

Ukraine Humanitarian Response Plan

2024-2025 Summary

Background Context

In 2014, Russia annexed Crimea, sparking years of tension between Russia and Ukraine, primarily in the Donbas region. Despite sporadic clashes, most of Ukraine remained peaceful until February 2022, when Russia launched a full-scale invasion, displacing 10 million people. Moldova, one of Europe's poorest nations, has since welcomed over one million people from Ukraine, with approximately 123,000 remaining in the country according to UNHCR, although resources are strained.¹

As the conflict drags on, challenges such as education, employment and healthcare access remain critical for refugees, particularly vulnerable groups like women, children and ethnic minorities. Meanwhile, Ukraine itself faces widespread devastation, with millions in need of humanitarian aid, especially in areas like Odesa, where displaced and returning families struggle to rebuild their lives amid ongoing conflict.

CWS is a faith-based organization dedicated to addressing hunger, poverty, displacement and disaster through sustainable and just solutions worldwide. In 2023, CWS operated in 31 countries, creating safe spaces for refugees and empowering communities through partnerships with local nonprofits.

Response To-Date

CWS has been working in partnership with local organizations in Moldova for over 15 years focusing on sustainable livelihoods, renewable energy and addressing rural poverty. This existing work enabled CWS to rapidly mobilize a refugee response in Moldova beginning in 2022, meeting the emergency needs of vulnerable people fleeing Ukraine.

Since then, CWS has expanded programs to include protection, education, health and livelihoods programs. CWS continues to work alongside host communities and local organizations. Together with our partners, CWS has provided food, basic living items, winter clothes, school supplies, supportive learning environments for children's education, psychosocial support, medical assistance, vocational training and language learning to vulnerable refugees and host communities in Moldova.

As the crisis persists and many organizations withdraw due to funding challenges, CWS remains committed to supporting vulnerable populations in Moldova through 2024 and 2025.

Ukraine Response Overview

The CWS response to the Ukraine crisis addresses the complex and varied needs of displaced and vulnerable populations both within Ukraine and in neighboring Moldova. With some families displaced for over two years and others facing new displacements or returning home despite ongoing risks, CWS has developed a comprehensive approach to support emergency, humanitarian and early recovery needs.

¹ UNHCR (2024). [Operational Data Portal – Ukraine Refugee Situation / Republic of Moldova](#).

In Moldova, where the refugee crisis includes early recovery activities in addition to basic needs assistance, CWS is focusing on stabilization activities and targeted emergency support for the most vulnerable. Simultaneously, CWS is launching operations in Ukraine's Odesa Oblast (province), addressing urgent needs such as food, protection and healthcare among displaced, returnee, and host populations.

CWS' efforts are grounded in a strong commitment to partnership, ensuring local leadership, parity and sustainability through collaboration with local NGOs. This partner-centered model, crucial in rapid-onset emergencies like the Ukraine crisis, allows for tailored responses and efficient resource mobilization. For 2024-2025, CWS will continue to prioritize key program areas such as basic needs assistance, protection, health, education and livelihoods, while refining selection criteria to ensure aid reaches the most vulnerable populations. This approach aligns with broader humanitarian strategies and maximizes impact in both Moldova and Ukraine.

New Projects in Ukraine

- **Turbotlivi sertsya (Caring hearts):** CWS will partner with local organization Culture of Democracy to purchase and distribute food and hygiene items and provide psychosocial support and medical assistance. The project will focus on remote villages of the Odesa Oblast, which remain underserved in the humanitarian response. The residents of these villages are often older people and are more acutely vulnerable to the impacts of war as they face increased levels of poverty, but also struggle to access social services. In total, the project aims to reach 4,500 Ukrainians with support.
- **Support for Women and Children in Wartime Conditions in Ukraine:** CWS will partner with local organization Positive Women Odesa to provide critical services for acutely vulnerable women and children in Odesa City. CWS anticipates that key services will include psychosocial support and legal assistance, along with basic needs assistance like food and other essential supplies, and support for purchasing medications. This project will focus on women, including those living with HIV, older women and women in the LGBTQ+ community, aiming to reach 180 women and 50 children with project support.

Cross-Cutting Priorities

Social Cohesion and Integration: CWS prioritizes social cohesion and integration in its programs, fostering connections between Ukrainian refugees and host communities in Moldova, as well as IDPs and host communities in Ukraine. Initiatives include mixed activities for local and refugee children and installing solar panels on refugee centers, which will benefit communities long-term. As the crisis persists, CWS remains focused on supporting both displaced Ukrainians and vulnerable host communities.

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion of Marginalized Groups: CWS also emphasizes Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI), ensuring programs address the unique needs of marginalized groups such as ethnic minorities, single-headed households, people with disabilities, the elderly and vulnerable children and youth.