

FEASIBILITY STUDY

- EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
- SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
- SOCIAL COHESION

Andreas Müller, 24.05.2023

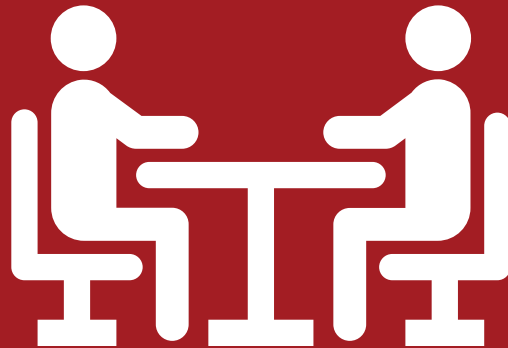


**HEKS
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INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND



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- **Timeframe:** Nov. 22 – Feb 23
 - **Focus:** Employment Opportunities, Skills Development and Social Cohesion
 - **Target Group:** Ukrainian Refugees and Vulnerable Moldovans in the Republic of Moldova (50:50)

Background - Objectives

- Assessment of
 - **access** to high quality TVET
 - existing micro **entrepreneurship schemes** for the target groups
- Identification of **constraints** for the target groups to make use of **existing employment opportunities/in-demand skills**
- **Social cohesion assessment** to
 - verify feasibility conditions to **improve decent living/coexisting**
 - **Include** the vulnerable Moldovan population and the Ukrainian refugees **economically** by respecting their **psychosocial well-(or ill-)being**

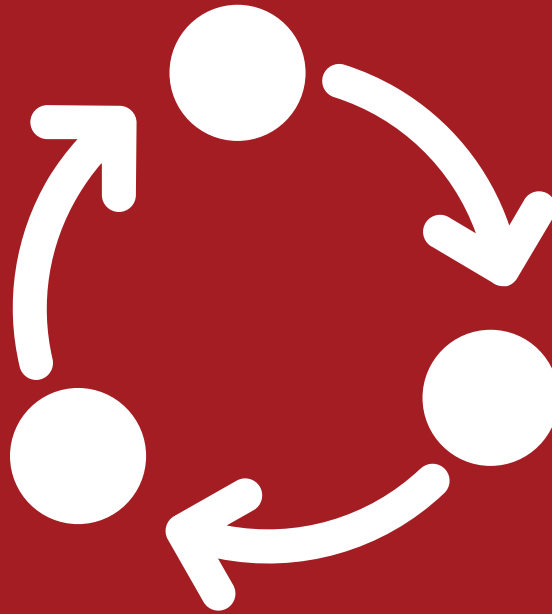
→ Concrete evidence to contribute to the operationalization of the **Nexus**

Background - Collaboration

- Cost sharing of the quantitative data collection
- Similar target groups
- Draw on complementary expertise
 - HELVETAS: Skills development & economic integration (MSD)
 - HEKS/EPER: Social cohesion & psycho-social support



METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH



Methodology – Mixed-Method Approach

- Desk research
- Primary (**qualitative**) data – 16 Semi-structured key informant interview
- Primary (**quantitative**) data – Survey amongst target groups
 - **Sample Size : 495 (70:30 women/men)**
 - **Distribution = 50:50** between both target groups – reason for that are:
 - Local population is suffering from **various crises** such as inflation, post-covid, security threats etc.)
 - To **strengthen social integration** and **avoid tensions**, both groups are represented equally

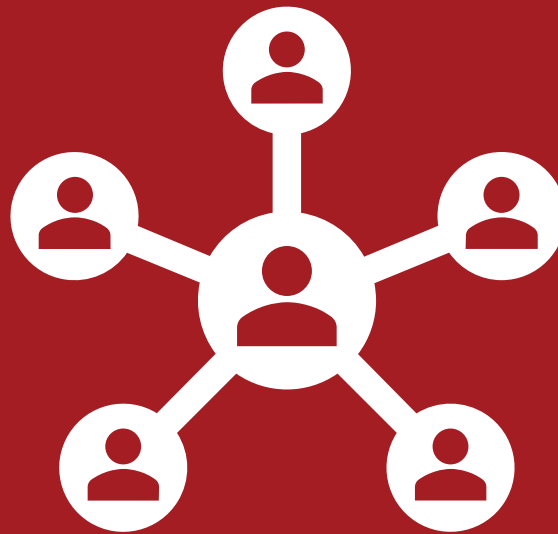
Methodology – Quantitative Data Collection

- **Target Group 1: Ukrainian Refugees** (mainly women and children), youth (below 30), people with disabilities, elderly (above 65)
- **Target Group 2: Vulnerable Moldovans:** people from rural areas, women, youth (below 30), people with disabilities, elderly (above 65), unemployed, minorities (clustered)

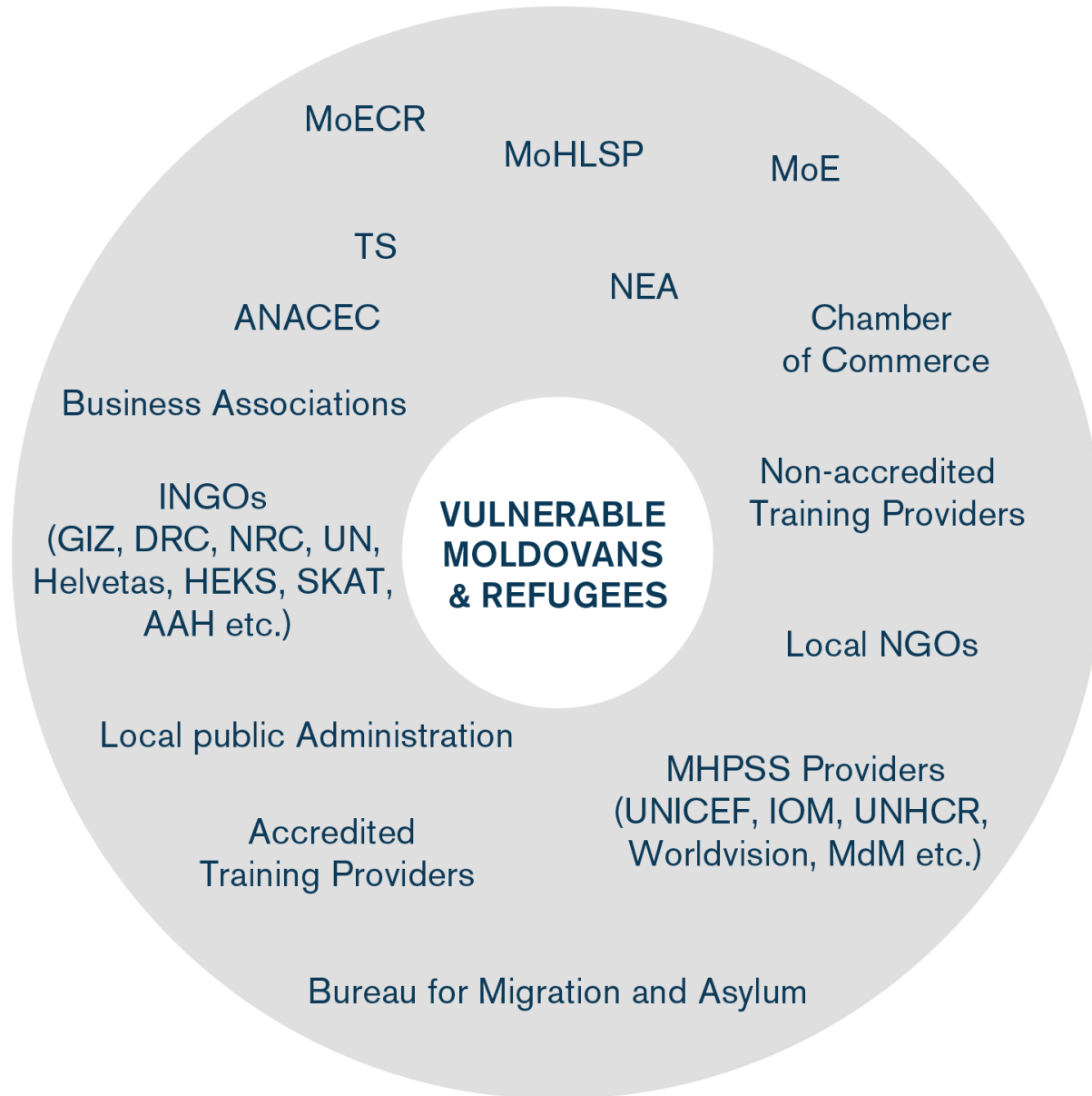
Methodology – Limitations

- **Size and distribution of the sample**
 - Sample size **not representative** (but targeted)
 - **Limitation in size and access** - not all (**minority**) groups were equally included
- **Geographical constraints**
 - Geographical distribution might exclude certain regions
- **Fast changing environment**
 - Needs might change along circumstances
 - Conflict makes **situation volatile** and unpredictable

STAKEHOLDER MAPPING



Stakeholder Mapping – Overview



Stakeholder Mapping – NEA

The **NEA** is a central stakeholder in terms of skills. It offers services as:

- Selection of Skills Development providers through public tenders
- Information about job market and vacancies (no. of unemployed, barometer, career counselling..)
- Entrepreneurship support
- Organization of job- and recruiting fairs
- Employment assistance for people with disabilities & Reintegration and rehabilitation of unemployed people with disabilities
- People with training but no experience (mostly young graduates) and vice versa, receive support from NEA through internship possibilities

→ The NEA struggles with its capacity to **efficiently** provide all services and to align the curricula of training providers to the **needs** of the market

Stakeholder Mapping – Others

ANACEC

- Training providers need to be accredited by ANACEC to be open to unemployed
- Accreditation is long and costly and hinders the evolution/transformation of the skills development market
- Private training providers offer courses without accreditation (excludes the most vulnerable due to costs)

Training Providers

- Many training providers exist in Moldova (Public, Associations, Chambers, NGOs etc.)
- Trainings offered by business associations seem to be more market-oriented (often not accredited)

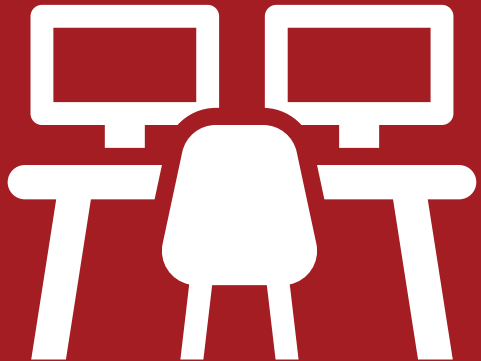
(I)NGOs

- Many (I)NGOs in the country (AAH, DRC, GIZ, UN etc.) - coordination is necessary!
- MSD practice is rare / many shorter-term (humanitarian) interventions

Providers of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services

- Local NGOs (WLC, Home Care, CCF, etc.) are lacking capacity.
- Local **stakeholders need to be included to achieve systemic and sustainable change**

LABOR MARKET ASSESSMENT



Labor Market Assessment – Overview

- Only 40% of the labor force was active in 2021
- Low unemployment rate / low labor market participation. Many seasonally employed
- **Remittances / Brain Drain**
- **Aging population / Shrinking youth population**
- **Inflation**
- **Insufficient public childcare**
- Continuing education **and LLL is underdeveloped**
- Educational structures are rigid and not aligned to market needs
- Unproductive and informal sectors with **manual and repetitive** tasks and low value added
- Financial & Insurance, Electricity and Gas, Transportation and Logistics and ICT **are the most attractive sectors**
- **Young and rural population is left behind**
- Legal status of refugees: Currently **temporary protection scheme**

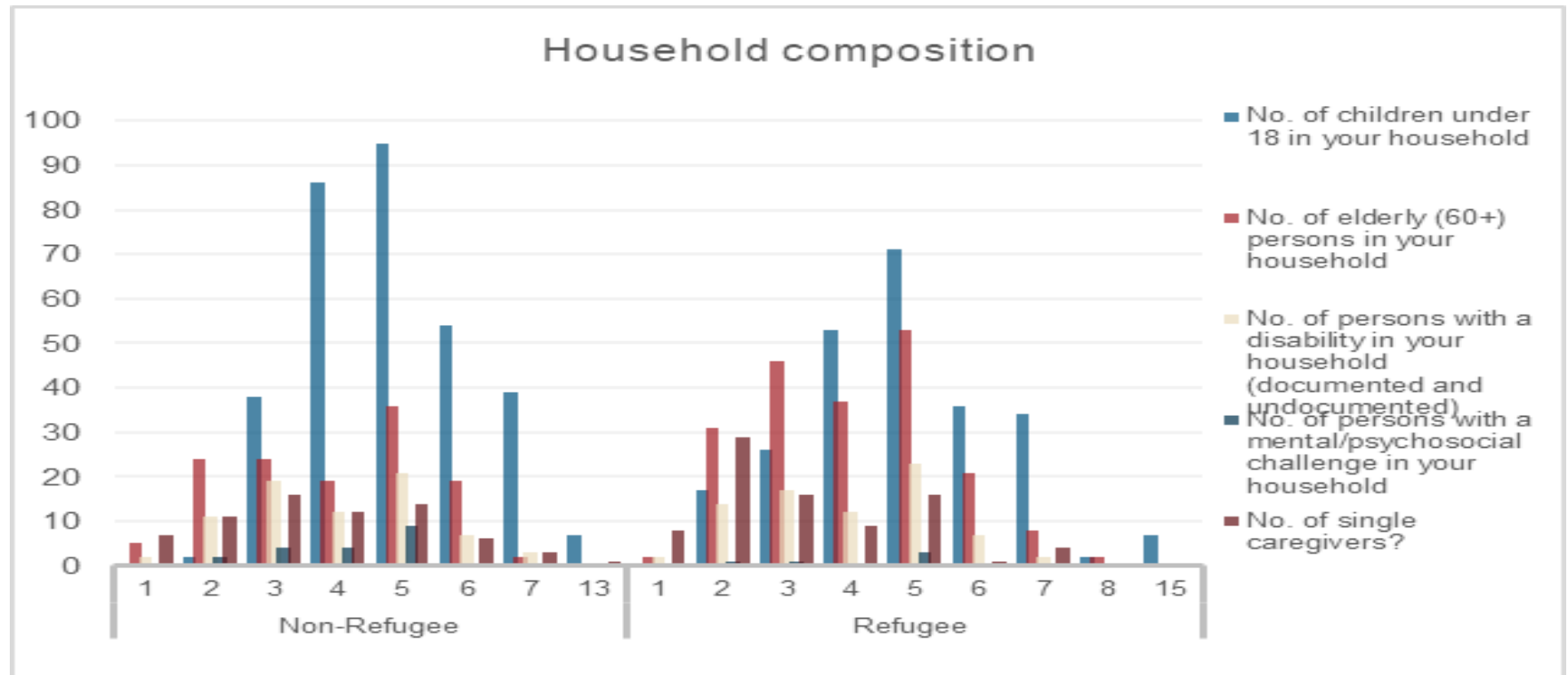
→ **Need for skills development (re- and upskilling)** → **structural issue** with a shortage of qualified teacher

SURVEY FINDINGS



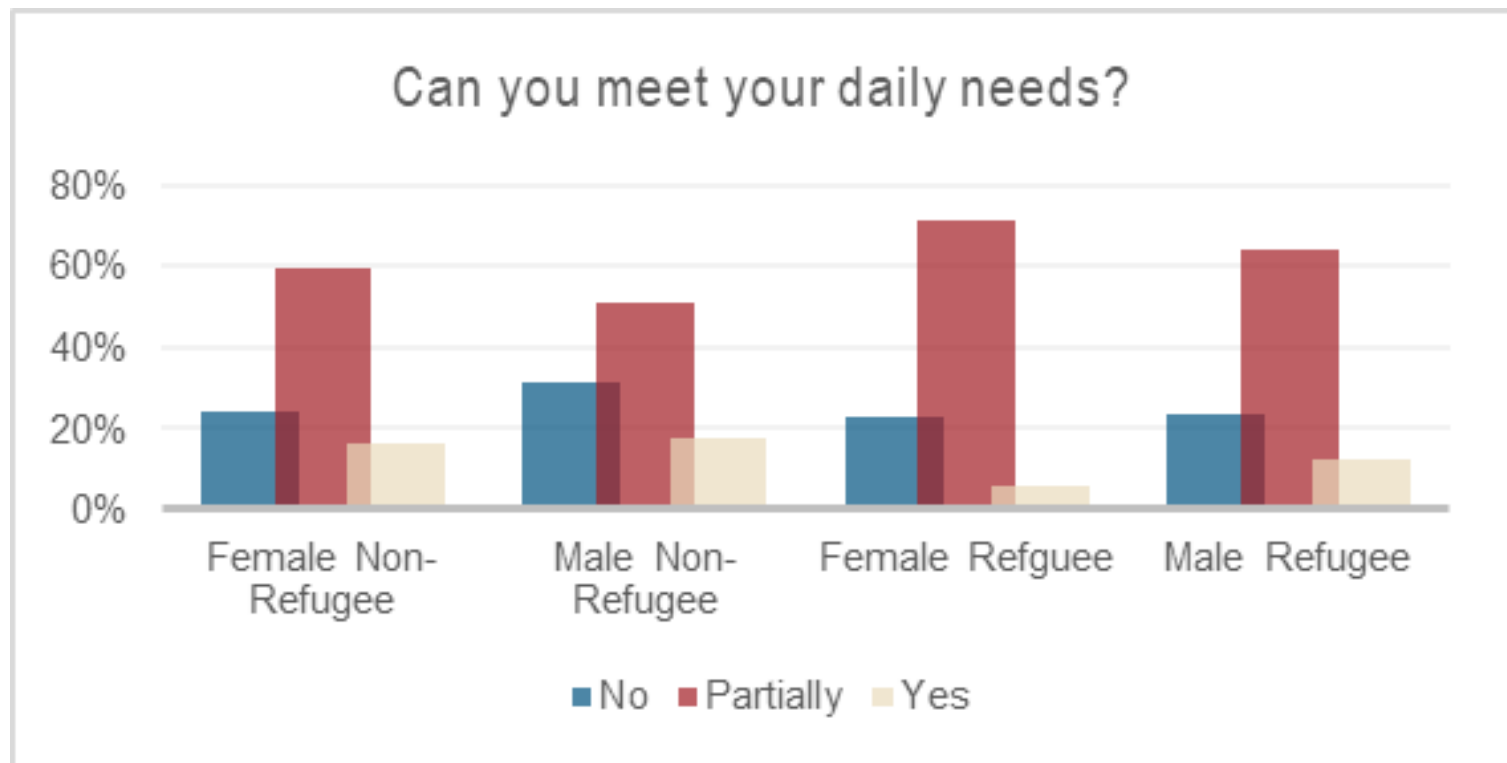
Household Information

- More children under the age of 18 in Moldovan households
- More single caregivers amongst refugees
- Higher number of people with mental/psychosocial challenges among refugees
- Higher number of elderlies in refugee households



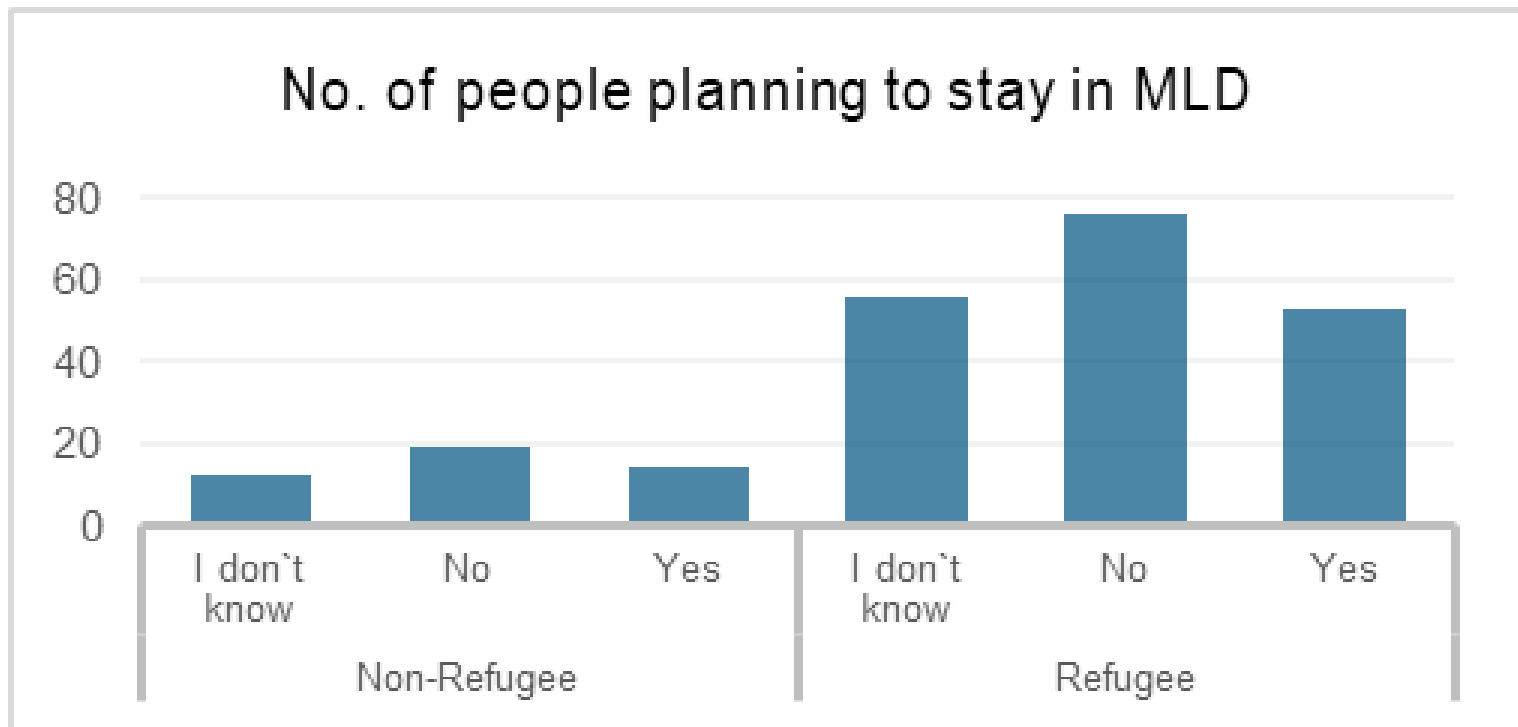
Income Information

- Refugees live of **savings, social welfare**, or other sources
- Moldovans live of regular income, savings, family support or pensions
- Almost all respondents **can only partially or not cover their basic needs**
- To compensate the expenditure-gap most people engage in **negative coping strategies** (cutting down on their expenses - partially with drastic measures)



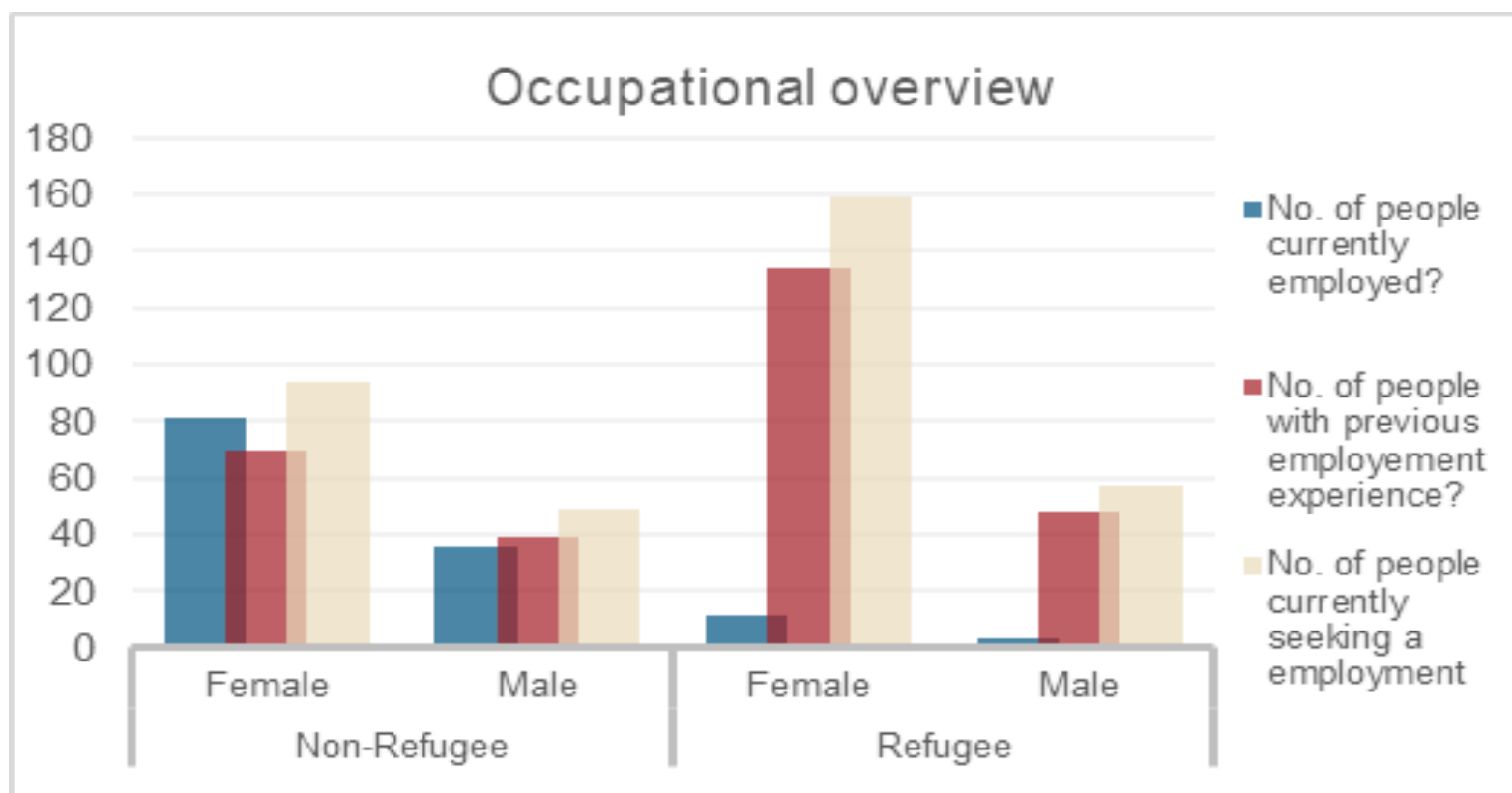
Mobility

- 82 out of 256 Moldovans want to move to another country
- 53 of the Ukrainian refugees want to stay in Moldova and 56 undecided (close to 80 refugees do not want to stay)
- Moldovans want to leave the country for economic reasons, Ukrainians mostly to reunite with family members



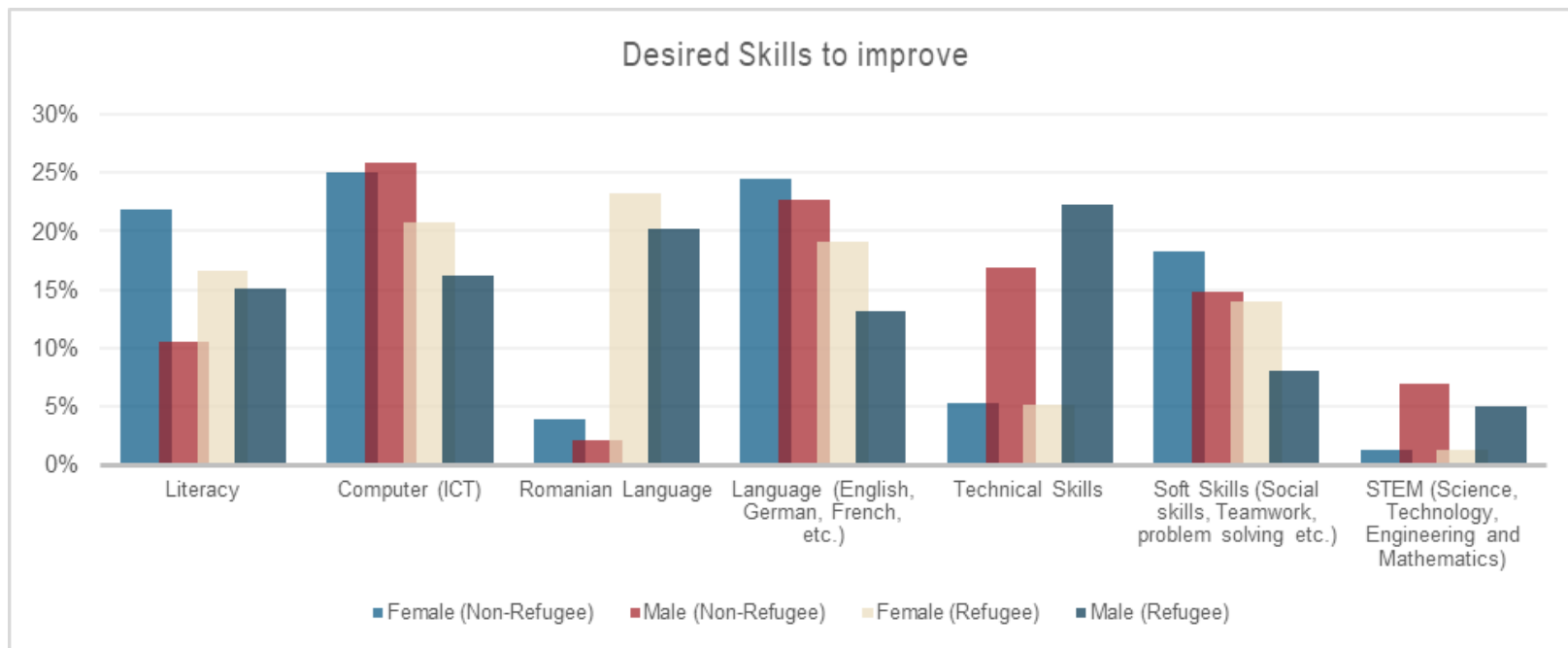
Education, Skills and Employment

- Out of the 495 people interviewed 135 are employed (4 self-employed)
- Out of **230 refugees only 14** were employed - in different sectors
- Most refugees (and many Moldovans) are seeking employment!



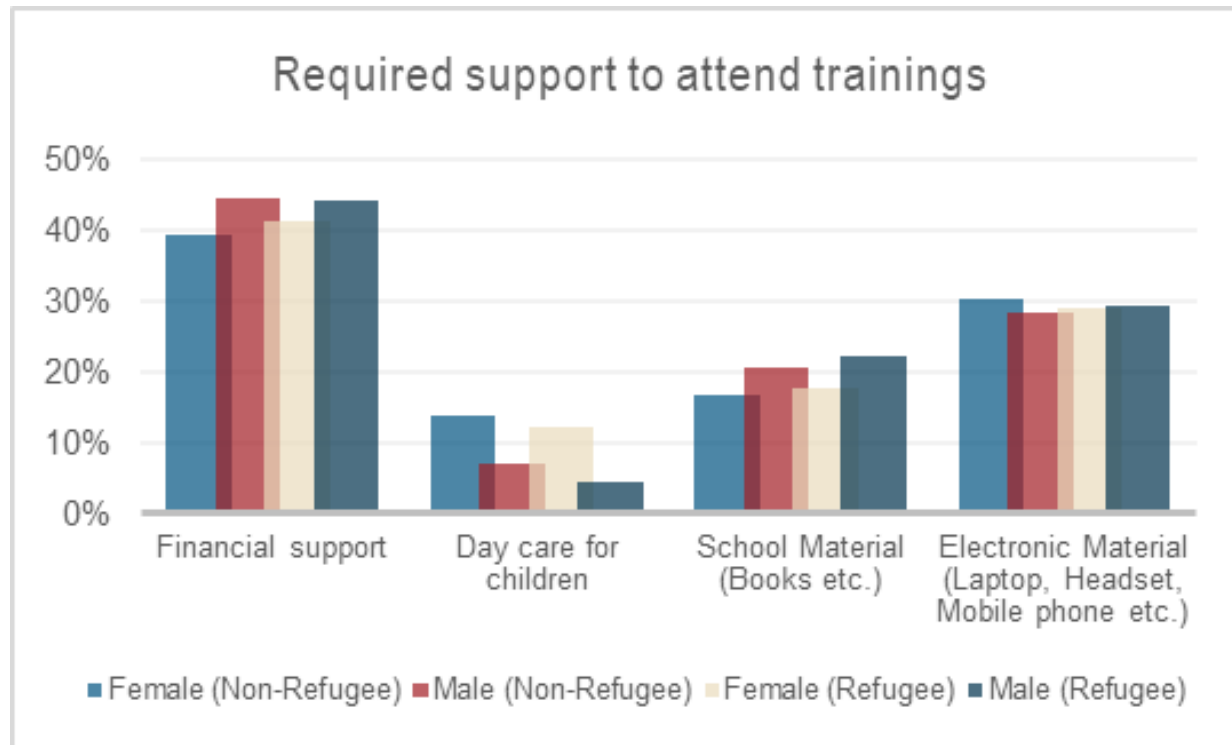
Education, Skills and Employment

- Preferred sectors for **women**: service sector (accounting, consulting services, clerical work, etc.) trade and education.
- Preferred sectors for **men**: construction, transportation & logistics and agriculture. ICT is in higher demand by Moldovans
- The most desired skill by far is **to learn Romanian** (for refugees).
- Other desired skills are **technical, literacy, ICT and other language skills**



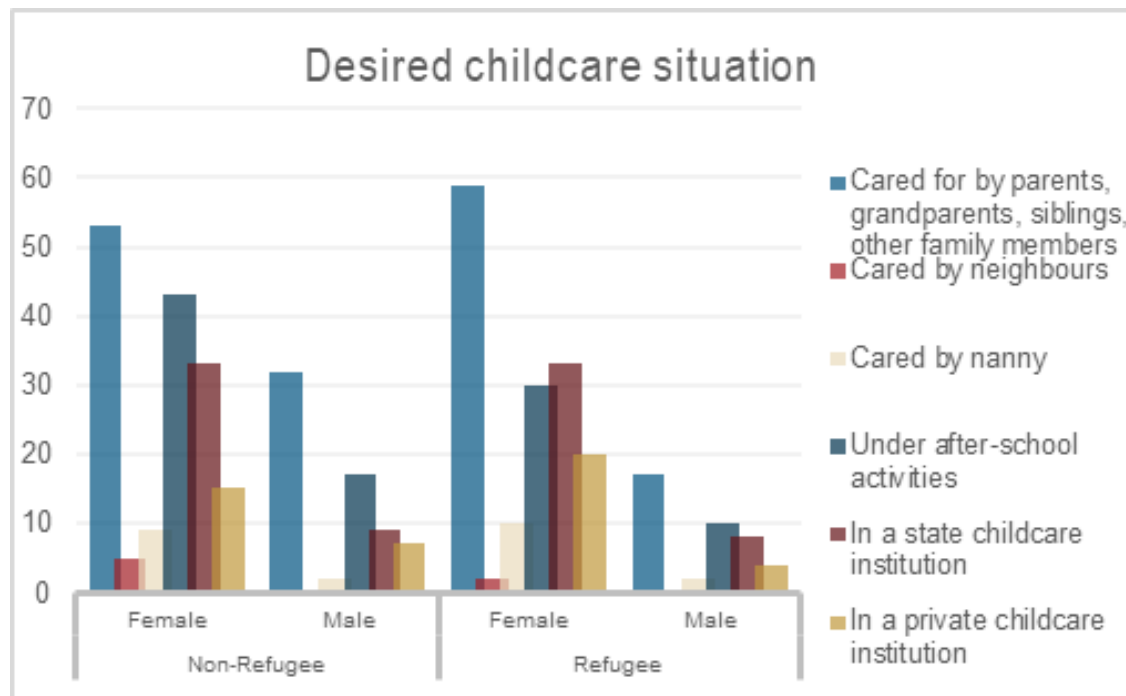
Trainings and Support

- Only few have attended trainings in the last two years
- Women were trained in service activities, health and social work, education or other fields. Men in IT, construction or other fields
- Quality of the secondary or tertiary education seems to be poor
- **Lack of financial support** major constraint for people attending training
- Non-availability of childcare is a **bigger obstacle for women**



Childcare

- More than 50% (271 of 495) live in hh with children
- Both groups rely mainly on relatives to look after their children
- General lack of public (quality) childcare services and
- Existing (private) childcare services of better quality, are not affordable for refugees and vulnerable people
- Many refugee children still follow Ukrainian online classes - impeding the economic inclusion of their mothers



Social Cohesion

- More “connecting factors” between hosts and refugees than “dividers” were

Connectors	Dividers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Similar values / worldview• Common traditions / culture• Same language (Russian)• Common interest in family/children• Wish for peace and decent living	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scarce resources / economic factors• Different languages / lack of language skills (Romanian)

- Most (75% Moldovans, 84% refugees) state that the relationship between hosts and refugees is positive or normal
- However societal tensions (e.g. Pro-Russian vs. Pro-Western population, linguistic cleavages) have also been reported and tensions between host and refugees are increasing over time.
- Some hosts demur that refugees receive more support than vulnerable Moldovans.
- Regular contact, dialog and friendship between hosts and refugees are not yet consolidated (with only 16% of hosts have UKR friends, and less than half refugees have MOL friends)

Q&A



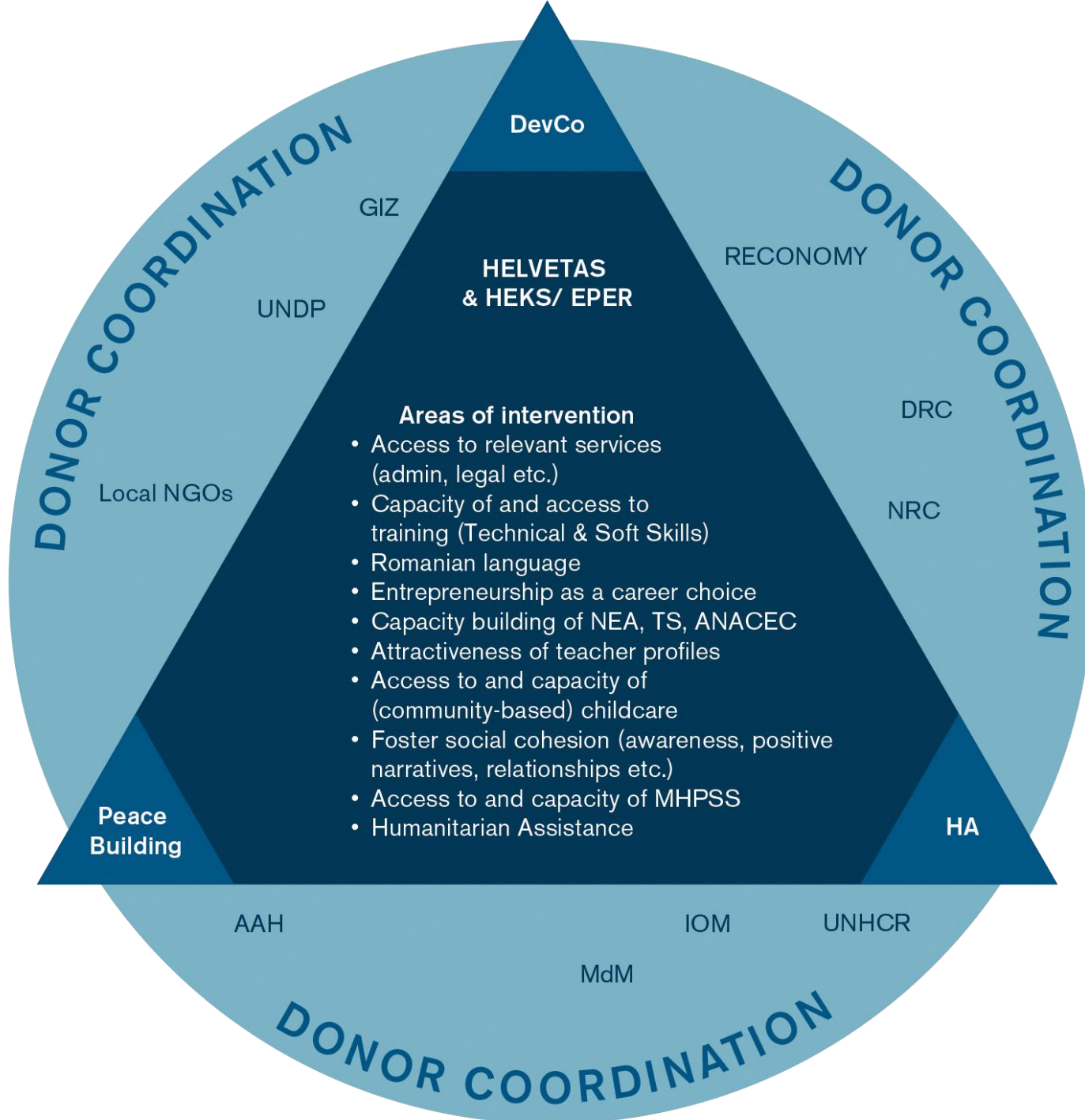


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HELVETAS

BACK-UP



Further Research

- Further research needed?
 - Support on entrepreneurship programs (rural / start-up funding etc.)
 - Existing and emerging community led groups /structures (of the Ukrainian refugees and Moldovans) and their capacities?
 - Humanitarian assistance, what capacity building is needed?
 - What are the current gaps in the MHPSS cooperation and referral system in Moldova?
 - Evidence on nepotism and clientelism regarding the distribution of jobs along ethnic and linguistic lines
 - More detailed and sector specific data on “unattractive sectors” (construction, agriculture, industry, manufacturing etc.)
 - Increased sample size (Including minorities, Transnistria)
 - Coordination of donor activities

