the Government, and adapting swiftly to shifting circumstances and displacement patterns.

In November 2023, IOM coordinated with national authorities to assist 53 Moldovan citizens who were evacuated from the Gaza Strip. This support encompassed transportation, emergency healthcare, psychological counselling, and essential Non-Food Items (NFIs), facilitating their smooth transition.

Notably, the inauguration of the first-ever Family Justice Centre, under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, took place following the support

from IOM in the renovation of the building. The establishment of the centre enhances the capacity of officials to provide immediate and qualitative support to survivors of domestic and sexual violence within a single service aimed at rebuilding and restoring lives.

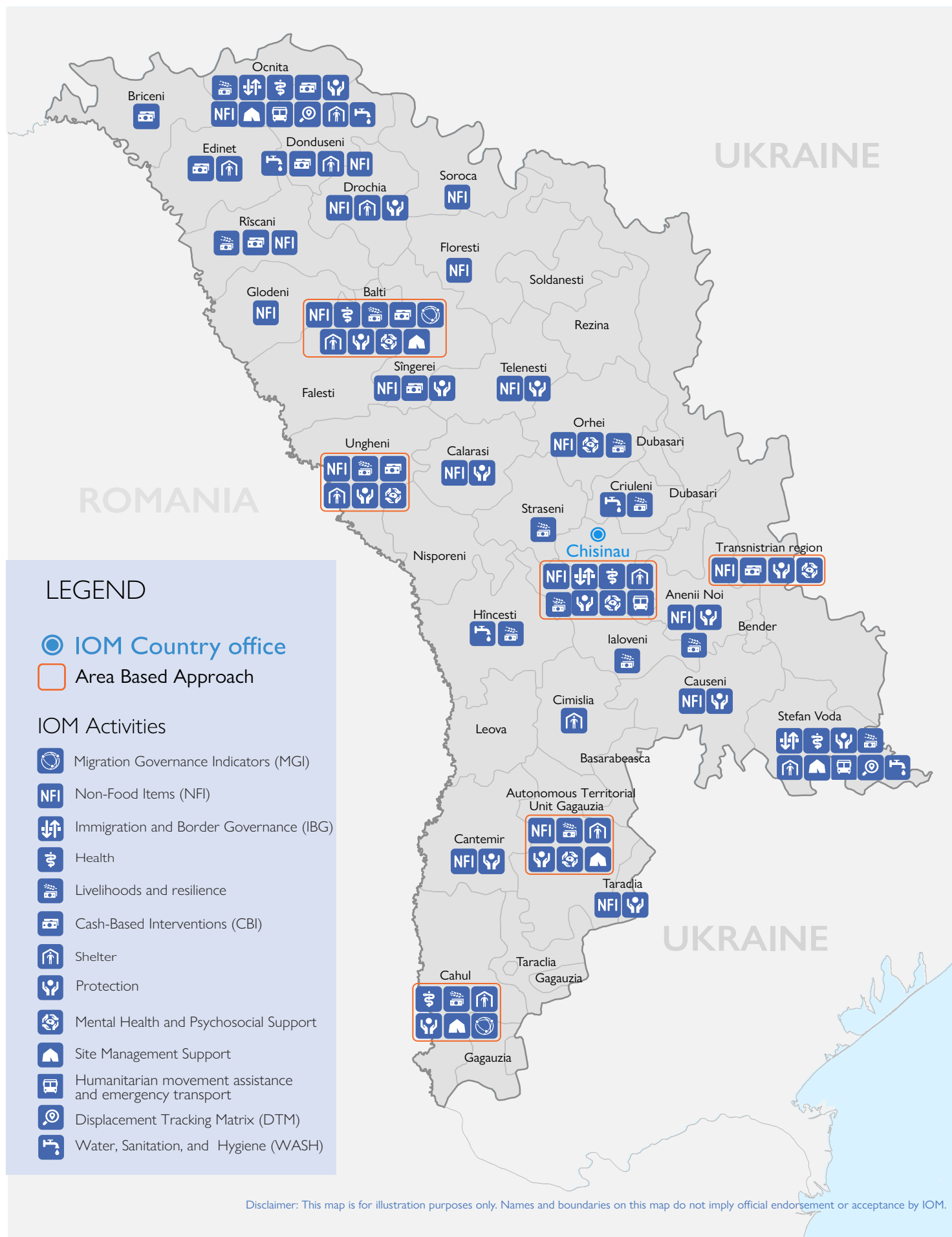
The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MLSP) introduced a new package of support measures during the winter. This decision entails providing cash assistance to Moldovans from vulnerable categories, ensuring additional social support to meet essential needs. IOM contributed with cash assistance support for a total of 1,203 Moldovan families. The cash assistance program is led by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and IOM, in collaboration with MLSP.

To strengthen the response capabilities of central authorities and public institutions, a 36-hour blackout scenario exercise was organized by the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations in collaboration with the IOM and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The exercise focused on planning, organizing, and managing scenarios related to potential electricity supply interruptions, with the goal of enhancing operational management capabilities and intervention skills.



IOM psychological support hotline was launched on 30 November 2023 in the Republic of Moldova to assist Ukrainian refugees and migrants. The hotline offers free and anonymous psychological support delivered by professional psychologists, psychotherapists, and psychiatrists.

Operating daily from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. local time (Eastern European Time, UTC), providing assistance in both Ukrainian and Russian languages. For consultations in English, Arabic and Bengali, the working hours are from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm on weekdays, and from 10:00am to 5:00pm on weekends (Eastern European Time, UTC).



Disclaimer: This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

ACHIEVEMENTS DURING OCTOBER-DECEMBER AND CUMULATIVE SINCE JANUARY 2023

HUMANITARIAN TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE

AIR TRANSFERS OF REFUGEES TO EU MEMBER STATES OR ASSOCIATED COUNTRIES		111	425
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GROUND TRANSPORT FOR REFUGEES TO ROMANIA		503	2,446
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ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN OF THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONALS (TCNS)		119	1,411
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MIGRATION HEALTH

MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT, SOCIO-RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES, MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIZED SERVICES, AND TRAININGS		1,899	5,200
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PRE-DEPARTURE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES AND TCNS		753	4,282
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PEOPLE ASSISTED WITH MEDICAL CARE AND TREATMENT (CANCER AND DIALYSIS)		128	379
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PROTECTION

PEOPLE ASSISTED WITH SOCIAL, LEGAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSISTANCE, INFORMATION, AND REFERRALS		4,175	12,290
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IMMIGRATION AND BORDER GOVERNANCE

NATIONAL AUTHORITIES TRAINED		214	325
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MOBILE PHONES DELIVERED TO THE NATIONAL AUTHORITIES		20	190
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VEHICLES DELIVERED TO THE NATIONAL AUTHORITIES		47	47
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SHELTER AND NON-FOOD ITEMS

RENTAL ASSISTANCE TO AFFECTED PEOPLE		94	1,968
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LEGEND: ■ During the reporting period (October-December) ■ Cumulative since January 2023

CASH-BASED INTERVENTIONS

MULTI-PURPOSE CASH ASSISTANCE TO AFFECTED PEOPLE		1,040	4,001
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LIVELIHOODS

PEOPLE RECEIVED ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAININGS		142	142
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UKRAINIAN REFUGEES AND LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS RECEIVED CASH FOR SKILLS TRAININGS, MICRO-GRANTS AND LANGUAGE TRAINING		119	440
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NATIONAL AUTHORITIES RECEIVED ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAININGS AND TRAININGS ON RESIDENCY STATUS REGULATIONS		252	252
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ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS

PEOPLE ASSISTED WITH INFORMATION AND REFERRALS THROUGH INFO CENTRES IN BALTI, COMRAT AND CAHUL		1,433	5,138
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PEOPLE ASSISTED WITH INFORMATION AND REFERRALS THROUGH IOM TOLL-FREE CALL CENTRE		2,320	5,697
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PREVENTION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE, AND HARASSMENT (PSEAH)

HUMANITARIAN WORKERS AND NATIONAL AUTHORITIES RECEIVED PSEAH TRAININGS		254	657
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DISPLACEMENT TRACKING MATRIX

RETURN INTENTION SURVEYS WITH REFUGEES ON DESTINATIONS, LENGTH OF STAY AND ASSISTANCE		2,585	9,828
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WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE (WASH)

PEOPLE BENEFITING FROM WASH ACCESSIBILITY AND REHABILITATION IN RACS		250	250
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LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIAL COHESION

To promote social cohesion, IOM organised a Day of Care and Support event for refugees and people with medical conditions at the Centre for Elders and People with Disabilities. Activities included the distribution of food and NFIs, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) art sessions, and planting of trees. To enhance capacity, a [training session](#) was organized for employees of the Territorial Social Assistance Directorates and National Employment Agency subdivisions. The session covered various aspects of temporary protection status granted to displaced persons from Ukraine, encompassing benefits, restrictions, employment conditions, and other regulations pertaining to the residency rights of foreign citizens within the Republic of Moldova. Moreover, [quick-impact development projects](#) were implemented to upgrade facilities used by community residents, fostering a sense of shared well-being and inclusion. These projects involved rehabilitating playgrounds in Popeasca, Otaci, and Chirsova villages.



Tree planting during the Day of Care and Support event. © IOM 2023



WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE

IOM assisted in conducting a [WASH accessibility and rehabilitation assessments](#) in Donduseni, Popeasca, Criuleni, and Carpineni RACs. Minor repairs were carried out, including the replacement of water boilers, water closets, wash hand basins, and improvements to ensure disability-friendly washrooms. This effort benefited approximately 250 people currently accommodated in the RACs.



IMMIGRATION AND BORDER GOVERNANCE

IOM continues to support the General Inspectorate of Migration's (GIM) efforts to ensure adequate visibility of its activity and accurate and reliable information for those interested in utilizing its services. In line with this, IOM has commenced the work on **re-designing the official GIM website** into a modern and user-friendly version. Additionally, during the reporting period, IOM donated **seven vehicles, three video conference systems, 20 smartphones, and 25 laptops** to GIM. Efforts also extended to Customs Service, with the delivery of **10 vehicles** for enhanced border security and **three notebooks** for the administration of their in-house E-learning platform. The General Inspectorate of Border Police (GIBP) received **30 vehicles** and a set of **16, 500 Mbps microwave radio links** to strengthen their operational capacity and the security of information exchange between subdivisions. Moreover, the feasibility study for the **reconstruction of the Otaci Border Police Sector** was finalized in December 2023. In collaboration with the Technical University of Moldova, IOM initiated a comprehensive **training programme** benefiting 13 IT personnel from national authorities, focused on digital engagement and information systems development. Furthermore, a total of 214 police officers and 102 border police personnel were trained in communication with people in vulnerable situations, including refugees and Third-Country Nationals (TCNs), as well as stress management and the prevention of burnout.



PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE (PSEA)

Comprehensive measures to strengthen PSEA awareness and response included a **workshop on sexual harassment and retaliation** policies with 27 staff members and a ToT session engaging nine staff members for regional community outreach on PSEA. Additionally, 83 consultants received **training to ensure a comprehensive understanding of PSEA policies**, reporting channels, and victim assistance and seven **information sessions** were conducted to over 85 participants. To further enhance interagency collaboration, nine new PSEA Network members received PSEA training through a joint training conducted with UNHCR. The second pilot of the IOM-Interpol-UNHCR multi-agency package was launched. A total of 93 law enforcement agents/ police officers received training and a **video** presenting this initiative was produced and launched. Following the initiative of developing an online **PSEAH course for GIBP**, the draft package was presented in two pilots organized in Chisinau and Balti to 28 border police officers. IOM significantly contributed to the **PSEA country risk assessment** by providing a thorough legal framework analysis regarding sexual violence among others. Moreover, December witnessed a pioneering global initiative with the submission of the PSEA online course, developed in collaboration with the GIBP.



PROTECTION

IOM signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the NGO "Roma Voice" to prevent human trafficking and address vulnerabilities to Gender-Based Violence (GBV). In November, IOM joined the **"#16 days of activism against GBV"** national campaign, organizing various events such as a public debate, a music concert, a round table on psychological violence, and training courses for law enforcement agencies to raise awareness about GBV and promote gender equality on both banks of the Nistru River. IOM continued conducting anti-trafficking and GBV **prevention initiatives**, encompassing trainings for multidisciplinary teams in ATU Gagauzia, law enforcement sessions, movie screenings, discussions on toxic relationships, and domestic violence awareness. **Capacity-building** initiatives were undertaken, including training sessions on legislation and victims of violence. Furthermore, four workshops on the **National Referral Mechanism** engaged 76 experts in counter-trafficking and GBV discussions, while a workshop on trafficking and irregular migration in the context of the Ukraine war, supported by the IOM in Romania, fostered cooperation between Romanian and Moldovan key government stakeholders.



HUMANITARIAN MOVEMENT

Since the onset of the war, IOM has supported those fleeing the war by providing information and assistance in coordination with UNHCR. Assistance includes **relocation to EU member states and associated countries**, as well as **voluntary humanitarian returns for TCNs** to their countries of origin. During the reporting period, 111 Ukrainian refugees were successfully transferred from the Republic of Moldova to Norway (65), Switzerland (28), Spain (11), and the Netherlands (7). A total of 91 TCNs and 28 Ukrainian nationals (spouses and children of the TCNs) were assisted to safely return to Azerbaijan (91), Turkmenistan (13), Uzbekistan (8), Türkiye (3), Armenia (2), Pakistan (1), and Vietnam (1). Moreover, a total of 486 refugees were assisted in their journey from Palanca Border Crossing Points (BCPs) to Romania, and an additional 17 refugees from Otaci BCP to Romania. The IOM team has been on-site, providing essential information regarding onward travel arrangements and the provision of accommodation for people transiting the Republic of Moldova. To ensure the health and safety of refugees and TCNs, pre-departure health assistance was provided before the travel.





Donation of cancer medicines (Zoladex) and medical equipment to the Oncology Institute. © IOM 2023



MIGRATION HEALTH

IOM is dedicated to strengthening institutions to provide sustainable access to essential healthcare, collaborating with the Oncology Institute, Ministry of Health, National Health Insurance Company, National Agency for Public Health, and the State University of Medicine and Pharmacy on the **"Breast Cancer Early Detection Campaign"**. In line with this commitment, information sessions on breast cancer early detection were conducted, reaching health providers, Moldovan women, and Ukrainian refugees. A [motivational video](#) spot endorsing breast cancer early detection was produced and broadcasted on national TV channels. Ongoing assistance to the health system includes providing cancer medicines (Zoladex) and medical equipment to the Oncology Institute. Additionally, various medical equipment, such as [tonometers](#), [pulse oximeters](#), [thermometers](#), [ophthalmoscopes](#), [glucometers](#), [ultrasound inhalers](#), and the [Audiometer Sibelound 400 with W50 software](#), has been donated to the Rehabilitation Centre Sanatorium Constructorul. Furthermore, contributions have been made to provide climate control systems for winterization efforts. To enhance

vaccine confidence and uptake, 13 designated vaccine ambassadors conducted interviews and organized activities, targeting Ukrainian refugees and leveraging social media platforms. Medical Mobile Teams continued to provide primary and emergency healthcare assistance near BCPs and extended their support to the Moldovan citizens returning from Gaza.



MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

IOM prioritizes the well-being of the affected populations. Events were organized to enhance relational skills and leadership, including a two-day conference in the Transnistrian region on prospects for the socio-cultural integration of refugees. In October, in observance of World Mental Health Day, IOM participated in the first **Mental Health and Wellness Fair** in the Republic of Moldova. The IOM program featured psychosocial art, socio-recreational activities, yoga, a quiz wheel, and a puppet theatre show, aiming to raise awareness about the theme "Mental health is a universal human right." Furthermore, on the International Day of Care and Support, elders and Ukrainian refugees at the national asylum for disabled and retired persons were actively engaged in [psychosocial activities](#), fostering a supportive exchange and cooperation within the local community. Moreover, IOM's commitment has extended to Moldovan returnees from the Gaza Strip who received Psychological First Aid (PFA) and psychological group counselling. Additionally, six training sessions, engaging 200 humanitarian workers, were organized with a focus on [self-care](#), [emotional intelligence](#), [PFA](#), [professional burnout](#), and [stress management](#). Moreover, to support the Refugee Accommodation Centres (RACs) consolidation strategy, the MHPSS team conducted five visits to RAC to provide support and [psychological counselling](#) to the residents.



Psychosocial art during Mental Health and Wellness fair. © IOM 2023



Launch of the Joint UN Moldova Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund Programme © IOM 2023



MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

In close collaboration with partners, IOM is dedicated to enhancing migration and development programming, strategically leveraging the connections to maximize positive impacts and harness its development potential. As part of this commitment, the **Joint UN Moldova Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund Programme** was launched, spearheaded by IOM, UNDP, UNICEF, and WHO in partnership with the Government. The program aims to capitalize on the [positive impact of migration](#) on socio-economic development, addressing negative effects through enhanced migration data collection and use, national data system upgrades, innovative [diaspora engagement](#) platforms and return and reintegration programs. Moreover, during the reporting period, an event was organized to discuss the outcomes of the **"Awareness Raising for Labour Mobility in Bulgaria"** project, jointly implemented across Bulgaria, Armenia, Georgia, and the Republic of Moldova. This initiative supports regular migration pathways and facilitates the implementation of the bilateral labour migration agreement between the Republic of Moldova and Bulgaria, fostering awareness and informed decision-making for

Moldovan labour migrants. Additionally, a workshop on supporting the financial inclusion and long-term savings of [Moldovan labour migrants](#) was organized, focused on promoting and valorising partnership opportunities with the banking sector in the Republic of Moldova to enhance the financial well-being of migrants during the entire migration cycle through developing and pilot-testing a financial literacy program.



SITE MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION

IOM is involved in developing context-specific [training for enhancing the capacity of RACs](#) in the Republic of Moldova. A module on operational procedures in RACs, including reception, registration, and orientation, was piloted in coordination with ACTED site management staff. Moreover, [community-based coordination training](#) was organized for IOM staff, and a workshop was conducted with 25 representatives of civil society organizations from the Transnistrian region to validate and formalize the local referral pathways for the Transnistrian region.



IOM at the local referral pathways workshop. © IOM 2023



CASH-BASED INTERVENTIONS

IOM provides essential **Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA)** to refugees from Ukraine currently residing in the Transnistrian region, mirroring the support refugees receive on the right bank of the river to address their critical needs. To enhance communication with the affected populations and raise awareness on the available support, an information session was organised, addressing the registration process for the MPCA, roles and responsibilities, and facilitating Q&A. Additionally, the registration form for the provision of MPCA to unaccompanied children and adult dependents was finalized in coordination with the Protection unit. The registration tool assesses children's conditions to confirm the caregiver's risk level for assistance enabling them to receive cash on behalf of children.



Registration of refugees to receive MPCA. © IOM 2023



Engineers conduct assessments of community infrastructure. © IOM 2023



SHELTER AND NFI

A total of 868 people received support through **monthly rental payments**, in line with the RAC Consolidation Strategy. Moreover, IOM partnered with Habitat for Humanity International to perform a **housing ecosystem assessment** to identify suitable solutions for affordable housing in the country. In line with this, a three-month work plan was developed, and the inception report was finalized. Additionally, a workshop was organized to explore the current housing industry status, exchange perspectives on the Republic of Moldova's housing market, and enhance insights on affordable housing options. The assessment seeks to identify long-term, affordable solutions, with IOM planning to use the research's output in a pilot project targeting vulnerable populations with limited housing access. In support of **winterization initiatives**, firewood was delivered to NGO CONCORDIA to provide protection and assistance to people in vulnerable situations

and refugees through daycare services. In a concerted effort to assist vulnerable refugees fleeing the war, a distribution of winter clothing has been initiated at the BCPs. Furthermore, to address the immediate needs and enhance the living conditions of Moldovan citizens from the Gaza Strip, NFIs were distributed, comprising hygiene kits, sets of bed linen, and blankets.



DISPLACEMENT TRACKING MATRIX AND ASSESSMENTS

In partnership with **WFP** and in coordination with **MLSP**, a **joint assessment** of the needs of the Moldovan population in relation to the Ukraine war was initiated, and ten focus group discussions, ten key informant interviews, and 1,542 interviews were conducted. The issues addressed were related to challenges in accessing social benefits, food security, public services, and humanitarian aid. Moreover, a total of 2,585 surveys with **Ukrainians crossing back to Ukraine** were conducted in Palanca (51%) and Otaci (49%) BCPs. A total of 19 per cent of respondents were returning to Ukraine for a long period, with 42 per cent travelling alone and 58 per cent accompanied by family members or other people. Regarding the reasons for their return, most respondents cited a desire to reunite with their family. Supplementary data collection was gathered, focusing on surveys conducted with refugees from Ukraine entering the Republic of Moldova, exploring their **needs, intentions, and integration challenges**. A total of 1,160 surveys were conducted, revealing that 16 per cent of people interviewed planned to remain in the Republic of Moldova, mostly in Chisinau, Donduseni, and Balti, while others reported transiting the country. Inclusion challenges encountered in the Republic of Moldova were related to finances, the language spoken, housing, employment, and accessing services. In collaboration with the National Bureau of Statistics (BNS), the team successfully conducted a **workshop** with over 100 BNS staff, focusing on the Census 2024 exercise and covering topics such as planning, organization, IT and GIS tools, and the role of migration data.



ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS (AAP)

IOM continues to mainstream AAP through online **information sessions**, a **toll-free call centre**, and **community information centres**, offering comprehensive information on IOM project activities, available support and acting as a platform for receiving complaints, feedback, and referrals. In November, an information session hosted on IOM Moldova's **Telegram channel**, with over 1,000 members, addressed 39 questions about IOM's assistance. The toll-free call centre at 080010877 continues to serve as the primary channel for referrals, feedback, and complaints. Throughout the reporting period, a total of 1,433 calls were received, with the majority of inquiries focusing on rental assistance, cash assistance, and legal support.



Ask IOM Telegram live session. © IOM 2023

IOM'S WORK IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA IS SUPPORTED BY:

