Flooding and deserts: information access and barriers in Moldova’s refugee response
Information Ecosystem Assessments aim to:

**ENVIRONMENT:** Identify available information, sources and preferences

**GAPS:** Identify priority information needs

**BARRIERS:** Identify the main barriers to information access

**DYNAMICS:** Understand dynamics such as trust relationships
Data

- **1,000+ Refugees**
  - Focus Group Discussions
  - Face to face survey (1171 refugees, 75% women)

- **1,000+ Host Community**
  - Focus Group Discussions
  - Face to face survey

- **Key Informant Interviews**
  - Government, local and Intl relief agencies, Social media administrators and media
Summary of Key Findings
Key Information

Channels are performing well

How often do you use these refugee response information channels? (Ukrainians)
Challenges with some hotlines

"They can’t answer [our questions] about [cash] payments. They answer and say, ‘call us back’ There are no answers... my eye will begin to twitch soon!"

[Ukrainian, Bălți]

“The migration service laughed that we wanted to stay here, and recommended hotels for us to stay in. They also speak aggressively when we call their phoneline.”

[Ukranian woman, Bălți]
Figure 25: Preferred methods to learn about refugee services. (Ukrainians)

- Phone call: 48.7%
- Via social media and messaging apps: 47.5%
- Face-to-face/in Person: 47.1%
- SMS: 35.5%
- Via their websites: 18.4%
- Via social media platforms: 16.0%
- Via a dedicated services App on your phone: 9.0%
- Via Moldovan media outlets: 2.7%
- Via posters/leaflets/etc.: 2.6%
- Via Ukrainian media outlets: 2.0%
- Other: 0.9%
Where you live impacts the quality and quantity of information available to you.

**Rural Vs Urban**
- Services concentrated in population centres
- People prefer face-to-face communication, this limits understanding of service eligibility

**RAC Vs private accommodation**
- Some information is distributed only for RAC residents, and this sometimes links with aid access
- Info not flowing among the community, but within accommodation groups
Age impacts access:

More unique information needs:

- information about sexual and reproductive health services (SRH)

- care for chronic diseases.
Information Gaps

Information needs by area (Ukrainians)

**BĂLŢI**
- Cash Assistance: 52.0%
- Food: 62.9%
- Health: 59.4%

**CHIŞINĂU**
- Cash Assistance: 42.4%
- Food: 52.9%
- Health: 53.2%

**CAHUL**
- Cash Assistance: 94.6%
- Food: 90.6%
- Health: 84.2%

**COMRAT**
- Cash Assistance: 57.6%
- Food: 61.4%
- Health: 56.2%

- **63%** Food and Clothing
- **60%** Health
- **55%** Cash Assistance
- **16%** Legal rights and documentation
- Volunteers feel disconnected

Ukrainian Refugees info needs
Community divides are evident despite a common language

- **At home:** 72% Speak Russian at home, but 91.5% would choose Russian to talk to aid workers

- **Written info:** 12% prefer Ukrainian (up from 6% spoken)

- **Language and social cohesion** – Avoidance of public use of Ukrainian

- Language is a barrier for refugees to engage with local media (limited Russian and Ukrainian options)
Host community feels less informed about the response and its priorities

How informed do you feel about the refugee response? (Moldovans)
- 7% Not at all
- 49% I know a little
- 38% I have a good amount of info

How satisfied are you with the information regarding the refugee support services available to you in Moldova? (Ukrainians)
- 67% I am very satisfied
- 29% I am somewhat satisfied
- 0.4% I am little satisfied
- 1.4% Not at all
**Figure 12: Information interests regarding the refugee response (Moldovans)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transparency - How is the money for refugees being spent</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't want any more information – I am not interested</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency – Who pays for the refugee services</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information – What kind of services are provided to refugees</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration – How long will services be provided to refugees</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the role of Local organizations</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the Government's role in the response</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration – How long will refugees stay / When will they...</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Misinformation and a lack of transparency about aid processes are contributing to social tensions.

"Why are we helping these people – they don't need it, they are just spending our government dollars that should be helping our poor who REALLY need it"

[Moldovan Man, Chisinau]

“This is practised: you get aid and are told not to tell others what is being distributed. There is a feeling that aid centres are committing fraud. On what basis do they decide who gets aid and who does not?”

[Ukrainian woman, Bălți]
To what extent do you think that Ukrainian refugees should be able to...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other refugees from Ukraine in general</td>
<td>50.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers/ NGO - UN workers</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local authorities</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends/family (from Ukraine, living in Moldova)</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil society organizations - NGOs / UN agencies</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends/family (from Moldova)</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host families (you didn't know before you needed to flee the war)</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious community/leaders</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other service providers</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldovan media</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central government authorities</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian media</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Information risks:

Main risks:
- Scams / Fraud
- Hate speech and prejudice
- Dis & misinformation
- Data privacy

“"It is treacherous. One girl applied to renew her documents after losing her child’s vaccination card. It turned out they were fakes. There are many such ‘services.’”

[Volunteers, Chișinău]
Use of feedback mechanisms is limited

Reasons
• Low **awareness** about mechanisms
• **Fear** of being perceived as ungrateful
• Do not feel their input would have an **impact** on aid operations

Have you ever made, or wanted to make, a complaint or suggest changes to a service you received in Moldova? (Ukrainians)

- **91%** No
- **7%** Yes
- **2%** Maybe
Recommendations
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1. Increase transparency to reduce misinformation and build trust.

2. Communicate in multiple formats to be accessible to different needs and preferences.
3. Shift the Power: Incorporate refugees into response decision making

4. Encourage and promote the sharing of feedback and complaints

5. Support the media as a watchdog and key information provider
Please join us for the launch events:

**English**
12-1pm EET
Tuesday 21 March

**Romanian**
2-3pm EET
Tuesday 21 March
Thank you

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