



EMERGENCY APPEAL: Russian Invasion of Ukraine



Appeal Code 6642 | Issued April 25, 2022

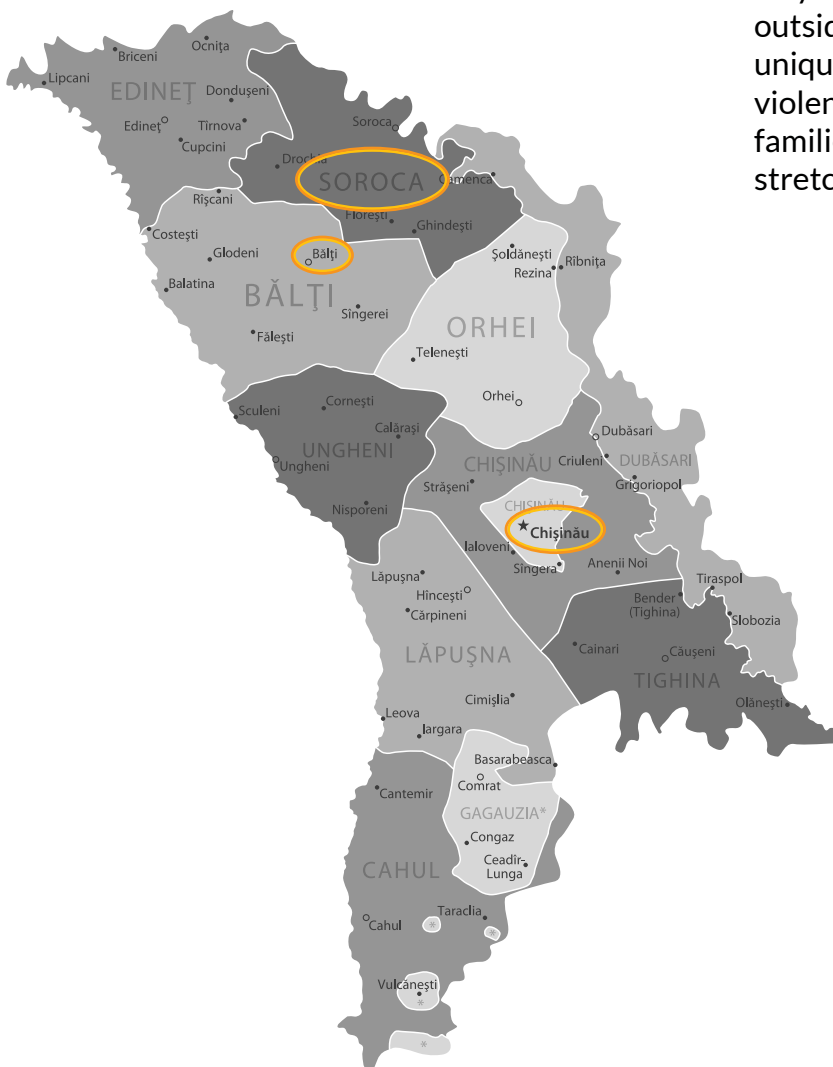
SITUATION

Russia launched an unprovoked attack on the sovereign neighboring nation of Ukraine on February 24. In the two months since, [more than 11 million Ukrainians](#) have fled their homes, including more than 5 million refugees who have fled to other nations.

More than 400,00 Ukrainians have fled to neighboring Moldova since the invasion. Many continued their journeys into Romania and beyond, and a few have returned to Ukraine as fighting shifts. As of last week, there were about 97,000 Ukrainian refugees in Moldova. Of those, 40% were women, 10% were men and 50% were children.

It is important to note that among the primary countries that are receiving Ukrainian refugees, only Moldova is not a member of the European Union. It is also one of the poorest countries in Europe, and yet it has welcomed the highest number of Ukrainian refugees relative to its population. The generosity and spirit of welcome among Moldovans has proven to be extraordinary.

There are 95 official Refugee Accommodation Centers in Moldova, but only about 5% of the Ukrainian refugees are staying in them. More than 90,000 Ukrainian refugees are living in private homes with Moldovan families or are staying in hotels or apartments. Refugees living outside official accommodation centers face unique protection risks, including gender-based violence (GBV) and risk of trafficking, and the families hosting them are facing increasingly stretched finances.



CWS RESPONSE

CWS has been active in Moldova through several local partners and projects for years. Shortly after Russia's invasion, CWS deployed a specialized staff team to Moldova and Romania to assess the needs of displaced and host communities and recommend how CWS and its partners may best respond. Unfortunately, it is increasingly clear that the humanitarian consequences of Russia's invasion have only worsened, and persisting hostilities continue to threaten the safety, well-being, and even lives, of countless Ukrainians and others affected.

CWS is committed to assisting Ukrainians and others impacted by Russia's aggression for the long-term. Our response will focus in three areas:

- » **Humanitarian Assistance:** Meeting displaced communities' immediate humanitarian needs, such as food and shelter, and supporting host communities.
- » **Protection (including Child Protection, GBV prevention, and anti-trafficking measures):** Building and/or strengthening existing protection mechanisms able to ensure refugees receive safe and dignified assistance and accommodation, with a focus on at-risk children and women.
- » **Durable Solutions:** Assisting displaced individuals access to current, language appropriate information and resources, and assist, when requested, with safe, onward movement, and asylum and protection in countries across Europe and in the United States, when appropriate.

CWS has already established a three-person team in Moldova and is currently responding in three parts of the country: the capital of Chisinau, the city of Balti, and the northern district of Soroca. Our initial response focuses on enhancing the capacity of local partners to offer a warm and dignified welcome to Ukrainian refugees and ensure that refugees

and the Moldovan families hosting them can meet their basic needs.

For example, we are supporting an organization called Diaconia in Chisinau and Balti. Diaconia established the first food bank in Moldova in 2020, which is now serving as a logistics and material hub for a number of organizations supporting Ukrainian refugees. They also converted a space that was intended to open as a daycare center into a small shelter for Ukrainian refugees. CWS has provided funds to cover utility costs for the shelter and purchase a forklift to enhance operations at the food bank. We are also supporting their educational outreach to refugee children and planning to offer technical assistance in child protection.

In Balti, we purchased a prefabricated container that will be used as an educational and recreational space for refugee children as well as a space for programming for Ukrainian refugee women. In the long run, this space will transition to being a community space for local families.

In Soroca our partner Soarta will support refugees living in a Refugee Accommodation Center (RAC) as well as those living with host families. Support includes kitchen equipment for the RAC as well as utensils, bedding, and hygiene materials. Host families will receive financial support to cover the additional costs incurred for electricity, food, and gas for cooking. Children will receive school supplies. Soarta and CWS staff will facilitate access to psycho-social support for refugees and promote refugee protection to minimize the threat of violence, including GBV. This will be done in partnership with local government representatives and with CWS support for professional development of Soarta staff.

BUDGET

- » Humanitarian assistance and protection provided with local partners - \$1,100,000, comprised of:
 - » Support to Refugees and host community in Soroca District: \$600,000
 - » Education, psychosocial services and protection for refugee children and women in Balti: \$250,000
 - » Food distribution, education, accommodation, and protection for refugees in Chisinau: \$250,000
- » Protection (GBV and child protection focus) technical assistance and service provision - \$400,000
- » Durable solutions technical assistance and service provision (including resettlement, safe onward movement, and local integration) - \$500,000

TOTAL: \$2,000,000



HOW TO HELP

[Donate to the Ukraine Crisis Response Fund](#). Donations can also be made by mailing a check to Church World Service, PO Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515. Please designate “Appeal code 6642: Ukraine Crisis Response Fund.”

We will continue to offer updates as this situation evolves. Follow CWS on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) for the latest information.

"We are not going on vacation. We are refugees."

Viktoriia is one of the Ukrainian refugees staying at the Diaconia shelter. She's there with her 13-year-old son, whose t-shirt she was wearing when we talked to her. She explained that when they left their home in Odessa, it was winter. She only brought winter clothes, so she didn't have anything to wear when warmer spring weather started in Moldova's capital of Chisinau. Her son had a slightly different approach to packing when they fled Odessa. Viktoriia told us that he started packing a bunch of t-shirts. "We are not going on vacation," she reminded him. "We are refugees." Because of their rush to leave, neither mother nor son really have proper clothes with them.

Viktoriia and her family have lived in Odessa since 2014, when they were displaced from Luhansk in eastern Ukraine due to war with Russia. Just last year Viktoriia and her husband bought their first home, an apartment, since they left Luhansk. "Odessa for me is home," she says. "All my thoughts are about how I can go home and help my family."

"My son is begging me to go home," Viktoriia says. When we talked to her, she had just extended her stay by another week. She had talked to her contacts in Odessa who told her that it wasn't yet safe to return home. So despite her son's pleas, they are staying in Chisinau for an extra week.

Both Viktoriia and her son are finding ways to stay busy as they wait. Viktoriia has an herb garden growing in the front yard of the shelter. "I grew up in a village. I feel like I am drawn to the land," she explained. Meanwhile, her son is volunteering in the food warehouse that Diaconia operates, making food packages for other Ukrainian refugees.

Thankfully, Viktoriia and her son have a comfortable shelter to stay in until it's safe for them to go home. "Not taking into consideration what is happening in Ukraine, I can say that here I feel at home. I'm not joking when I say that even here I eat more than I did back in Ukraine because everything we ask for is brought to us. We have everything we need, all the food we need, all the hygiene supplies. Without considering the situation in Ukraine, this place is a wonderful place to rest, even enjoy a holiday," Viktoriia says. "We really appreciate all the help that Diaconia has given us." (She did want to be very clear that she was praising how the Diaconia team was providing all of the supplies and food that she needed, not saying that she lacked food in Ukraine.)

This story was [posted](#) on April 5.



