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Cash and Voucher Assistance in Ukraine: Compendium

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PeReHID Initiative

The PeReHID Initiative (PI) is a technical assistance collaboration between the Ministry of Social Policy, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO), the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Food Programme (WFP), the Collaborative Cash Delivery Network (CCD), the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Right to Protection (R2P), and the Social Protection Technical Assistance, Advice, and Resources Facility (STAAR)/DAI Global UK Ltd.

The overall objective of the PeReHID Initiative is to support the transition of parts of the humanitarian caseload into an inclusive shock-responsive national social protection system. To this end, the PeReHID Initiative fosters a shared understanding between the Government of Ukraine and humanitarian actors on increasing alignment and linking humanitarian cash transfers and humanitarian services with national social assistance and social (care) service programmes. Moreover, the PeReHID Initiative supports the Government's agenda to reform the social protection system to make it more adequate, adaptive, and shock responsive to the current context and ongoing full-scale invasion.

The PeReHID Initiative was officially endorsed by Order 186-N of the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine.¹

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¹ Ministry of Social Policy, Order 186-N of 31 May 2023 On the establishment of the Working Group (Coordination Center) of the PeReHID Humanitarian Aid and International Development Reform Project for Ukraine on the transition from emergency humanitarian aid to the creation of a sustainable system of social protection of the population aimed at overcoming shocks caused by the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. Link: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z1224-23#Text>

Forewords

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine generated profound multi-sectoral needs across the country. Alongside the Governments of Ukraine's commendable continuation of social assistance payments, humanitarian cash has played a key role in supporting those affected by the devastating impact of the invasion. The PeReHID Initiative was established in 2023 by the Ukrainian Ministry of Social Policy and supported by Humanitarian donors, UN agencies and national and international NGOs and a dedicated Technical Assistance Facility to identify opportunities for strengthening alignment and complementarity between national Ukrainian social protection systems and humanitarian cash programmes in order to meet the basic needs of those affected by the full-scale invasion in the most effective and efficient way.

As donors of the PeReHID Initiative, and members of the Steering Committee, DG ECHO (EU), and UK-FCDO, commend the achievements of the humanitarian community – both international and Ukrainian civil society, in close coordination and collaboration with the Government of Ukraine, in delivering a large-scale humanitarian cash response in line with the interests of Ukrainian people and Grand Bargain Commitments. Humanitarian cash has empowered those affected by the impacts of the full-scale invasion to meet their individual needs in a dignified way that affords individuals agency in their recovery.

The PeReHID Initiative report highlights the success of the humanitarian cash response in Ukraine while acknowledging challenges with the stand up of a rapid shock response. The report includes a set of clear and relevant recommendations. The Cash Compendium was developed by the PeReHID Initiative's Technical Assistance Facility through extensive consultation with a variety of humanitarian cash actors and stakeholders working in Ukraine in order to support a broad understanding of the humanitarian cash response to date. Both the compendium itself, along with the collaborative process underpinning its development, are an important step towards fostering greater coordination and alignment between the design and implementation of humanitarian cash and national social protection systems. In line with the Common Donor Approach for Humanitarian Cash Programming, we remain committed to supporting the humanitarian cash response to most effectively align with and complement Ukraine's social protection system in order to effectively and sustainably empower those affected by the devastating impacts of the full-scale invasion in Ukraine to meet their needs.



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The Ukraine Cash Compendium reflects our collective journey in delivering humanitarian cash assistance in Ukraine, underscoring our commitment to humanitarian principles and effective action. It provides a comprehensive overview of our efforts throughout 2022 and 2023, documenting not only our provision of critical Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance to over 9.6 million of people affected by conflict but also underscoring our ongoing efforts to strengthen partnerships with government social protection systems.

In addition to highlighting challenges and successful practices, the compendium outlines opportunities for collaboration and growth in the humanitarian field, while emphasizing our continuous efforts to strengthen linkages with Ukrainian government social protection systems, ensuring that our interventions not only address immediate needs effectively but also pave the way for sustainable solutions for the vulnerable people affected by the conflict.

As we look to the future, navigating the evolving crisis and funding constraints, let this compendium along with our collective experience and learnings inspire us to continue pushing boundaries and forging new pathways. By enhancing coordination, leveraging technology, and championing collaborative approaches, we can pave the way for a future where humanitarian and government systems harmonize seamlessly. This collective effort aims to establish a more inclusive and sustainable cash response that upholds dignity and provides dedicated support to all vulnerable persons affected by the conflict in Ukraine.

Together, we aspire to create a future where every person in need receives dignified assistance, and where our humanitarian and social protection initiatives converge effectively to achieve maximum impact and ensure no one is left behind.

On behalf of the Cash Working Group Ukraine



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Cash Working Group Co-Chair

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Contents

List of Abbreviations	8
Glossary	9
1. Executive Summary	12
1.1 Key Findings	13
1.2 Key Recommendations	17
1.3 Purpose, Scope, and Limitations	20
2. Overview of the Ukrainian Humanitarian Response	22
2.1 Ukrainian Humanitarian Response in 2022	22
2.2 Ukrainian Humanitarian Response in 2023	22
2.3 Dynamics of Humanitarian Coordination in Ukraine's Response Effort	24
2.4 Balancing Immediate Relief and Long-Term Recovery	25
2.4.1 Escalating Humanitarian Demands versus Strategic Resource Allocation	25
2.4.2 The Funding Shortfall in Humanitarian Aid	26
2.4.3 Strategic Funding Priorities: Development Aid versus Humanitarian Assistance	28
2.5 Background to Cash and Voucher Assistance in Ukraine	29
3. Enabling Environment for Cash and Voucher Assistance in Ukraine	31
3.1 Coordination of Cash and Voucher Assistance	31
3.1.1 De-duplication of Cash and Voucher Assistance	33
3.2 Beneficiary Preferences for Aid Modalities: Monitoring and Adapting Strategies	36
3.3 Assessing the Continued Feasibility of Cash Assistance Response	37
3.4 Evaluating the Availability of Cash Assistance Delivery Channels	38
3.5 Development of the Humanitarian Minimum Expenditure Basket in Ukraine	39
3.5.1 Methodology for Determining the MEB in the Ukrainian Context	41
3.5.2 Aligning MPCA Transfer Values with the MEB for Targeted Assistance in Ukraine	42
3.6 Tax Exemption Status for Humanitarian Cash Assistance	42
3.7 Registration and Enrolment: Challenges of Scaling Response	43
3.8 Data Protection and Data Sharing: Status Quo and Challenges	45

4. Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance	47
4.1 Rapid Emergency MPCA (R-MPCA)	51
4.2 Emergency Cash Assistance (ECA)	54
4.3 Intersectoral Strategy and Planning for Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance	55
4.4 Targeting of Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance.....	56
4.4.1 Targeting Development: No-Regrets, Vulnerability Categories, Vulnerability Ranking	56
4.4.2 Current Targeting Framework: Speed and Stability Pathways and Challenges with Proxy Means-Testing	59
4.4.3 Emergency MPCA Guidelines: Enabling Local Coordination for Emergency Response	61
4.5 Findings and Recommendations on Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance	62
5. Sectoral Deployment of Cash and Voucher Assistance.....	63
5.1 Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster.....	63
5.1.1 Response Strategy	65
5.1.2 Sector Needs Included in MPCA.....	65
5.1.3 Sector-Specific CVA Top-Up Programmes	66
5.1.4 Sector-Specific Standalone CVA Programmes	66
5.2 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Cluster	66
5.2.1 Response Analysis.....	67
5.2.2 Sector Needs Included in MPCA.....	67
5.2.3 Sector-Specific CVA Top-Up Programmes.....	68
5.2.4 Sector-Specific Standalone CVA Programmes	68
5.3 Shelter and Non-food Item Cluster	68
5.3.1 Response Analysis.....	71
5.3.2 Sector Needs Included in MPCA.....	74
5.3.3 Sector-Specific CVA Top-Up Programmes.....	74
5.4 Protection Cluster	81
5.4.1 Response Analysis.....	83
5.4.2 Sector Needs Included in MPCA.....	84
5.4.3 Sector-Specific Top-Up CVA Programmes	84
5.4.4 Sector-Specific Standalone CVA Programmes	84
5.5 Other Cash and Voucher Assistance Interventions	86
5.5.1 Survivor and Community-Led Response.....	86
5.5.2 Group Cash Transfers	86
5.6 Findings and Recommendations on Sectoral Deployment of Cash and Voucher Assistance.....	86

6. Complementary Programming: Integrating Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance and Sector-Specific Cash and Voucher Assistance.....	87
6.1 Findings and Recommendations on Complementary Cash and Voucher Assistance Programming	89
7. Delivering Cash Assistance by Leveraging Government Systems	90
7.1 Cash Assistance for War Veterans with Disabilities	90
7.2 Prykhystok Complementary Assistance	91
7.3 Cash Top-Ups for Pensioners	93
7.4 Planned Transitional Top-Up Interventions	94
7.5 Findings and Recommendations on Delivering Cash Assistance by Leveraging Government Systems	95
8. Cross-Cutting Multi-Sectoral Challenges	96
8.1 Inter-Sectoral Coordination Challenges Related to Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance, Sectoral Cash and Voucher Assistance, and In-Kind Assistance	96
8.1.1 Coordination Challenges for Complementary Inter-Sectoral Programming	96
8.1.2 Coordination Challenges for Inter-Sectoral Market and CVA Feasibility Assessments	97
8.2 Potential of Interoperability to Enhance Inter-Sectoral Coordination.....	97
8.2.1 Challenges of Interoperable Systems in Area-Based Coordination.....	97
8.2.2 The Unique Opportunity in Ukraine of an Enabling Environment for a De-duplication System	98
8.2.3 Expanding the Horizons of Assistance Management through Building Blocks	99
8.2.4 Steps Toward Realizing Building Blocks' Full Potential	99
8.3 Localization and Engagement of National Actors in Cash Coordination and Cash and Voucher Assistance Programming	100
8.4 Findings and Recommendations on Cross-Cutting Multi-Sectoral Challenges.....	101
9. Bibliography	104

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Form
AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
ACAPS	Assessment Capacities Project
API	Application Programming Interface
BB	Building Blocks
BHA	Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
CALP	Cash Learning Partnership
CCD	Collaborative Cash Delivery Network
CWG	Cash Working Group
CVA	Cash and Voucher Assistance
DG ECHO	Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
DIGID	Dignified Identities in Cash Assistance
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
ECA	Emergency Cash Assistance
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office
FSLC	Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster
FSP	Financial Service Provider
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GPG	GNU Privacy Guard
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
ICCG	Inter-Cluster Coordination Group
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JMMI	Joint Market Monitoring Initiative
MEB	Minimum Expenditure Basket
MoSP	Ministry of Social Policy
MPCA	Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance
MTotT	Ministry of Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories
MVA	Ministry of Veterans Affairs
NORCAP	Norwegian Capacity
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PMT	Proxy Means Test
RAIS	Refugee Assistance Information System
R2P	Right to Protection
SDAR	Shelter Information Damage Assessment and Response
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SNFI	Shelter and Non-Food Items
STAAR	Social Protection Technical Assistance, Advice, and Resources
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
URCS	Ukrainian Red Cross Society
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme

Glossary

Overarching Coordination Structures

Cash Working Group (CWG)	<p>A Cash Working Group (or Basic Needs Working Group in some responses) is a forum which facilitates the coordination and harmonization of cash and voucher assistance within a humanitarian response. Functions of CWGs can include coordinating on issues such as transfer values, targeting, delivery mechanisms, Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) development, and harmonizing tools and guidance.²</p> <p>As a result of the Grand Bargain Cash Coordination Caucus, a cash coordination model³ was endorsed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in March 2022. The CWG can sit under the humanitarian cluster architecture as per this model, or under government national disaster management response architecture.</p>
Cluster	Clusters are groups of humanitarian organizations, both United Nations and non-United Nations, in each of the main sectors of humanitarian action, e.g. water, health and logistics. They are designated by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and have clear responsibilities for coordination. ⁴
The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT)	The Humanitarian Country Team's (HCT) overall goal is to ensure that inter-agency humanitarian action alleviates human suffering and protects the lives, livelihoods and dignity of people in need. As the top inter-agency humanitarian leadership body in the country, it provides strategic direction for collective inter-agency humanitarian response. ⁵
The Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG)	The Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) is a mechanism of the Humanitarian Cluster Coordination System that facilitates efficient and effective delivery of humanitarian aid. By organizing multiple sector-specific clusters and sub-clusters, the ICCG ensures cohesive strategy, operational planning, resource allocation, and response actions among different humanitarian agencies and stakeholders, aiming to optimize assistance and address cross-cutting issues in crisis situations. ⁶

Types of Humanitarian assistance

CVA	The humanitarian sector uses varied terms like 'Cash Transfer Programming' (CTP), 'Cash-based Transfer' (CBT), 'Cash-based Assistance' (CBA), and 'Cash-based Interventions' (CBI) for cash- and voucher-based aid. To clarify, in 2019, 'Cash and Voucher Assistance' (CVA) was established as the collective term for programmes incorporating both assistance types, as included in the CALP glossary. ⁷
Cash Assistance/ Cash Transfer	Cash Transfers are "the provision of assistance in the form of money – either physical currency or e-cash – to recipients (individuals, households or communities). Cash transfers are unrestricted, which means recipients can choose how to use the assistance. As such, cash is distinct from restricted modalities including vouchers and in-kind assistance." ⁸
Voucher	Vouchers are "A paper, token or e-voucher that can be exchanged for a set quantity or value of goods or services, denominated either as a cash value or predetermined commodities or specific services (or a combination of value and commodities)." ⁹
In-kind Assistance	Humanitarian assistance provided in the form of physical goods or commodities. In-kind assistance is restricted by default as recipients are not able to choose what they are given. ¹⁰

² CALP Network, Cash Working Groups, November 2023. Link: <https://www.calpnetwork.org/community/cash-working-groups/>

³ Interagency Standing Committee (IASC), New Cash Coordination Model: All you need to know about the new model, 10 November 2022. Link: https://interagency-standingcommittee.org/sites/default/files/migrated/2022-11/New_cash_coordination_model_presentation.pdf

⁴ HumanitarianResponse.info, What is the Cluster Approach?, 2020. Link: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/coordination/clusters/what-cluster-approach>

⁵ Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), Standard Terms of Reference for Humanitarian Country Teams, February 2017. Link: https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/sites/default/files/migrated/2019-02/hct_tors.pdf

⁶ OCHA, Inter-cluster Coordination, November 2023. Link: <https://response.reliefweb.int/ukraine/inter-cluster-coordination>

⁷ CALP Network, Glossary of Terminology for Cash and Voucher Assistance, 2023. Link: <https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/calp-glossary-english.pdf>

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Service Delivery	Services such as water and sanitation, healthcare, education, protection, legal, etc. provided to affected populations, independently or in partnership with public/state services. ¹¹
Complementary programming	Complementary programming refers to when humanitarian actors blend various activities and methods to meet specific goals for aid beneficiaries. It can be conducted by one or several organizations in partnership, involving different modalities within a single initiative or connecting people to other services. Such an approach is based on evidence that multifaceted programmes are more impactful. Effective complementary programming often requires a coordinated, multisectoral strategy for assessing and responding to needs. It is an integral aspect of good programming, distinct from integrated programming which addresses broader processes and enables comprehensive, people-centered interventions. Complementary programming focuses on achieving specific outcomes for a targeted recipient group and on maximizing impact.
Specialized Humanitarian Terms for CVA	
Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA)	Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) has been defined by humanitarian actors as financial transfer either regular or one-off financial transfers designed to cover, fully or partially, a household's basic needs. ¹² MPCA programmes generally encompass transfers (one-time or recurrent) set to match the financial demands of a household's primary and/or recuperative needs across various sectors.
The Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB)	<p>The Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) serves as a foundational element in humanitarian response, particularly when employing MPCA as an intervention strategy. MEBs are typically constructed with operational objectives in mind, providing a benchmark to determine transfer values for MPCA, assess vulnerabilities, and monitor cost of living fluctuations over time.¹³ In particular donors and humanitarian agencies have aligned on defining what is meant by covering fully or partially a household's basic needs through the consensus of an inter-agency group, culminating in the establishment of an MEB. For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) from USAID posits that "MPCA contributes to meeting a Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) or a similar calculation of the amount required to cover basic needs."¹⁴ • Similarly, the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) advises that "To meet recurrent basic needs, an MPCA Transfer value should be defined based on an estimate of the gap between the MEB and what beneficiaries can contribute towards their needs."¹⁵ <p>However, a key point is that MEB normally considers only recurrent basic needs, and "there will always be sector-specific needs which cannot be met through recurrent cash assistance but rather must be met through, for example, a one-off transfer and/or more substantial transfers."¹⁶</p>

¹¹ CALP Network, Glossary of Terminology for Cash and Voucher Assistance, 2023. Link: <https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/calp-glossary-english.pdf>

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Klein, Nathalie, Nynne Warring, Demystifying the Minimum Expenditure Basket, 2021. Link: <https://www.calpnetwork.org/blog/demystifying-the-minimum-expenditure-basket/>

¹⁴ CALP Network, Sector-Specific MEB Companion Guidance: Shelter, 2023. Link: <https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Sector-Specific-MEB-Companion-Guidance-Shelter.pdf>

¹⁵ Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document No 3 Cash Transfers, March 2022. Link: https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/thematic_policy_document_no_3_cash_transfers_en.pdf

¹⁶ Ibid.

Sector-Specific Cash or Voucher Assistance	Sector-Specific Cash or Voucher Assistance targets specific sector objectives, with varying conditions. Vouchers may restrict spending to sector-aligned items and services, while cash transfers, whether labelled or designed, aim to guide recipient expenditure toward achieving these sector-specific goals. Both methods offer flexibility in meeting defined objectives. ¹⁷ At its core, sectoral cash represents specialized support, crafted to alleviate sector-specific challenges confronting individuals. With its acute focus, humanitarian entities can confidently direct resources to address beneficiaries' needs in a profound, efficient manner. ¹⁸ Generally, Sector-Specific Cash or Voucher Assistance programmes can be divided into two categories: Sector-Specific Top-up Cash or Voucher Assistance and Sector-Specific Standalone Cash or Voucher programmes. ¹⁹
Specific Programme Types	
Sector-Specific Standalone Cash or Voucher programmes	Sector-Specific Standalone Cash or Voucher programmes are programmes that achieve sector-specific objectives, via cash transfers or vouchers to purchase items in the market but that require complementary sector-specific technical design, quality assurance, etc. and must be implemented at field level by a sector-specific technical team. An example could be a shelter programme that provides cash or vouchers to displaced families to purchase temporary shelter materials from local markets. The shelter team designs the technical specifications for adequate materials, sets transfer values based on costs, and monitors procurement.
Sector-Specific Cash or Voucher Top-up programmes	Sector-Specific Cash or Voucher Top-Up programmes are one-off or recurrent cash transfers that cover sector-specific basic needs that are not covered by the objectives of MPCA, and that can be met via the market. They can be made by any humanitarian actor, although ideally a sectoral technical team would be involved in the design and implementation at field level and on maximizing impact. Examples could be: A shelter programme that provides one-time grants for essentials like blankets and heating appliances, targeting vulnerable families in collective centres and inadequate hosting situations; a shelter programme that provides funds to vulnerable households in conflict zones for heating fuel, prioritizing those in damaged homes and collective centres.

¹⁷ CALP Network, Glossary of Terminology for Cash and Voucher Assistance, Update of 2023. Link: <https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/calp-glossary-english.pdf>.

¹⁸ Harvey, Paul and Sara Pavanello, Multi-Purpose Cash and Sectoral Outcomes. A review of evidence and learning – Full report. UNHCR, May 2028. Link: <https://www.unhcr.org/media/multi-purpose-cash-and-sectoral-outcomes-review-evidence-and-learning-full-report>

¹⁹ Global Shelter Cluster, Shelter Cash and Markets Community of Practice. Shelter Considerations for MEB Development and MPCA Program Design: a guidance note, June 2023. Link: <https://sheltercluster.org/shelter-cash-and-markets-community-practice/documents/shelter-considerations-meb-development-and>

1. Executive Summary

The Ukraine Cash Compendium provides an overview of the crisis cash response in Ukraine between 2022 and 2023 and analyses the effectiveness of humanitarian cash assistance through the implementation of inter-sectoral basic needs support and complementary sectoral aid. It presents main findings and recommendations for key stakeholders, including the Government of Ukraine, humanitarian organizations, coordination clusters, humanitarian donors, and development partners, among others.

As reported through the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) and rapid cash feasibility assessments undertaken over the past two years,²⁰ Ukraine has an overall conducive environment for humanitarian cash transfers: markets are resilient, the financial infrastructure functions, and cash remains the preferred response modality for affected populations. However, in some areas close to the frontline, availability, access, and affordability of some goods and services remain challenging, such as the provision of solid fuel. While not entirely coherent across the response mechanisms, tax exemptions upheld spending power, while inflation, reached 26.6 per cent at the end of 2022 and gradually declined to an estimated 5.1 per cent at the end of 2023,²¹ undermined it. Diverse financial channels provided delivery mechanisms, though remote access barriers persisted, and security constraints fluctuated.

In this context, Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) formed a cornerstone for Ukraine's humanitarian response, providing support to almost 6 million war-affected individuals in 2022, and more than 4 million in 2023²², according to data from the Cash Working Group (CWG).²³

Targeting of MPCA evolved from an initial blanket categorical targeting, using a no-regrets approach to achieve timeliness and scale, towards a more inclusive, needs-based criteria, capturing and prioritizing the socio-economic vulnerability of affected populations. Aligning transfer values of the MPCA responses to reflect the increased cost of living was achieved through the revision of the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) undertaken in August 2023.²⁴ However, some clusters have expressed concerns about sector-specific aspects of the MEB that were overlooked, and about limited consultations for the MEB composition. The CWG, in its capacity as inter-sectoral forum, should do more work to support evidence-based decision-making related to selection of the most adequate assistance modalities for different locations, by making available cash feasibility data. Nevertheless, the Ukrainian CWG has been an instrumental entity in key areas of the humanitarian response, including coordination, advocacy, data analysis, and governance of task teams, ensuring a cohesive approach. Moreover, the practice of the MPCA de-duplication process has proven to be a highly effective strategy, leading to substantial improvements in efficiency and enabling humanitarian cash actors to extend their reach and assist a greater number of people affected by this crisis.

Sectoral cash mechanisms enabled targeted interventions that required the oversight of different clusters like Shelter and Non-food Items (SNFI); Food Security and Livelihood; Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH); Health, and Protection. Complementary cash and voucher assistance (CVA) and stand-alone modalities filled gaps between the MPCA coverage and diverse pressing sectoral needs. The response increasingly incorporated complementary programming, combining MPCA and sectoral assistance. However, a complementary intersectoral CVA response programming strategy has not been put in place. Intersectoral coordination remains siloed, a challenge which is currently being addressed at the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) level. While area-based coordination is implemented at the cluster level, the de-duplication of assistance process at the household level is mostly absent for sectoral CVA and other assistance modalities. Interlinkages across sectors can be further enhanced, building on existing platforms, such as the Building Blocks or the Refugee Assistance Information System (RAIS+), and other

²⁰ CWG, CVA Feasibility Task Team, July 2024, Link: <https://response.reliefweb.int/ukraine/cash-working-group-cwg/cash-working-group-task-team-2-delivery-mechanisms>

²¹ World Bank, Ukraine – Third Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA3): February 2022--December 2023 (English). Washington, D.C. : World Bank Group, Washington, D.C. Link: <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/099021324115085807/p1801741bea12c-012189ca16d95d8c2556a>

²² IOM, OCHA, Ukrainian Red Cross Society, Multi-purpose Cash Assistance, Ukraine 2023 Response Analysis Snapshot (January–December 2023), March 2024. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/multi-purpose-cash-assistance-ukraine-2023-response-analysis-snapshot-january-december-2023>

²³ Data include only CWG-reported MPCA.

²⁴ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Ukraine Cash Working Group – Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB), August 2023. Link: <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/ukraine/ukraine-cash-working-group-minimum-expenditure-basket-meb-august-2023-enuk>

sector-specific de-duplication tools, such as the Shelter Information Damage Assessment and Response (SIDAR) for humanitarian shelter light and medium repairs. In the case of Cash for Protection, due to the sensitive and tailored nature of this type of assistance, de-duplication can be advanced through enhanced capacity-building and strengthened risk assessment tools, part of a coherent inter-sectoral cash complementarity strategy.

While advocacy efforts have been made at policy level²⁵ to highlight the need for increased alignment between the humanitarian response initiatives and Ukraine's robust social protection system, progress in this area has been limited. Adopting a social protection lens in humanitarian programming remains paramount to operationalise the social protection-humanitarian nexus overall and for practical considerations of social assistance benefits in humanitarian programming.

1.1 Key Findings

- **Unprecedented scale-up of the CVA response in Ukraine.** MPCA formed the cornerstone of Ukraine's humanitarian response, delivering the bulk of the emergency assistance in 2022 and 2023. Overall, the scale-up of the CVA response in Ukraine was unprecedented in these two years. Beneficiary targeting evolved from status-based eligibility to more needs-based eligibility mechanisms, applying multi-dimensional vulnerability criteria. With 5.6 million people assisted in 2022 alone, the humanitarian cash response in Ukraine was the largest in history and used a multi-pronged approach to scaling-up. The rapid scale-up was achieved by strengthening the operational capacity of multiple agencies, moving closer and closer to the frontline, and progressively using government systems for targeting, such as the eDopomoga platform.
- **The benefits of the CVA could be further leveraged.** Cash assistance has played a pivotal role in mitigating immediate hardships in Ukraine, complementing the government social protection assistance initiatives for people in vulnerable situations. At the beginning of the response, cash was the modality of choice adopted by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). Affected populations also reported that cash assistance remained the preferred assistance modality over the past two years, despite rampant inflation. In 2023, CVA accounted for 33 per cent of the overall response, of which 78 per cent was MPCA.²⁶ In situations of inaccessible essential services, high prices, disrupted markets, or specific needs like healthcare, protection, and shelter such as in areas close to the frontline and surrounding oblasts, complementary in-kind assistance and services remain indispensable. In-kind assistance, including services, represented approximately 67 per cent²⁷ of the consolidated multi-sectoral response in 2023. Cash and in-kind assistance play complementary roles: when strategically combined based on contextual analysis, evidence, and beneficiaries' preference, they contribute to an appropriate and dignified response. However, too much reliance on in-kind assistance, or using both modalities in the same locations, while evidence²⁸ indicates that cash assistance is feasible in most of Ukraine, cannot be justified for addressing the nuanced and evolving needs amidst Ukraine's complex crisis.²⁹
- **Fragmented modality selection.** Ukraine maintained, over time, a favourable environment for CVA. Market monitoring and adapting modalities, based on beneficiaries' feedback and changing realities on the ground, strongly contributed to ensuring the provision of relevant assistance. Financial channels such as banks and postal systems provided reliable delivery mechanisms, although some barriers remained in remote areas and at the frontline. However, the selection of modalities is still fragmented, leading to some lack of uniformity among organizations and sectors. This is particularly relevant for basic needs: Expansion of sectoral cash outside basic needs (or outside the MEB) is desirable to equip the Ukraine operation to better answer specific needs requiring complementary targeting. However, sectoral cash expansion under basic needs means that beneficiaries must

²⁵ ACTED, OCHA, Common Donor Messaging on Humanitarian Cash Programs in the Response in Ukraine, June 2022. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/common-donor-messaging-humanitarian-cash-programs-response-ukraine>

²⁶ IOM, OCHA, Ukrainian Red Cross Society, Multi-purpose Cash Assistance – Ukraine 2023 Response Analysis Snapshot (January to December 2023), March 2024. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/multi-purpose-cash-assistance-ukraine-2023-response-analysis-snapshot-january-december-2023?>

²⁷ Figures provided by the CWG Ukraine.

²⁸ OCHA, Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2024 (December 2023), January 2024. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-2024-december-2023-enuk>

²⁹ Tholstrup S. and H Juillard, External review of the Humanitarian Cash Programme, Humanitarian Coordinator, 2023.

find several transfers to answer their basic needs. The delivery of MPCA allowed the beneficiaries to rely on only one transfer. This raises efficiency and accountability issues; the fragmentation, to some degree, limits a harmonised response to fluctuating needs. Strengthening intersectoral coordination and enhancing agility in modality selection based on evidence remain key to optimizing the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance.

- **Delayed review of the MPCA transfer value and a missing evidence base for its duration.** While MPCA targeting evolved positively from status-based eligibility towards needs-based criteria, significant gaps between needs and coverage remain. The revision of the humanitarian Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB), which was advocated for since August 2022, was finally conducted in the summer of 2023 and endorsed by the HCT in August 2023.³⁰ This adjustment enabled alignment of MPCA transfer values, until then clearly insufficient to cover basic needs, with the costs of basic needs, amidst rampant inflation. In addition, setting the duration of the MPCA delivery was not based on evidence and created some tensions among partners, impacting the balance between adequacy and coverage. There was also limited guidance for targeting and selecting the same households over time. Concurrently, some partners argued that the MPCA duration was based on the household enrolment into the IDP allowance, which was defined for three months at the beginning of the war, and later slightly reduced. In any case, the evidence base for MPCA duration remains unclear and depends on the area of displacement.
- **Transition to trigger-based assistance; formerly limited to MPCA but now being developed at intersectoral level.** The frequency and intensity of shelling and air attacks in the eastern part of Ukraine (specifically Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Zaporizhzhia oblasts) drastically increased in 2023 and 2024, impacting the complexity of needs experienced by victims of these recurrent threats, access, and the way humanitarian actors coordinate their assistance. The unpredictability of attacks, combined with the variability of human and financial resources available at field level, has presented some coordination challenges, including the required collaboration with the local authorities.

In August 2023, the Emergency MPCA Guideline was formalised and endorsed by Dnipro's Sub-National CWG. This guidance enabled a coordinated trigger-based emergency response, involving local authorities and humanitarian actors, and informed area-based coordination. However, the approach was limited to MPCA in the face of the multi-sectoral needs of affected populations. In December 2023, an Emergency Inter-Cluster Assistance Guideline was developed for coordination purposes and endorsed by the Inter-Cluster Working Group East. It was also presented to the ICCG. Discussions are ongoing on the operationalisation of the guideline. Moreover, the SNFI Cluster East Hub developed a draft standard operating procedure (SOP) for emergency response, supporting this sector-specific assistance in Donetsk oblast. While the purpose of this SOP is clearly different from the Emergency MPCA Guideline, it showcases that the inter-sector emergency response strategy could be streamlined.

- **Limited complementarity across and between sectoral CVA and MPCA.** Inter-cluster coordination on CVA package design resulted in relative complementarity between standardised CVA packages. However, some sectoral CVA packages need to be harmonised and streamlined. Additionally, some sectoral CVA packages have not been standardised, which further undermines efforts to achieve a streamlined, complementary CVA response in Ukraine.

A structured analysis of the complementarity of different cash benefits has not been undertaken nor fully coordinated. It should be conducted to ensure that value for beneficiary and value for money are increased across the response, and to leverage complementarity across sectors.

In addition, until June 2024, there was no guidance on potentially emerging sectoral cash assistance packages that target basic needs which are part of the MEB, such as Cash for WASH or Cash for Food. In June 2024, the FSL Cluster provided guidance on sectoral cash transfers, aiming at harmonizing the Cash for Food assistance modality and avoiding significant disparities between actors within the same area of intervention.³¹ Such guidance will be useful to streamline targeting and enable de-duplication mechanisms between different CVA pack-

³⁰ IOM, OCHA, Ukrainian Red Cross Society, Ukraine Cash Working Group – Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB), September 2023. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-cash-working-group-minimum-expenditure-basket-meb-august-2023-enuk>

³¹ Food Security Cluster, FSLC Guidance on Sectoral Cash Transfers 2024, June 2024. Link: <https://fscluster.org/ukraine/document/fslc-guidance-sectoral-cash-transfers>

ages in addition to fostering an integrated approach across the response. However, introducing sectoral CVA assistance packages that are already included in the MEB could be potentially disruptive to the cohesion of the CVA response; thus, sectoral CVA packages should be implemented in a cohesive manner. The ICCG should play an integral role in their coordination, considering the heterogeneity of needs and response options according to the different affected areas.

Finally, the absence of an inter-sector vulnerability assessment framework, informing the design and targeting of sectoral cash benefits and MPCA, led to insufficient cohesion between aid packages.

- Potential to enhance de-duplication of assistance.** Ukraine's cash assistance response has made important strides in de-duplication, laying the technological groundwork through the World Food Programme's Building Blocks system to integrate encrypted personal data points and avoid duplication across MPCA programmes. The CWG has played a key role in promoting the MPCA de-duplication mechanism, and over 50 CWG partners have endorsed it. This has helped avert significant overlap in delivering assistance. In 2023, the value of avoided unintended overlap reached USD 163.2 million.³² In addition, while limited in scope and not fully operationalised, the SNFI Cluster implemented a winter cash de-duplication mechanism. As reported at the end of April 2024, 16,079 unique household IDs have been effectively de-duplicated in Building Blocks for the Cash Winter Energy module.³³ Unfortunately, the module was only available from mid-February 2024, missing most of the cash for winterisation caseload for the 2023–2024 winter season.³⁴ In January 2024, the SNFI Cluster published an SOP related to de-duplication mechanisms for winter shelter and NFI assistance through cash. This document supports Ukraine Shelter Cluster partner organizations in establishing a community agreement for effective utilization of Building Blocks.³⁵ In parallel, the Shelter Information Damage Assessment and Response system, or SIDAR, which was developed by the Shelter Cluster and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Ukraine, is used to de-duplicate light and medium shelter repair assistance.³⁶ Despite these positive developments, de-duplication is currently limited to MPCA and shelter interventions. Expanding to other sectoral assistance could benefit and optimize coordinated aid packages tailored to needs.
- Interlinkages and interoperability could be fostered.** Technical capacity for data sharing exists, but overcoming the sectoral mindset and data sharing principles codified in different agencies' policies, while mitigating risks for people in need of protection is challenging. Leadership, analysis, pragmatic guidelines, and commitment to collective outcomes are essential to unlocking the next stage of interlinkages and interoperability. With technological infrastructure in place, such as Building Blocks, RAIS+ and SIDAR, Ukraine is well positioned to build on lessons learnt, enhance linkages, pioneer coordinated data sharing, and further engage with stakeholders on legal ways to do so. Considering the evolving legal framework in Ukraine, continuous consultations with the Government on data sharing and data protection are crucial.
- Dichotomy of localisation in humanitarian partnerships.** Progress has been made on localization, but meaningful participation of local civil society and non-governmental organizations (CSOs and NGOs) in CVA coordination bodies and fora is still disproportionately low. A gap remains between rhetoric and action on fully empowering these partnerships. International organizations still dominate strategic decisions, resources, and narratives. Relationships with local CSOs frequently remain transactional rather than transformational, focused on subcontracting for localized implementation rather than equitably integrating perspectives into programme design and coordination. Direct funding and core cost support for local organisations is limited, despite some increasing capacity and engagement. Investments in strengthening capacity in different aspects of quality CVA programming and coordination would be valuable.

³² IOM, OCHA, Ukrainian Red Cross Society, Multi-purpose Cash Assistance – Ukraine 2023 Response Analysis Snapshot (January to December 2023), March 2024. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/multi-purpose-cash-assistance-ukraine-2023-response-analysis-snapshot-january-december-2023?>

³³ Shelter Cluster Ukraine, Standard Operating Procedure. Deduplication mechanisms for Winter Shelter & NFI Assistance through Cash modality. Version 00, January 2023. Link: https://sheltercluster.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/public/docs/20240112_SoP%20Deduplication%20with%20Building%20Blocks_v00_clean%20version.pdf?VersionId=qKMOFDkTUxfsBzAzCE7gtr7wdGljqb_

³⁴ Reported by WFP Head of Digital Solutions in Ukraine.

³⁵ Shelter Cluster Ukraine, Standard Operating Procedure. Deduplication mechanisms for Winter Shelter & NFI Assistance through Cash modality. Version 00, January 2023. Link: https://sheltercluster.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/public/docs/20240112_SoP%20Deduplication%20with%20Building%20Blocks_v00_clean%20version.pdf?VersionId=qKMOFDkTUxfsBzAzCE7gtr7wdGljqb_

³⁶ Shelter Cluster, UNHCR, Shelter Cluster Ukraine: Shelter Information Damage Assessment & Response (SIDAR), June 2023 Update, June 2023. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/shelter-cluster-ukraine-shelter-information-damage-assessment-response-sidar-june-2023-update>

- **Challenges to inclusion and accountability efforts.** Strengthening inclusion and accountability remains essential in Ukraine.³⁷ Considering the scale of operations, the trauma that will affect populations for generations, and the transition and incorporation of some of the caseload into the national social protection system, targeting and registration methods require ongoing adaptation to reach the most vulnerable. Long-term efforts and costs related to mental, physical, and socio-economic rehabilitation and social inclusion will be substantially required. However, participation of affected populations in assessments, planning, and feedback processes, while vital to a people-centred approach, is still limited. Progress and lessons learned in mainstreaming gender, mental health, disability, and child protection considerations is insufficiently documented, raising concerns about possible marginalization. The fragmentation of CVA also creates confusion among recipients, leading to a need for increased investment in communications, Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), and adequate feedback mechanisms and channels.
- **Shrinking humanitarian funding requires prioritization.** Global solidarity risks fatigue, with humanitarian appeals struggling to meet, not only Ukraine's protracted needs, but those of competing humanitarian crises around the world. In 2024, as more people spiral into multi-dimensional vulnerability and poverty, life-saving assistance must be allocated to those enduring direct acute shocks of violence, displacement, and rights violations. Declining international funding requires a reorientation of assistance to uphold dignity where crises rage, while doubling down on development initiatives to lift communities towards self-reliance. Short-term humanitarian funding cannot meet systemic needs across all sectors; prioritization and focus on cost-effectiveness and value for money is imperative. Engaging stakeholders in enhancing humanitarian and development linkages is crucial to capitalize on investment and effectiveness. Resourcing must align realistically with financial capacity, progressively transitioning to the Ukraine's social protection system and engaging with the Ministry of Social Policy (MoSP) and other relevant ministries.
- **Coordination between humanitarian and development donors is lacking.** Separate funding streams, distinct requirements, timelines, and competing priorities impact the synergies between humanitarian and development initiatives. The best coordination efforts are still insufficient to foster a cooperative environment to collectively and strategically contribute to a more cohesive and impactful response in the Ukrainian context.
- **Emerging transitional cash assistance and leveraging government systems to deliver aid.** Different initiatives³⁸ implemented by the Ukrainian Red Cross, UNHCR, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Food Programme (WFP) represent innovative steps and operate partially outside the purview of established (humanitarian) cash coordination frameworks. As such, these initiatives represent potentially cost-effective instruments for programming, to be implemented in alignment with the social protection system. Their improved coordination and harmonization across different actors is crucial for avoiding duplication, ensuring complementarity, and achieving an aligned transition from covering some humanitarian caseloads, into a more shock-responsive social protection system. Challenges to be overcome include defining standardised processes for sharing government targeting data and the constraints related to data protection legislation.
- **An insufficient social protection lens in humanitarian CVA design.** The importance of incorporating a stronger social protection lens in humanitarian CVA programming and linking the two is increasingly recognized as crucial. However, the technical capacity to do so remains limited. Pragmatic operational guidelines on effective design of such interventions are still missing. It requires adaptation of existing guidelines on CVA modalities and adequate operational training. In 2022, some attempts were made to provide cash assistance via the eDopomoga government registration system, which was used to quickly scale-up the provision of assistance. However, while initially the recommendation of MoSP was to provide MPCA in addition to social assistance, a social protection lens was not used in programme design, nor were existing social assistance benefits considered when determining the transfer values. Efficiently collaborating with the Government and the MoSP to align the humanitarian response with national social protection schemes is a lengthy process, which necessitates planning, technical and legal knowledge, and strategic vision at the highest levels of organizations.

³⁸ Further examined in section 6.4

1.2 Key Recommendations

Humanitarian Actors

- **Refine targeting for inclusion, while prioritizing life-saving needs.** Although humanitarian MPCA targeting has improved over the last two years, identified gaps are likely to persist. Decreasing resources require sharper prioritization. Enrolment processes should be continuously adapted to adequately reach people with multi-dimensional vulnerabilities in order to leave no one behind. Simplified procedures and community participation can positively foster inclusion.

Common understanding of targeting should be promoted and enhanced to effectively address and prioritize critical humanitarian needs in a dignified way, in line with human rights and people-centred approaches. Developing a pragmatic and realistic inter-sector vulnerability assessment framework to inform the design and targeting of sectoral CVA benefits and MPCA is key to strengthening cohesion and complementarity between aid packages.

Coordination on aligning eligibility criteria for humanitarian and social protection coverage remains key, as well as directing assistance to those facing recurrent shocks and multi-dimensional vulnerabilities, rather than duplicating assistance which risks reinforcing exclusion. Adopting a social protection lens and building on government systems in targeting humanitarian assistance is crucial.

- **Strengthen inter-cluster coordination of CVA.** Harmonized analysis of needs, gaps, and suitable modalities across sectors could be enhanced to overcome siloed coordination. Structured analysis of different CVA benefits should be conducted to ensure that value for money is increased across the response and to foster complementarity, including an inter-sectoral approach to CVA feasibility assessment. Ensuring that any new sectoral CVA package is appropriately assessed for complementarity before scaling-up, would be key. Directives and incentives from ICCG/HCT to enact this would also be essential, ensuring streamlined decisions on modality and fostering complementarity across the response.
- **Enhance de-duplication efforts.** Ukraine has made progress on de-duplication for cash assistance, but realizing its full potential remains imperative. De-duplication tools could be further expanded and streamlined. An ongoing ICCG-led de-duplication taskforce is in place, directed by the HCT.

A gradual approach expanding the de-duplication mechanisms to sectoral cash, first including the totality of sectoral cash assistance top-ups (such as winterisation fuel top-ups) that complement MPCA and moving towards stand-alone sectoral CVA should be pragmatically implemented. Modality-agnostic de-duplication should be considered to ensure that in-kind and CVA efforts are reconciled at the household level.

The functionality of de-duplication technologies such as WFP's Building Blocks should be extended to enable area-based coordination, not only to look retrospectively at who has already been assisted, but to plan future engagements. The data collected also include the duration of current assistance, offering the possibility to easily showcase a heatmap of assistance at hromada (territorial community) level.

- **Foster the potential of interlinkages and interoperability.** Interlinkages require extensive coordination and inclusive system design. Guidelines, capacity-building, and trust-building on ethical data use are prerequisites. Interoperability requires a well-developed ecosystem of data sharing agreements, infrastructure, and data responsibility. If achieved in a principled manner, the humanitarian community can progressively reduce fragmentation through enhanced consolidated analysis.

Concurrently, enabling data protection and the legal environment remain as major elements to be prioritized and enhanced at all levels. Interlinkages with government systems would require technical discussions and decisions at the HCT and CWG levels and should be further explored to enable a social protection lens in humanitarian programming.

- **Prioritize localization including in cash coordination.** Despite global commitments, relationships with local NGOs and civil society organizations remain transactional and not empowering. Direct funding and core support could be directly allocated to national NGOs, while providing and enhancing CVA technical and coordination training, and enhancing capacity in a sustainable way to increase step-by-step community-led responses. Cash

coordination bodies must create spaces where local voices are amplified, including an enhanced engagement of the MoSP, other relevant ministries, government disaster and crisis response bodies, and local authorities to gradually increase their presence within the humanitarian coordination architecture.

- **Further develop the Emergency MPCA Guideline based on lessons learnt and bring the mechanism to inter-sector level.** Since August 2023, the Emergency MPCA Guideline has been implemented and coordinated at Dnipro hub level. It is crucial to generate evidence and build on the lessons learned from implementation of this guidance, and specifically on collaboration with local authorities and organisations. This will enable a timely, trigger-based humanitarian response, linked with the social protection system. This strategic engagement should be discussed and supported at the HCT and ICCG level.

Expanding the practice to the inter-sectoral level is vital, as MPCA is not always the most fitting response mechanism, with sectoral cash packages being key for different triggers (e.g. Cash for Rent is relevant in a scenario of forced displacement or reintegration). Ultimately, this will benefit collaboration with local authorities, which can lead to a more localised and empowered response, leveraging local assets and capacities.

- **Active engagement in the transitional cash framework.** A harmonization strategy for transitional cash assistance programmes needs to be formulated to foster more effective coordination with broader humanitarian efforts. By finding their place within the larger ecosystem of humanitarian assistance, the transitional cash initiatives can maximize their impact. This provides an opportunity for policy development, particularly in enhancing data-sharing frameworks that respect the principle of informed consent, while allowing for effective programme monitoring. There is potential for strengthened collaboration with government agencies to ensure that initiatives are supportive of, and aligned with, state-run social protection schemes. This collaboration could serve as a model for partnerships in different humanitarian contexts.
- **Integrate a stronger social protection perspective into the design of humanitarian CVA programmes.** Establishing links and aligning humanitarian responses with existing social protection schemes is essential, but there is still a notable gap in the technical capacity required to design, implement, and consider existing social benefits in the humanitarian programming landscape. The provision of technical training would also enhance this approach. Practical and operational guidelines for designing such interventions could draw upon established principles such as those of the European Union Social Protection Systems Programme (EU-SPaN)³⁹ and the Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board (SPIAC-B).⁴⁰ These frameworks offer guidance on enhancing coordination and coherence in social protection policies and practices, ensuring that immediate relief efforts are integrated with long-term social protection strategies.

Humanitarian Donors

- **Uphold principled, needs-based humanitarian funding.** Donors must reaffirm their support to principled humanitarian funding that is flexible, multi-year, and allocated impartially to areas of greatest need rather than to short-term and earmarked interests. This will contribute to upholding timely, unhindered lifesaving assistance. Funding should empower collaboration and accountability, reducing endless competition for resources and including prioritisation of MPCA as a default assistance approach alongside an inter-sector complementary assistance strategy.
- **Promote coherence across CVA assistance packages.** Achieving synergy and cohesion across CVA packages requires a multifaceted and unified approach, which is essential for aligning different CVA interventions with broader humanitarian and development objectives. This approach should be cultivated to ensure that all efforts are harmoniously integrated and mutually reinforcing.
- **Require a streamlined inter-sector CVA feasibility and market functionality assessment.** Assistance modality choices need to be streamlined to limit potential damage to local markets due to over-use of in-kind assistance and to reflect evidence of people's preferences. Moreover, a "why not cash" section should be required in all project proposals to ensure that an adequate modality feasibility analysis was undertaken.

³⁹ European Union, The Guidance Package (GP) on Social Protection across the Humanitarian-Development Nexus (SPaN), 2019. Link: https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/info/guidance-package-span-resources_en

⁴⁰ SPIAC-B Subgroup on Linking Humanitarian Assistance and Social Protection, Common Principles for Linking Humanitarian Assistance to Social Protection, CALP Network, December 2023. Link: <https://www.calpnetwork.org/publication/common-principles-for-linking-humanitarian-assistance-and-social-protection/SPIAC-B-Subgroup-on-linking-Humanitarian-Assistance-and-Social-Protection>

- **Encourage alignment and linkages between humanitarian response and the state social protection system.** Leveraging government systems and taking a principled social protection lens in humanitarian programming should be strongly encouraged. The Common Donor Messaging on Humanitarian Cash Programmes for the crisis response in Ukraine,⁴¹ which is currently being updated by donor agencies, should take the social protection lens into consideration in practical terms.
- **Incentivize de-duplication, interoperability, and coordination.** Inter-cluster coordination, joint needs analysis, consolidated reporting, and participation in optimizing initiatives like de-duplication systems must be linked to funding allocations to overcome silos and considering the geographic distribution of Persons in Need (PIN) across the country. In addition, technical resources alongside directives to incentivize data sharing and integrated systems could lead the way to enhanced safety and security for beneficiaries, while evidence is generated on interoperability in collaboration with the relevant government stakeholders.
- **Increase direct funding to local organizations and investment in CVA capacity-strengthening and institutionalisation of CVA across national organizations.** A dedicated share of humanitarian funding should be allocated, directly and indirectly, to local actors, not just as subcontractors or implementing partners, but in a leading position. It is crucial to enforce equitable partnerships that entrust strategic decisions to local organizations while supporting them in navigating this complex environment. Coverage of local actors' core organizational costs in international NGO subgrants might be required to sustainably embed localization and locally led humanitarian response.
- **Prioritize inclusion of people in vulnerable situations to leave no one behind.** Designate specific funding pools for interventions that assist marginalized groups facing discrimination and barriers to accessing humanitarian assistance, and explicitly encourage assisting such groups in funding guidelines. By supporting disability inclusion, protection mainstreaming, referral to service providers and feedback mechanisms, tailored assistance will reach people in the most vulnerable situations and uphold the principle of impartiality, while aiming at leaving no one behind. A social protection lens and rights-based approach to programming should be adopted to inform thinking about vulnerability.
- **Balance urgent relief, recovery, and development, while prioritizing development initiatives.** Principled humanitarian funding streams providing lifesaving assistance must be maintained even as the recovery phase takes precedence in stable areas. It is crucial to avoid redirecting all funding towards prioritized recovery and development objectives at the expense of still critical relief and humanitarian needs. Leaving basic needs uncovered may compromise investments into not only recovery and development, but also into some sectoral needs. Strategic collaboration and coordination between humanitarian and development donors should be reinforced for sustainable and durable solutions.
- **Foster accountability requirements.** All funding must be underpinned by robust monitoring, evaluation, learning, and transparent reporting requirements focused on outcomes, protection mainstreaming, and community feedback mechanisms. Continuous improvement directed by evidence and inclusive participation of affected populations is integral to providing accountable assistance. Support for mechanisms that ensure enhanced Accountability to Affected Populations⁴² (AAP), such as the Cash Barometer, should be considered. A social protection lens within a rights-based approach should inform discussion about inclusion and access in the humanitarian response.

Government of Ukraine

- **Explore the sustainable transition from humanitarian to social assistance.** It is worth developing and building collaborative frameworks that link cash assistance recipients to social assistance programmes, where appropriate and feasible. Joint planning can help prevent aid cliffs as relief funding fluctuates. Coordination forums between the Government, clusters, local authorities, humanitarian and development donors, and NGOs could enable integrated assistance planning. Delineating the humanitarian and social protection space is required to enhance coordination and linkages between humanitarian and development donors.

⁴¹ ACTED, OCHA, Common Donor Messaging on Humanitarian Cash Programs in the Response in Ukraine, June 2022. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/common-donor-messaging-humanitarian-cash-programs-response-ukraine>

⁴² See IASC definition on Accountability to Affected People in Strengthening Accountability to Affected People. Link: <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/strengthening-accountability-affected-people>

- **Recognise and engage local civil society.** It would be beneficial to formally acknowledge local organizations and, where relevant, local authorities as first responders and include them in policy consultations based on their mandates and their vital role within the community. As key stakeholders, they should participate in planning that is adapted to local realities. Their insights can strengthen localization and improve outcomes while fostering social cohesion.
- **Enhance participation of the Government in cash coordination.** The Government should engage with humanitarian partners to assess where its systems could begin assuming coordination roles in the near future, with the goal of transitioning from externally managed emergency coordination to gradually co-leading within the humanitarian architecture. Areas to explore include needs assessments, vulnerability targeting, programme design, modality selection, registration, benefit levels, and payment systems. This transition should be gradual, starting with non-sensitive functions such as consolidated and aggregated reporting and analysis. Significant capacity-building and tools adoption by government bodies currently not specialized in humanitarian coordination will be required for a smooth, methodical transition based on regular progress reviews which will build national ownership and sustainability. Linkages to and embedment in national disaster response protocols will be key, especially at local level, where local authorities and humanitarian responders already work extensively together.
- **Assess the feasibility of Diia as an alternative de-duplication system.** De-duplication systems currently play a major role in de-duplicating humanitarian assistance recipients. However, it might be worth exploring the potential of Diia as a nationally owned alternative and building on the lessons learnt from SIDAR's work on linkages with the Government's RDDP (Register of Damaged and Destroyed Property)⁴³ and the Diia damage database. As Diia is widely used for e-government services and civil documentation, it may be possible to incorporate modules that can be used for the coordination of relevant humanitarian assistance where it does not conflict with humanitarian principles and protection concerns. Clear standards and protocols for responsible data sharing and privacy protection should be developed in collaboration with humanitarian partners, and adequate monitoring should be put in place. While it may be a longer-term initiative, it warrants ongoing consideration and dialogue.

1.3 Purpose, Scope, and Limitations

The purpose of this report is to assess the different uses of humanitarian cash transfers in Ukraine to enable an analysis of overlaps and complementarities between humanitarian cash and the social protection system, fostering better alignment and transitions between the two. At the same time, it provides insights into the inner workings of the humanitarian cash response, identifying areas of improvement and value for money gains.

The report offers an overview and analysis of cash and voucher assistance (CVA) delivered by humanitarian actors – United Nations agencies and NGOs – in Ukraine, including multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) and key sectoral packages, during the last two pivotal years. It starts with the unprecedented scale-up of CVA after Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022 and continues through 2023 with a focus on refined targeting and needs-based support as the war continued.

The analysis examines the implementation of inter-sectoral basic needs humanitarian assistance across various modalities, sectors, and target groups, as well as complementary sectoral humanitarian assistance when cash is used as a response modality. To do so, it explores outcomes, transfer values, frequency, duration, targeting approaches, and delivery mechanisms. Coordination structures, gaps in coverage, and localisation efforts are reviewed, and the effectiveness of feedback mechanisms and inclusion of marginalized groups are touched upon. Within the scope of the compendium is an analysis of the strengths and limitations of MPCA and sector-specific interventions. A key focus is on assessing interconnections and coordination between various forms of assistance and identifying systemic gaps and potential solutions. An additional focus is on the use of potential innovations like enhanced interoperability of aid data systems as a potential strategy to optimize analysis, resources, and outcomes across sectors. The report reviews targeting approaches, localisation efforts, inclusion and accountability to provide evidence-based guidance on refining assistance delivery as the crisis persists amidst shifting needs and systemic constraints. It incorporates updated data on reach, funding shortfalls, and beneficiary feedback from 2023 to inform pragmatic recommendations.

⁴³ World Bank, Ukraine – Third Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA3), February 2022–December 2023 (English). World Bank Group, Washington, D.C. World Bank Group

While this report provides an in-depth analysis of CVA intervention strategies, the scope of this analysis is constrained by data availability and methodological considerations:

- The methodology of the analysis involved a desk review of key sources including reports from the Cash Working Group (CWG), cluster updates, multi-sector needs assessments, and humanitarian response plans. Bilateral consultations were undertaken with the CWG, and cluster coordinators given access constraints. Key informant interviews were conducted with various key humanitarian actors as part of a PeReHID Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) collaboration with the Collaborative Cash Delivery Network (CCD), especially as part of the Cash for Protection (C4P) research;⁴⁴ however, more could be done.
- The Health Cluster in Ukraine has requested that their developing CVA for health framework be excluded from the current analysis, as it is still under refinement. This limitation means that sector-specific cash strategies for health are not addressed in this report. Once the Health Cluster finalizes and shares the framework,⁴⁵ an update may be warranted to integrate these elements.
- The analysis for this report was done in September–October 2023, and so has had to rely on the 2022 Flash appeals, and the 2023 Ukraine Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). This time limit meant that work done during the 2024 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) process could not be included, other than information recorded in the minutes of CWG meetings in September 2023.
- Humanitarian 4W (Who does What, Where and When) coordination data⁴⁶ was not available disaggregated by modality, so it has not been possible to assess use of cash, vouchers and in-kind assistance by the different clusters.
- MPCA demographic data, while available, has not been disaggregated by MPCA packages and so it has not been possible to link demographic data to targeting criteria. For the clusters, disaggregated data by age, gender, disability, and location by modality or programme objective was not available for the desk review or was not available in a ready-to-share manner due to data cleaning considerations.
- The evolution of the response – with changing objectives and amounts of assistance provided during the two years – has prevented a robust assessment of the quantitative impact of cash assistance, as it is not possible to create a clear delineation of results attributable to cash interventions.
- Due to the ‘no-regrets’ approach used in the early months of the response, there are significant gaps in publicly available data about the use of MPCA in the first half of 2022, including the amounts of aid distributed, duration of programmes, demographic specifics, and displacement status of recipients. However, this is not only specific to MPCA. Data quality on the broader response significantly increased in 2023 as compared to 2022. While the 2023 introduction of the ActivityInfo system⁴⁷ represents an advancement in data collection efforts, the limited time since its deployment restricts the extent to which longitudinal trends can be analysed and understood.

Despite these constraints, the existing compilation of data provides initial insights into CVA's role and magnitude in Ukraine, directing attention to potential areas for augmenting support efficacy and inclusivity.

⁴⁴ Young, Philippa, Julia Grasset, Antoine Sciôt, CCD and Global Protection Cluster, Cash and Protection in the Ukraine Response. Learning Report, CCD and Global Protection Cluster, December 2023. Link: <https://www.calpnetwork.org/publication/c4ptf-ccd-cash-for-protection-in-the-ukraine-response/>

⁴⁵ Ukraine Cash and Voucher Assistance for Health framework 1.0 was published in May 2024 and presented at the CWG meeting on 12 June 2024 in Kyiv. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-health-cluster-ukraine-cash-and-voucher-assistance-health-framework-10-may-2024>

⁴⁶ UN OCHA, Who does What, Where and When. Link: [https://www.ochaopt.org/page/who-does-what-where-and-when#:~:text=The%204W%20database%20was%20designed,in%20Which%20period%20\(When\)](https://www.ochaopt.org/page/who-does-what-where-and-when#:~:text=The%204W%20database%20was%20designed,in%20Which%20period%20(When))

⁴⁷ <https://www.activityinfo.org/>

2. Overview of the Ukrainian Humanitarian Response

2.1 Ukrainian Humanitarian Response in 2022

With the outbreak of full-scale war in February 2022, the humanitarian situation in Ukraine rapidly deteriorated, requiring an unprecedented scale-up of the humanitarian response. On 1 March 2022, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) launched a Flash Appeal⁴⁸ targeting 11.5 million people in need across Ukraine with multisectoral assistance. This was the largest appeal ever launched for an emergency response in Ukraine. The appeal was updated twice, in April and August 2022, as needs continued to grow, eventually calling for USD 4.3 billion in funding to assist 17.7 million people. Prior to the escalation of the conflict in February, the humanitarian response was limited, focused on Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, parts of which have not been controlled by the Government of Ukraine since 2014, and displaced populations across Ukraine. The 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), launched just 13 days before the invasion, targeted 1.8 million people and requested less than USD 200 million in funding. Between 2015 and 2021, humanitarian response plans had targeted, on average, 60 per cent of total needs, with around 45 per cent of targeted populations effectively reached each year, constrained by funding and access challenges.

The unprecedented scale-up of the response in 2022 reflected the massive growth in humanitarian needs as the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine destroyed infrastructure, disrupted services and displaced millions both internally and to neighbouring countries, and severely impacted livelihoods. The Flash Appeal mobilized record levels of funding and an enormous expansion of relief operations by the United Nations, international NGOs and national civil society groups. However, major access challenges due to active hostilities as well as bureaucratic impediments continued to prevent humanitarian organizations from reaching all people in need.

2.2 Ukrainian Humanitarian Response in 2023

The 2023 HRP for Ukraine called for USD 3.9 billion to aid 11.1 million⁴⁹ people in need, or around 29.7 per cent of Ukraine's estimated 2021 population. This comprehensive plan was centred around life preservation, access facilitation to basic services, and integration of safeguarding measures into all aspects of humanitarian assistance. HRP priorities are encapsulated in two key strategic objectives:

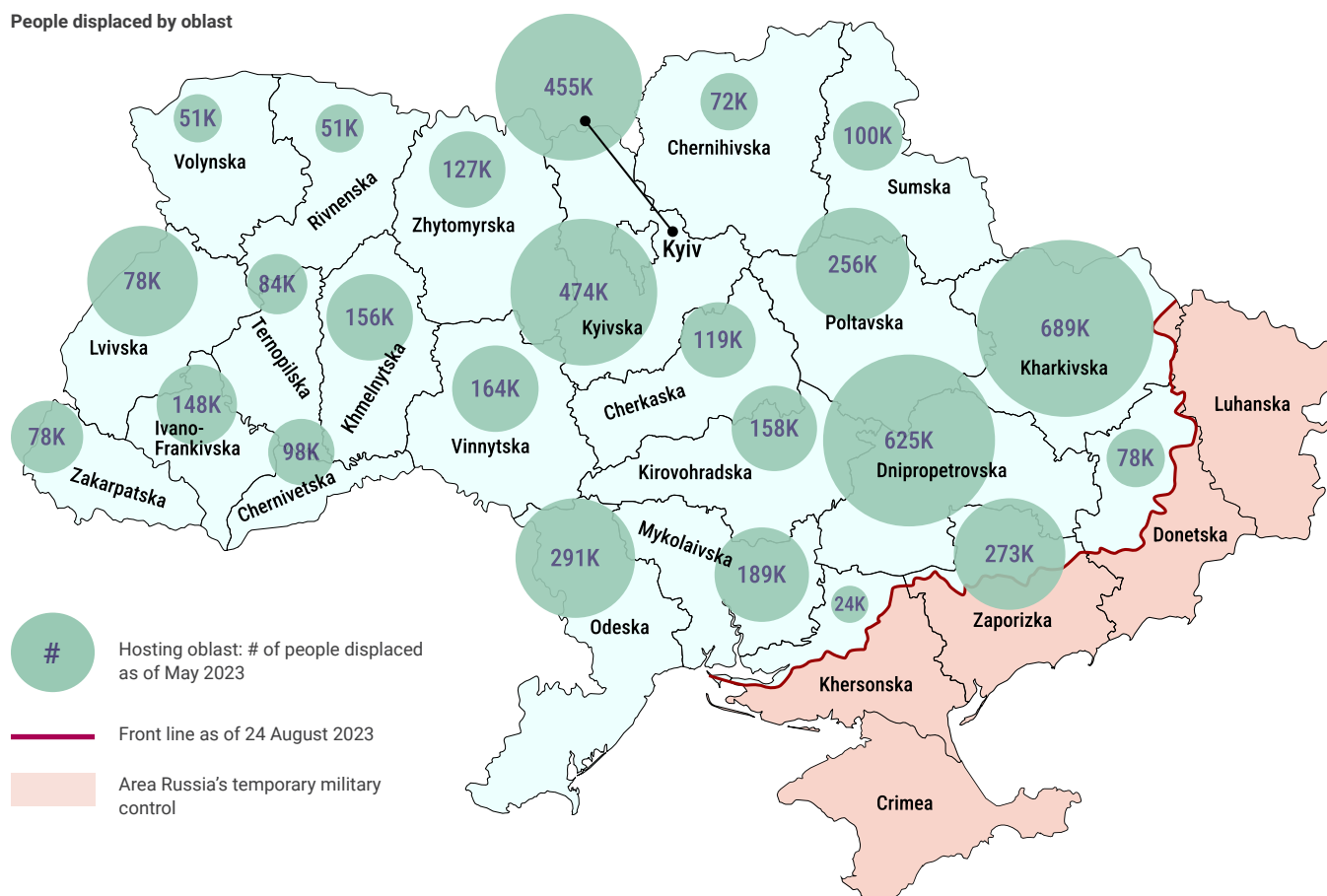
- **Strategic Objective 1:** To provide principled, timely, and multi-sectoral life-saving assistance to internally displaced people, those who have not been displaced, and returnees, while upholding their safety and dignity.
- **Strategic Objective 2:** To ensure that basic services are accessible to internally displaced people, non-displaced individuals, and returnees.

The humanitarian crisis in Ukraine continued to deteriorate over the course of 2023, with at least 17.6 million Ukrainians in need of aid, according to the 2023 HRP.

⁴⁸ UN OCHA Financial Tracking Services (FTS), Ukraine Flash Appeal 2022. Link: <https://fts.unocha.org/plans/1102/summary>

⁴⁹ OCHA, Ukraine: Humanitarian Response Plan, February 2023), February 2023. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-humanitarian-response-plan-february-2023-enuk>

People displaced by oblast



Displacement Trend (February 2022 - June 2023)

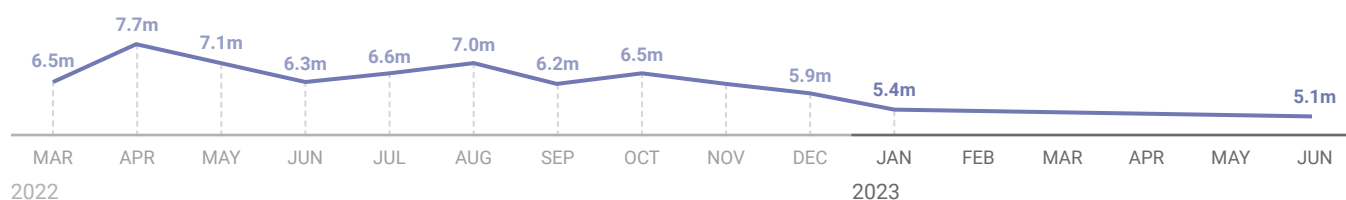


Figure 1. Number of people displaced by oblast from February 2022 to June 2023

(Source: HRP 2023, adapted by the PeReHID Initiative)

An OCHA Situation Report (September 2023) notes that homes, schools, hospitals, water systems and other civilian infrastructure have been damaged by intensified fighting.⁵⁰ Attacks have impacted both frontline areas as well as regions further from fighting. According to the same report, over 5 million Ukrainians are internally displaced.

Both aforementioned reports describe how infrastructure damage has disrupted essential services like healthcare, education, and water access. The September overview notes that only 30 per cent of school-age children can now attend school full-time in person. Access to health services also remains extremely challenging near the frontline, with less than half of facilities still operating, according to the overview. In 2023, a total of 227 security incidents obstructed humanitarian operations, especially in areas of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia oblasts under the temporary control of the Russian Federation, according to the January–December 2023 overview. Fifty aid workers were injured or killed in 2023, including 11 killed in the line of duty, as reported by OCHA.⁵¹ The HRP indicates that no inter-agency convoys reached the aforementioned Russian-controlled areas. Overall, the war has continued to escalate, destroying lives, livelihoods, and infrastructure leading to increased humanitarian needs.

⁵⁰ OCHA, Ukraine Humanitarian Response 2023: Situation Report, 5 September 2023. Link: <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/ukraine/ukraine-humanitarian-response-2023-situation-report-5-september-2023-enuk>

⁵¹ OCHA, Ukraine Humanitarian Response 2023: Situation Report in January–December 2023, 2024. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-humanitarian-response-2023-situation-report-january-december-2023-enuk>

2.3 Dynamics of Humanitarian Coordination in Ukraine's Response Effort

The humanitarian response in Ukraine is coordinated through various clusters, working groups and task forces operating at national and local levels.⁵² These groups, including clusters and working groups under the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG), inform the strategic decision-making of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). The HCT makes decisions and oversees the collective humanitarian effort in collaboration with the Government. Other cluster functions include: Supporting service delivery; Planning and strategy development; Monitoring and reporting; Contingency planning/preparedness/capacity building, and Advocacy.

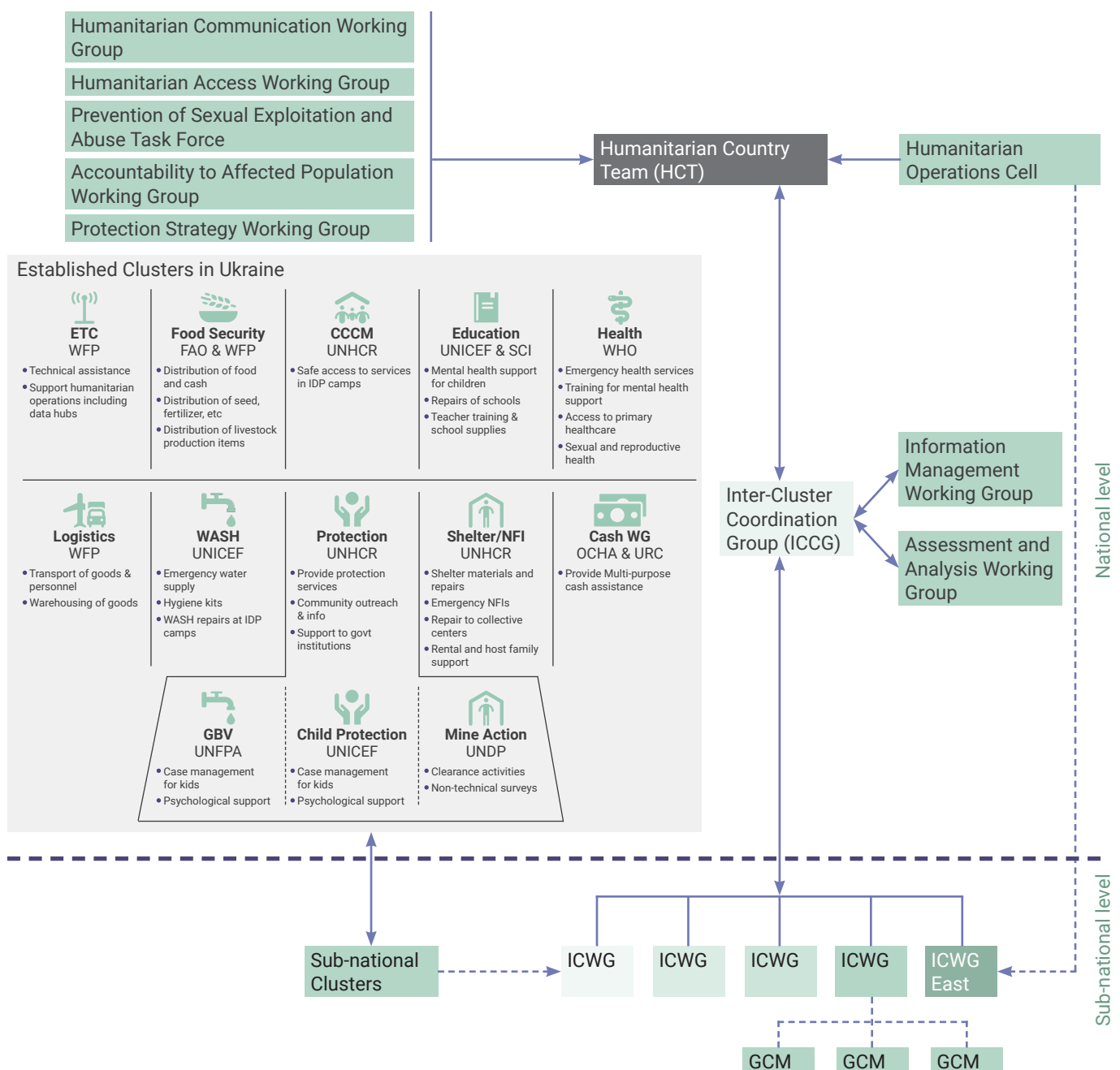


Figure 2. Ukraine Humanitarian Architecture, as of September 2023 (adapted by the PeReHID Initiative)

⁵² The current humanitarian coordination architecture in Ukraine mirrors the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) structure used globally to organize humanitarian response. The IASC establishes humanitarian coordination mechanisms during crises. Ukraine has adapted this standardized structure to coordinate the large-scale humanitarian response.

The coordination hubs facilitate the implementation of humanitarian responses. Through these hubs, as shown in Figure 2, operational agencies are kept abreast of the evolving environment, ongoing efforts and the security situation while acting as platforms for sharing information. In addition, monthly meetings at regional level are held with the office of the Head of the Regional State Administration, OCHA and partners allowing for further coordination with government authorities at local level.



Figure 3. OCHA's presence in Ukraine (adapted by the PeReHID Initiative)

2.4 Balancing Immediate Relief and Long-Term Recovery

2.4.1 Escalating Humanitarian Demands versus Strategic Resource Allocation

The humanitarian situation in Ukraine is marked by an acute escalation of needs across diverse sectors. This escalation is caused by the deepening crisis, the return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) to areas of conflict, and the sustained economic downturn within Ukraine. These challenges have catalysed the imperative for both robust resource mobilization and the meticulous deployment of humanitarian assistance. While the global community has showcased commendable solidarity, there is a tangible discrepancy between the available financial and operational capacities and the burgeoning demand for humanitarian aid. This disparity accentuates the critical need for a coordinated response that judiciously targets populations in direst peril.

In response, the humanitarian aid strategy in Ukraine for 2023 has pivoted from its initial no-regrets policy and blanket approach to specific vulnerable groups, which emphasized widespread and immediate action, to a fine-tuned targeted strategy (initially revised in August 2022) and adding socio-economic vulnerability criteria for a limited duration of MPCA transfers. This shift reflects an optimization of limited resources, ensuring that aid delivery is not only responsive but also strategic in addressing the most pressing needs identified through thorough assessments, while enhancing operational coordination and general strategic targeting of the response, focusing on the east of the country. Although this tactical evolution was necessitated by a notable funding shortfall, it also represents a

deliberate enhancement of aid effectiveness. By prioritizing interventions that align with the most critical humanitarian needs, the sector aims to forge a balance between the urgency of the situation and the practical limitations of available resources.

This dual approach – recognizing the financial constraints and optimizing within them – is essential to navigating the narrowed humanitarian space. It allows for a more sustainable and impactful humanitarian operation in Ukraine, ensuring that aid reaches those who need it most, even amidst the complexities of an evolving crisis and constrained fiscal landscape.

2.4.2 The Funding Shortfall in Humanitarian Aid

As of September 2023, 2022–2023 funding shows a significant gap between requirements and funded projects/programmes, as shown in Figure 4, necessitating a re-focus on targeting and identifying the most vulnerable individuals. This funding shortfall, along with increasing access constraints, impacts the ability of humanitarian actors to deliver an urgent humanitarian response at the scale required.

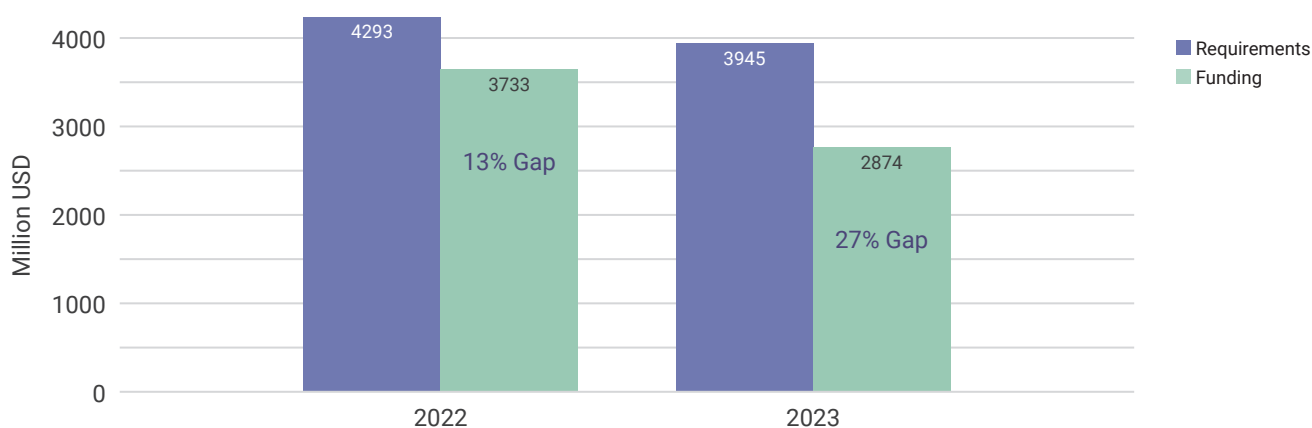


Figure 4. 2022 Flash Appeal and HRP and 2023 HRP Funding (Source: FTS, July 2024)

Responses by cluster are summarized in Figure 5 and clearly highlight the same challenges.

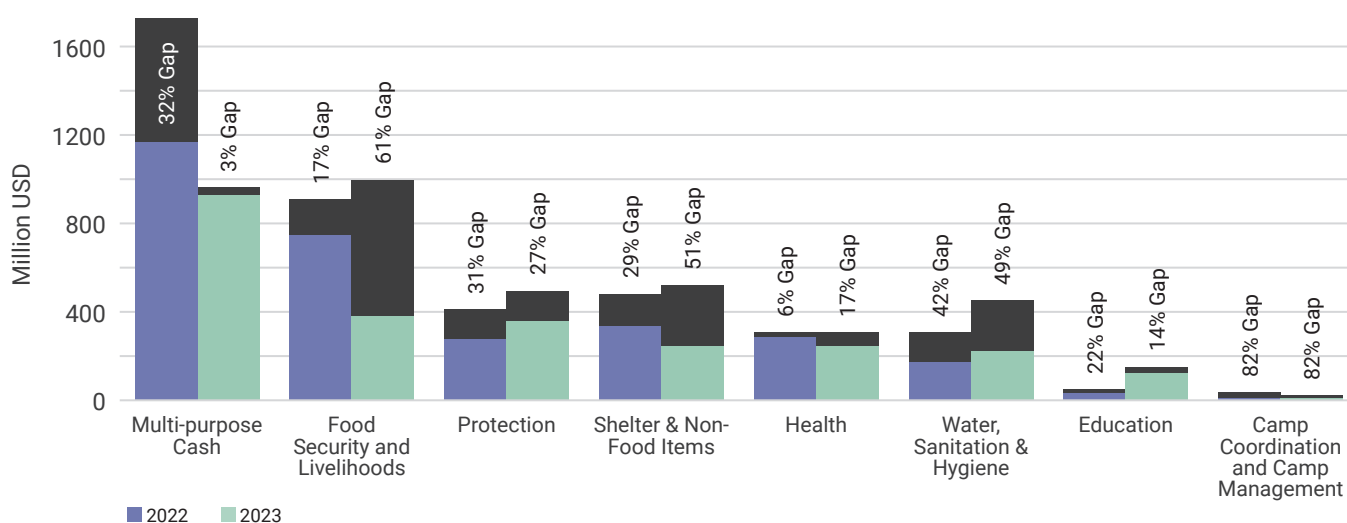


Figure 5. 2022 Flash Appeal and HRP and 2023 HRP funding by cluster (Source: FTS, July 2024)

In 2023, as outlined in the HRP, the coordinated humanitarian effort required USD 3.95 billion to effectively meet Ukraine's critical needs. Despite initial hopes, contributions from donors have not met these needs. By 9 November 2023, USD 2.08 billion had been raised,⁵³ just over half leaving a substantial shortfall of USD 1.87 billion or 47.4 per cent of the funding target. Looking at the broader picture of humanitarian aid for Ukraine, total funding stands at USD 2.5 billion. Of this amount, the coordinated plan has utilized USD 2.08 billion, which means that a notable 82.9 per cent of the total aid has been channelled through this organized response. Still, there is an outstanding USD 427 million not yet distributed within the framework of the coordinated plan.

This funding gap is reflective of a systemic shortfall worldwide. In 2023 the Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO)⁵⁴ identified an unprecedented need of USD 54.8 billion to support 249 million people globally deemed in urgent need among a total of 362 million affected individuals. At the midpoint of 2023, only 20 per cent of these identified needs had been financed through donor contributions, consistent with previous years' trends. Moreover, financial requirements had escalated by USD 8.4 billion, an 18 per cent increase from 2022. The gap between financial requirements and resources reached a record high of USD 43 billion – more than double the GHO's entire requirement six years ago. This underfunding phenomenon signifies a prolonged and critical issue that affects not only Ukraine but regions around the world.

Reviewing the data related to funding for the humanitarian aid landscape for Ukraine for 2023, a stark reliance on a selected few donors becomes apparent, with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) at the forefront.⁵⁵

Funding Source	USD	% of total
United States of America	USD 1,021,834,915	48.9%
European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department	USD 268,955,988	12.9%
Japan	USD 171,344,379	8.2%
Germany	USD 91,361,507	4.4%
France	USD 86,817,456	4.2%
Norway	USD 78,561,586	3.8%
International NGO Own Funds	USD 61,728,661	3.0%
Private (individuals and organizations)	USD 39,542,395	1.9%
United Kingdom	USD 32,761,044	1.6%
UNICEF Own Funds	USD 29,646,047	1.4%
Canada	USD 29,394,369	1.4%
Netherlands	USD 22,630,952	1.1%
Disasters Emergency Committee (UK)	USD 18,127,099	0.9%
Sweden	USD 15,080,605	0.7%
Italy	USD 14,669,004	0.7%
Belgium	USD 14,348,614	0.7%
Denmark	USD 14,072,132	0.7%
Finland	USD 12,760,723	0.6%
Austria	USD 8,640,091	0.4%
Other	USD 58,733,208	2.8%
Total	USD 2,091,010,775	

Table 1. Humanitarian funding source for the 2023 HRP, as of November 2023

⁵³ OCHA, Ukraine 2023 Financial Tracking Services, November 2023. Link: <https://fts.unocha.org/countries/234/summary/2023>

⁵⁴ OCHA, Global Humanitarian Overview 2023, Mid-Year Update (Snapshot as of 18 June 2023), November 2023. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/global-humanitarian-overview-2023-mid-year-update-snapshot-18-june-2023>

⁵⁵ OCHA, Ukraine 2023 Financial Tracking Services, November 2023. Link: <https://fts.unocha.org/countries/234/summary/2023>

In 2023, the United States Government contributed over USD 1 billion to the coordinated plan for Ukraine, which represented 48.9 per cent of the total budget, making it by far the most significant single donor. The European Commission (through EU/DG ECHO) and the Government of Japan follow as key contributors, yet their combined support does not match that of the United States. Other nations like France, Norway, and Germany offer contributions of below 5 per cent each, demonstrating a broad yet shallow pool of support. Non-governmental actors, including NGO and private donors, provide essential yet comparatively minor financial assistance. This reliance on a narrow donor base presents a vulnerability for humanitarian actors in Ukraine, especially considering potential shifts in donor priorities due to global political dynamics, conflicts, natural disasters, and donor fatigue.

2.4.3 Strategic Funding Priorities: Development Aid versus Humanitarian Assistance

In stark contrast to short-term humanitarian funding to international NGO and United Nations actors, Ukraine has received substantial non-humanitarian funding. In June 2023, the Ukraine Recovery Conference,⁵⁶ which took place in London, saw substantial pledges of non-humanitarian assistance, including private sector-led recovery, to support Ukraine's government functions and rebuilding efforts. Ukraine's partners agreed to provide USD 60 billion to meet early recovery priorities, reconstruction needs and reforms.

Since February 2022, the World Bank⁵⁷ has been instrumental in securing over USD 38 billion in international financing, with USD 29 billion disbursed as of the end of October 2023. Based on the bank's analysis, 90 per cent of this financing was provided by development partners. This aids 13 million Ukrainians through wage support for civil servants, pensions, and social assistance for vulnerable groups.

The World Bank's aid is strategic, sustaining essential services and laying the groundwork for reconstruction across sectors. Key programmes, which are a combination of loan guarantees and grants financed through multi-donor trust funds and loans, include:

- The USD 2.25 billion FREE Ukraine initiative for economic stabilization.
- The historic USD 23.42 billion PEACE programme to maintain public services.
- The USD 600 million Japan Parallel Budget Support in conjunction with FREE SDPL.
- The USD 1.1 billion Ukraine Relief, Recovery, Reconstruction and Reform Trust Fund (URTF)⁵⁸ boosted by Japan, Norway, and others, for health and lifesaving (HEAL), energy, housing, agriculture.

Through the Multi-agency Donor Coordination Platform for Ukraine⁵⁹ the EU, its member states and European financial institutions have made available a EUR 49 billion facility for reforms and investment up to 2027, to help bridge the gap between needs and resources. The United Kingdom pledged GBP 3 billion in loan guarantees to support World Bank lending over four years. Japan contributed USD 23 million to a Ukraine World Bank Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (Ukraine MIGA) trust fund and has provided over USD 7.6 billion in total. Canada gave USD 20 million more to a European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) Ukraine climate action fund and has donated over USD 8.8 billion overall. Italy committed USD 200 million for energy and infrastructure. The US announced over USD 500 million for Ukraine's energy sector. The UK pledged GBP 15 million more for anti-corruption efforts. Finally, the German development bank Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) committed EUR 200 million for the IDP housing programme. This list is illustrative and non-exhaustive. At the London recovery conference, European Commission President Von der Leyen presented the commission's proposal for a new Ukraine Facility that will mobilise up to EUR 50 billion over four years in the form of grants and loans. The facility will support Ukraine's efforts to sustain macro-financial stability and promote recovery, as well as rebuild and modernise the country whilst implementing key reforms on its EU accession track between 2024 and 2027.

⁵⁶ Ukraine Recovery Conference, URC 2023, 2023. Link: <https://www.urc-international.com/urc-2023-info>

⁵⁷ World Bank, Financing Support Mobilization to Ukraine since February 24, 2022, World Bank Group, June 2024. Link: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/ukraine/brief/world-bank-emergency-financing-package-for-ukraine#:~:text=Since%20February%202022%2C%20the%20World,was%20provided%20by%20development%20partners>

⁵⁸ World Bank Group, Ukraine Relief, Recovery, Reconstruction and Reform Trust Fund (URTF 2023). Link: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/urtf>

⁵⁹ European Commission press corner, 'Ukraine, Multi-agency Donor Coordination Platform for Ukraine kick-starts work', January 2023. Link: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/read_23_383

This wide-ranging support not only meets immediate needs, but signals confidence in Ukraine's resilience and strategic development priorities. The World Bank is spearheading impactful initiatives across sectors to sustain essential services and lay the groundwork for an inclusive, sustainable green recovery and development.

This disparity illustrates two key insights. First, there is an evident strategic decision to prioritize development funding, reflecting a commitment to long-term solutions for Ukraine's myriad challenges. Second, despite this influx of development funds, the gap in meeting immediate humanitarian needs persists, as illustrated in Figure 4. This gap highlights the critical ongoing challenge of ensuring that urgent humanitarian relief efforts are not overshadowed by the focus on development and calls for a more balanced approach to address both immediate and enduring needs. The international community faces the complex task of not only maintaining but also diversifying funding streams to provide Ukraine with sustainable and resilient support. Finally, the limited coordination or convergence of funding priorities between humanitarian and development assistance could impact and limit the financial sustainability of the humanitarian response in Ukraine, as highlighted previously.

2.5 Background to Cash and Voucher Assistance in Ukraine

Since 2014,⁶⁰ CVA has gained traction in Ukraine as a dignified, empowering, and efficient form of aid. By 2015, CVA had emerged as a key response strategy, especially in areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts under Government control, where markets and financial infrastructure functioned. As a result of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation in 2022, the humanitarian community expanded the scale of programmes to provide principled and timely life-saving assistance. In particular humanitarian actors and donors aligned on utilizing MPCA as the preferred response modality to rapidly scale up humanitarian aid in areas of Ukraine where it was safe, feasible and appropriate.⁶¹

On 27 June 2022, humanitarian donors published their Common Donor Messaging on Humanitarian Cash Programs in the Response in Ukraine.⁶² This set forth 14 common principles to engage partners on MPCA programme delivery and funding alignment. Key priorities include:

- Transitioning from status-based targeting to needs-based targeting of the most vulnerable
- Mainstreaming protection and gender considerations
- Coordination between cash actors and protection actors
- Participation in coordination efforts like the CWG and deploying the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Cash Coordination Model
- Utilizing market monitoring to inform modality choices
- Prioritizing data responsibility and privacy
- Fostering a harmonized, collaborative approach to MPCA
- Meaningful partnerships with local organizations
- Utilizing Grand Bargain Cash Workstream outcome indicators for transparency
- Linking with social protection systems
- Attention to cost-efficiency balanced with effectiveness

This statement built on the 2019 Common Donor Approach for humanitarian cash programming⁶³ and the 2019 Joint Donor Statement on Humanitarian Cash Transfers.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ As part of cluster activation in late 2014, the CWG was established and facilitated by OCHA (later co-chaired by OCHA and ACTED; currently co-chaired by OCHA, IOM and the Ukrainian Red Cross)

⁶¹ OCHA, Ukraine Flash Appeal, March to December 2022, August 2022. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-flash-appeal-march-december-2022>

⁶² ACTED, OCHA, Common Donor Messaging on Humanitarian Cash Programs in the Response in Ukraine, June 2022. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/common-donor-messaging-humanitarian-cash-programs-response-ukraine?>

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ CALP Network, The State of the World's Cash 2023, November 2023. Link: <https://www.calpnetwork.org/collection/the-state-of-the-worlds-cash-2023-report/>

By late 2022, MPCA reached almost 6 million people, transferring USD 1.18 billion across Ukraine, with the CWG guiding feasibility assessments and coordination. Targeting evolved from initial blanket eligibility of specific vulnerability groups toward prioritizing the most vulnerable based on displacement status, location, and socio-economic criteria. The focus of these operations was mostly areas under the control of the Government, where markets remained functioning or were recovering, and financial service providers, including postal and bank services, were accessible and offered a delivery mechanism that was safe, efficient, and suitable for beneficiaries. Sectoral cash for shelter and protection also expanded, alongside MPCA. Complementary top-ups to government social protection assisted specific vulnerable groups like veterans with disabilities (I and II) by the Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS) and International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC). However, sector cash performance numbers are not readily available due to limited availability of modality breakdowns within sectors to feed into the present research.

In 2023, humanitarian organizations continued delivering vital cash assistance across Ukraine to help war-affected individuals meet urgent needs. From January to December 2023, over 3.9 million people received close to USD 657 million in MPCA as reported to the CWG. This significant injection of liquidity empowered recipients to prioritize amongst pressing needs.

MPCA was delivered across all of Ukraine's regions with prioritization of aid focused on the heavily impacted Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kherson, Odesa, Zaporizhzhia, and Sumy oblasts. Over time, the focus of assistance increasingly concentrated on frontline regions, specifically in Kharkiv region, as shown below in Figure 6.

The uncertain trajectory of the war and its long-lasting impact are feeding a sense of concern. Ongoing humanitarian needs are still massive in frontline regions, as highlighted in Figure 7, and will only increase as the third winter of the war approaches more than ever.

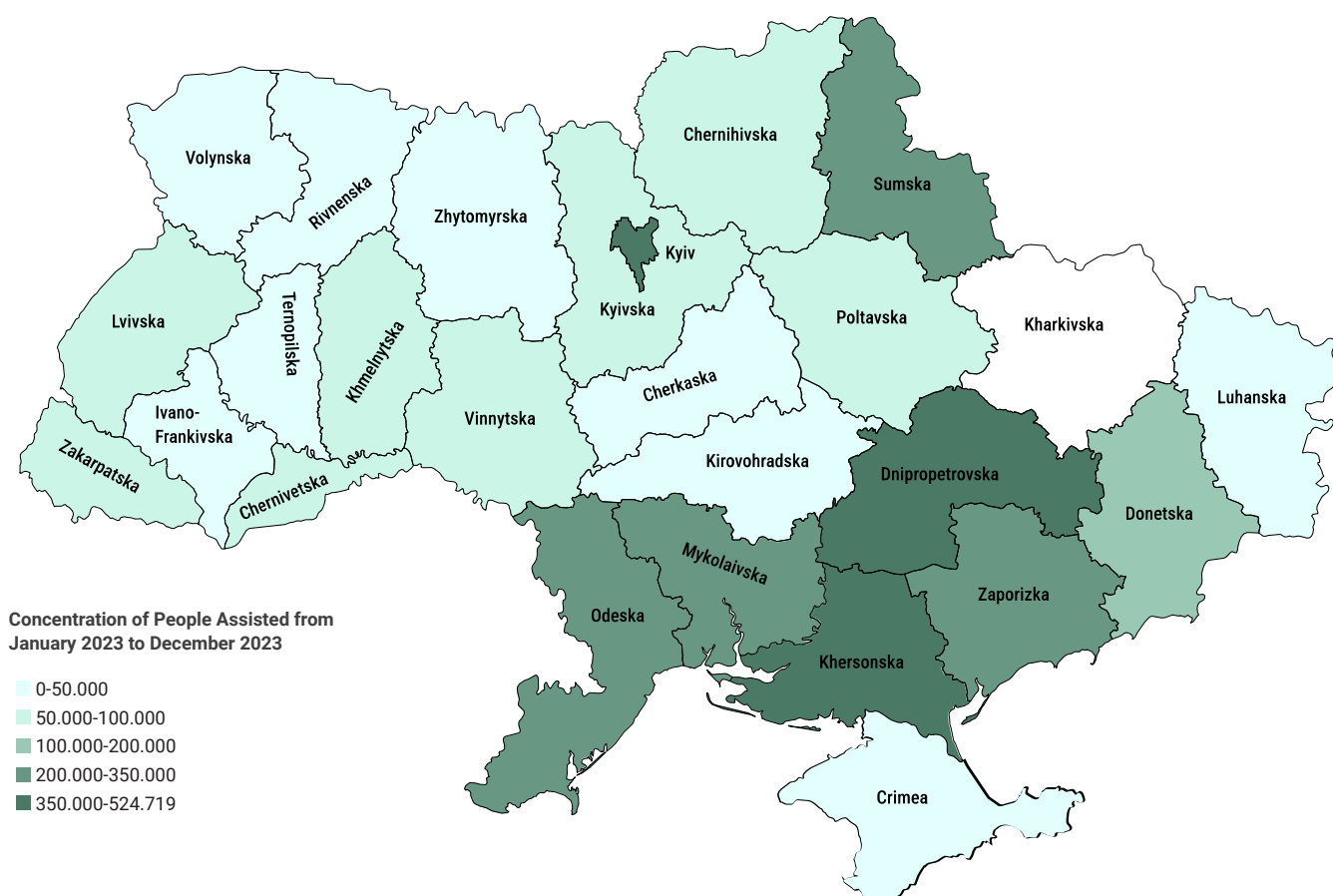


Figure 6 Concentration of people assisted by MPCA by region, as of January 2023

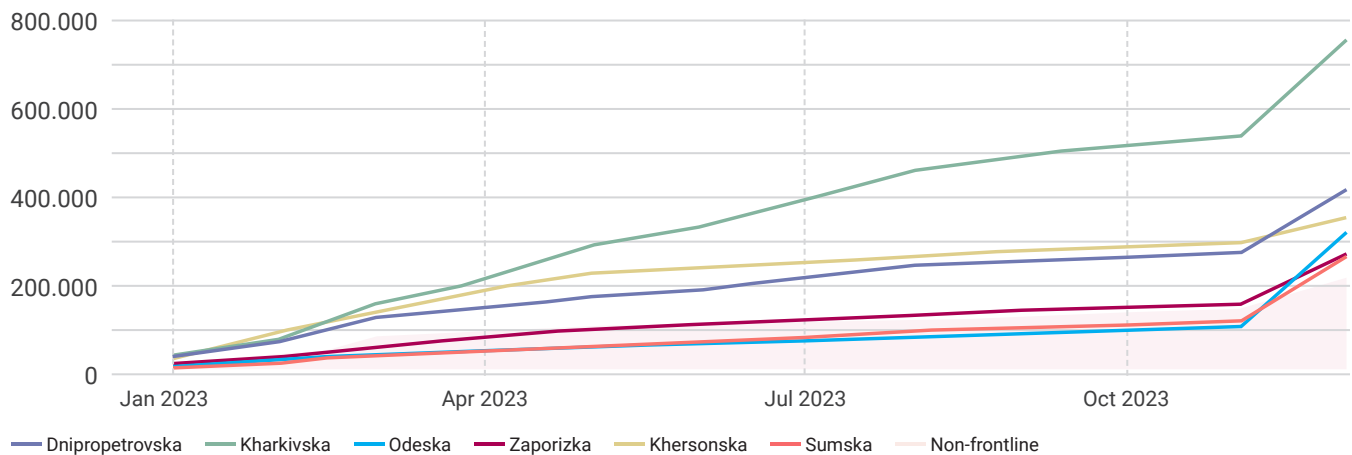


Figure 7. Number of beneficiaries in frontline and non-frontline areas, between January 2023 and December 2023

3. Enabling Environment for Cash and Voucher Assistance in Ukraine

The suitability of cash and voucher assistance (CVA) in Ukraine depends on government tax regulations, beneficiary preferences, market stability, and the availability of safe delivery mechanisms for cash transfers. Monitoring confirms ongoing government tax exemptions, market functionality, accessibility, and costs to enable appropriate programming. Diverse financial channels, including banks and services, facilitate transfers so that aid reaches people via their preferred modality.

3.1 Coordination of Cash and Voucher Assistance

The Cash Working Group (CWG) has followed the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) cash coordination structure since March 2022, however, in October 2022, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) reinforced the formal coordination structure for CVA in Ukraine and published the Ukraine Cash Working Group Terms of Reference. The new structure⁶⁵ is aligned with global protocols recommended by IASC. The CWG was designated as the main coordinating body for multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) and advisory to clusters on other types of CVA assistance linked to their respective mandates. It operates under the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) and the oversight of the HCT.

The CWG ensures operational coordination of multipurpose cash MPCA, including that MPCA is clearly defined, harmonized and centrally reported on by all humanitarian actors. For CVA other than MPCA, the CWG aims to promote harmonization of approaches and provide technical support to the clusters accountable for sectoral responses, to ensure that the modalities of interventions are tailored to sector-specific needs and objectives.⁶⁶

The chronology of MPCA events and milestones for 2022 are summarized in Figure 8.

⁶⁵ Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), New Cash Coordination Model, November 2022. Link: <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/global-cash-advisory-group/new-cash-coordination-model>

⁶⁶ OCHA, Ukraine Cash Working Group Terms of Reference, October 2022, October 2022. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-cash-working-group-terms-reference-october-2022>

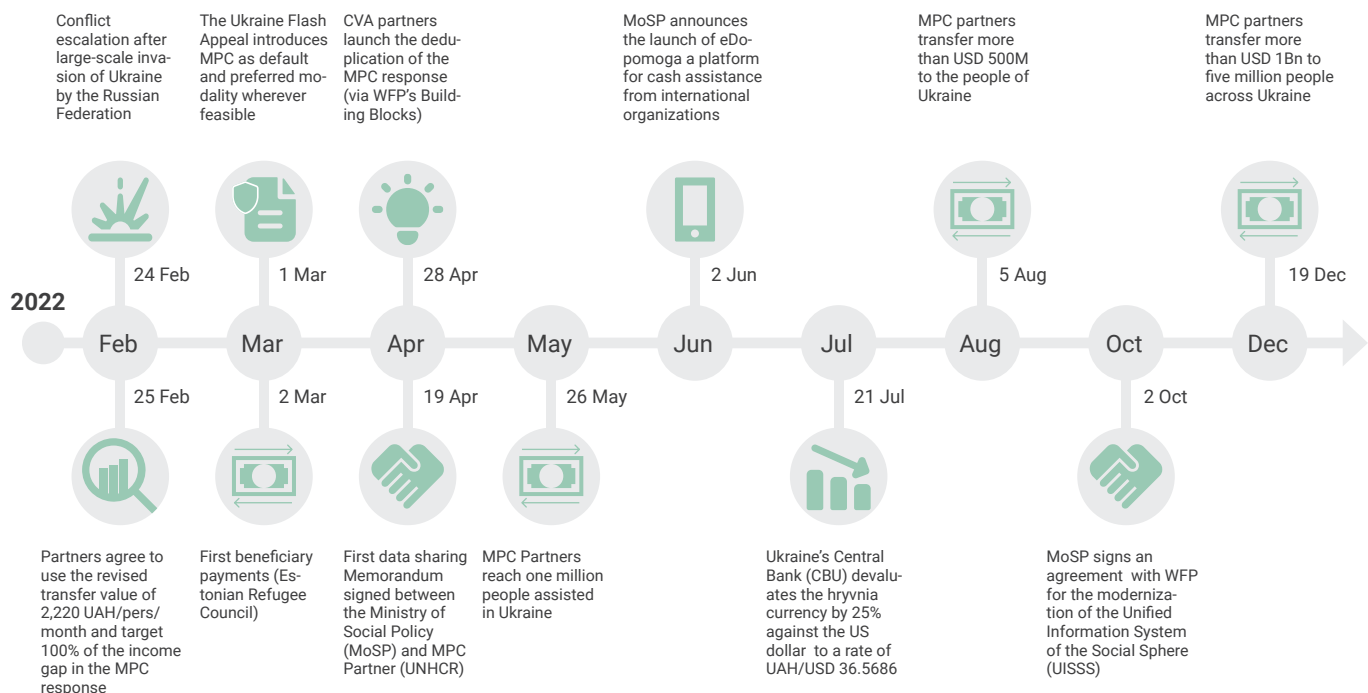


Figure 8. Chronology of MPCA events and milestones for 2022 (adapted by the PeReHID Initiative)

In the initial months after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the CWG succeeded in rapidly establishing targeting criteria to identify beneficiaries most in need, based on displacement status and proximity to active hostilities, while socio-economic vulnerability indicators were introduced into the CWG targeting strategy in August 2022. The CWG leveraged the existing national tax ID system to develop a practical approach for registration and de-duplication across agencies for MPCA (see next section for details). The CWG is an assembly of diverse stakeholders, including UN bodies, a variety of national and international NGOs, Red Cross Movement partners, and associated clusters, working collaboratively to enhance the efficiency and efficacy of CVA programmes. They convene bi-weekly, with provisions for remote participation to ensure comprehensive countrywide engagement. The CWG also focuses on centralizing reporting and analysis for MPCA, which represents the bulk of CVA activities in Ukraine.

The structure of the CWG was bolstered by the formation of several dedicated task teams, each with a specific focus area:

- **Task Team 1 – Response Analysis and Targeting:** This team concentrates on assessing the situation and identifying the individuals and communities most in need of assistance.
- **Task Team 2 – CVA Feasibility:** Tasked with evaluating the practical aspects of implementing CVA programmes, this team looks at on-the-ground feasibility assessment, evidence and logistical considerations.
- **Task Team 3 – Registration, De-duplication, and Interoperability:** This group focused on the systematic registration of beneficiaries to avoid overlap and ensure efficient aid distribution across different agencies and programmes.
- **Task Team 4 – Inclusion, Gender, Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP):** Dedicated to ensuring that the assistance programmes are inclusive, accountable and address the needs of all demographics.
- **Task Team 5 – Social Protection:** This team worked to integrate CVA efforts with existing social protection schemes, ensuring a cohesive and sustainable support system for those affected. This task team is currently not active.

Each of these task teams play a pivotal role in the CWG's capacity to swiftly navigate the complexities of emergency response, underpinning a coordinated and effective strategy that could adapt to evolving needs on the ground. These task teams report back with recommendations that the CWG could quickly validate and act on. This ability to make rapid decisions on thematic areas of the response through consultative task teams was a significant success factor in the emergency phase.

However, as noted by key observations within the group, the CWG's current operational model limits participation to actors that are present in Ukraine, effective as of October 2022. This facilitated in-country collaboration and allowed the CWG to operationally refocus around the Ukrainian context and actors, but potentially overlooked the vast global expertise available in the CVA community and omitted valuable international practices that could be integrated into the local context. Addressing this limitation could unlock additional value, enhancing the CWG's efforts through incorporation of a broader spectrum of global knowledge and experience. Donors were excluded from the CWG in September 2022. There is also still no Government attendance, which is not unusual in humanitarian settings. This somewhat limits strategic and inclusive discussions at CWG level, particularly when it comes to the transition.

In addition to its central role, the CWG extends technical support and expertise to individual clusters involved with sectoral cash. This system of support and coordination has been further augmented by establishment of a dedicated sub-national coordination hub,⁶⁷ which offers tailored operational guidance and information specific to the sub-national east region, including CWGs in Kharkiv and in the south, thereby complementing the overarching activities coordinated from Kyiv.

The sub-national coordination hub and the national CWG recently expanded their operational coordination efforts by introducing the Emergency MPCA Guideline (see section 4.4.3 for details) that enables and offers a framework for emergency coordination of MPCA.

3.1.1 De-duplication of Cash and Voucher Assistance

3.1.1.1 Development of De-duplication Systems

In the initial weeks of the response the issue of coordinating and preventing overlap in humanitarian CVA in Ukraine was identified as a critical issue that needed resolution to enable effective and efficient use of limited humanitarian funding.⁶⁸ By the first month of the response CWG members recognized that due to the widespread use of self-registration, referral pathways, and the provision of cash to an existing caseload who had since relocated, area-based coordination of MPCA transfers was likely to be unsuccessful. Consequently, on 15 March 2023 the CWG created a dedicated Task Team 3 (TT3) focused on registration, de-duplication, and interoperability⁶⁹ which quickly concluded that the only realistic method to prevent overlapping and duplication of assistance was to undertake coordination at the individual level using some form of data exchange.

Since 2014 in Ukraine a system of individual-level de-duplication had been utilized by most agencies. This involved manually sharing tax IDs via Excel spreadsheets sent to other parties by email. While this approach worked to a certain extent, it was not considered suitable for the current response owing to the dramatically increased volume of records being shared, and its ad hoc nature posed some risk to organizations, particularly concerning the sharing of personally identifiable information (PII) data. It also exposed organizations to the risk of human error, such as sharing the wrong list with additional PII data included.⁷⁰ The law of Ukraine on Personal Data Protection (PDP) was adopted in 2010. It is well-enforced but presents some limitations regarding the consent form to share personal data. This law was amended in 2022, but the minor changes do not affect the general policy.

⁶⁷ OCHA, East Coordination Hub, December 2023. Link: <https://response.reliefweb.int/ukraine/dnipro-hub>

⁶⁸ Ukraine Cash Working Group Task Team 3 (TT3): 'Deduplication and Registration Potential Solutions for Deduplication' Meeting notes, April 2022.

⁶⁹ OCHA, 'Ukraine Cash Working Group Meeting: Discussion and Action Points, 15 March 2022 [Meeting Minutes]', March 2022. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-cash-working-group-meeting-discussion-action-points-15-march-2022-meeting-minutes>

⁷⁰ Ukraine Cash Working Group Task Team 3 (TT3): 'Deduplication and Registration Potential Solutions for Deduplication' Meeting notes, April 2022

TT3 members created a clear problem statement to assess system selection. It stated that “humanitarian organizations in Ukraine are currently unable to easily and securely compare planned and actual beneficiary caseloads due to the variety of data sources, data structures, and information systems in use in the response. Humanitarians need real-time de-duplication that would enable organizations to confirm whether people they are trying to assist have already received assistance from other partners/organizations. Given the sensitivities and practical constraints around sharing personal data, humanitarians need a solution and approach that does not require the sharing/exchange of personal data/personally identifiable information (PII).”

After a rapid review, the task team identified four options that could enable the required real time de-duplication.⁷¹

System Name	Overview
Building Blocks	The Building Blocks (BB) system, developed by the World Food Programme (WFP), ⁷² is a blockchain network designed for humanitarian aid. It supports de-duplication and delivery of assistance like cash and food, notably used in Ukraine and the post-Beirut blast response. It secures data using encryption and allows for the creation of unique identifiers for individuals without tax IDs. BB required minimal resources to deploy for Ukraine by April 2022.
Diia App	The Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine, assisted by UNDP, proposed to use OpenG2P, an open-source social benefits registry and delivery platform that enables digital cash transfer from government to persons and integrates it into the Diia app. The platform offers interoperable components for digitizing and automating service delivery and enables inclusive and efficient delivery of benefits. The ministry would build the system to securely manage tax IDs and aid distribution for May 2022 cash transfers. The plan included tokenization for personal identification and streamlining of various cash programmes, with the capability to handle 1.2 million beneficiary records for efficient future humanitarian efforts.
Estonian Refugee Council web-based platform for MPCA de-duplication	The Estonian Refugee Council (ERC) developed a web platform tailored for de-duplication in the Ukrainian crisis response, using tax numbers to identify potential duplicates. Agencies were granted access to import and manage their lists, perform cross-checks for duplicates, and retain control over their data with secure features. As of April 2022, the system was in use, with four agencies having uploaded their lists to the platform.
Refugee Assistance Information System (RAIS)	UNHCR developed the Refugee Assistance Information System (RAIS), a web application that coordinated and tracked aid delivery among partners to prevent duplication. It featured assistance tracking, coordination, and referral capabilities. RAIS was built on the .NET framework with SQL Server and JavaScript, secured by Active Directory/MF2. It relies on a unique identifier for de-duplication and was scheduled for deployment in the second week of May 2022, with essential data sharing arrangements.

During the Ukraine CWG meeting on 3 May 2022, TT3 presented its assessment of the different evaluated de-duplication systems and recommended CWG co-chairs to adopt WFP’s Building Blocks (BB), citing its readiness and the humanitarian imperative for efficient resource use in the MPCA response. Deputy Minister Vitalii Muzychenko highlighted at the meeting the collaborative potential for a government-led digital de-duplication solution. As such it was agreed that the CWG would use BB as a temporary measure while exploring possibilities to integrate with the Diia app once the platform is operational.⁷³

The Diia De-duplication System was designed to be a comprehensive digital solution for management of both monetary and in-kind aid. As a centralized database, the system aimed to facilitate verification of aid recipient information across various organizations. This verification process was intended to prevent the distribution of duplicate aid, thereby increasing the efficiency of resource allocation and ensuring that assistance reached those in genuine need without unnecessary repetition. The system’s architecture was expected to enable the de-duplication of all humanitarian assistance in the country. By providing a single point of reference, it would help to avoid creation of multiple,

⁷¹ Cash Working Group (CWG), Ukraine: Overview of Potential Solutions for De-duplication by Ukraine CWG TT3, April 2022. Link: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/ukraine/document/ukraine-overview-potential-solutions-de-duplication-ukraine-cwg-tt3-11>

⁷² World Food Programme (WFP), Building Blocks (BB) Version V0230605, June 2023. Link: <https://www.wfp.org/building-blocks>

⁷³ OCHA, Ukraine Cash Working Group Meeting: Discussion & Action Points, May 2022 [Meeting Minutes], May 2022. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-cash-working-group-meeting-discussion-action-points-3-may-2022-meeting-minutes>

fragmented databases that could lead to inefficiencies and mismanagement of aid. The Government's vision for the system was not just as a tool for immediate aid coordination, but as a long-term solution to aid management, which would continuously adapt and scale according to the evolving landscape of humanitarian needs in the country. Key features of the system included secure data entry points for authorized organizations, encrypted databases to ensure the confidentiality of sensitive information, and advanced search capabilities for quick cross-referencing of recipient data. The Government specified that the system would be the primary platform for aid coordination, thereby signalling its intent to centralize aid management and discourage the development of alternative non-government systems which could potentially lead to a disjointed aid distribution network. At the beginning of the conflict, one of the key issues for not using Diia for humanitarian settings was that it was not 'deconflicted' from its military use.⁷⁴ Follow-up research in this area is recommended, to identify what lessons can be learnt from the development and innovations of this system, and to determine its interoperability, especially in view of increased alignment between the humanitarian response and the social protection system.

3.1.1.2 Systems in Use: Building Blocks,⁷⁵ RAIS+,⁷⁶ and SIDAR⁷⁷

The BB system is recognised as a pioneering de-duplication solution that has been used to enhance the efficiency of humanitarian assistance in Ukraine. BB's prime function is to mitigate the redundancy of aid across multiple organizations within the CWG. Utilizing Ukrainian Tax IDs, BB provides a de-duplication mechanism that allows participating entities to identify beneficiaries who have already received aid, thereby preventing double allocation of resources. BB serves as a facilitator by providing vital data that assist in the adjudication process, although it does not directly involve itself in dispute resolution. Any contention regarding duplicate assistance is collaboratively settled by the organizations in conjunction with CWG. Designed to be a neutral platform, BB is poised for joint ownership and operation by its member organizations. Currently, considering the exigent circumstances posed by the Ukraine crisis, the WFP is custodian of BB, offering the potential for future transition to member-led governance.

The BB web portal is a sophisticated interface enabling organizations to manage assistance lists, access historical aid records, and identify blocked aid attempts to maintain the integrity of distribution. The system emphasizes the optional nature of de-duplication, enforces encrypted communications for sensitive data, and assures privacy using anonymized BB IDs. Strict guidelines govern the use of data within BB to safeguard against unauthorized access, ensuring that the system's intelligence is employed solely for its intended purpose of streamlining aid and enhancing inter-organizational coordination.

By 31 May 2022, WFP, UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and UNICEF were reportedly using BB for all their MPCA caseload. Selected for its readiness and relevance, WFP's BB system was promptly implemented due to the urgency of the humanitarian crisis. With governance and operations under WFP, BB became a determinant tool for coordination. From May 2022 to August 2022, BB was instrumental for 18 organizations, enabling them to detect and avert about USD 35 million in potential duplicate MPCA by flagging overlapping aid distributions, translating to an additional 185,000 possible transfers.⁷⁸ By mid-2023, savings through BB are estimated at USD 100 million. As of April 2024, the system is currently being used by 53 organizations⁷⁹ and a total of USD 160 million of MPCA has now been de-duplicated within it. Moreover, the SNFI Cluster implemented a Winter Cash de-duplication mechanism, which includes six activities enabled on the BB platform such as Cash for Rent, Cash for Winter Clothing, Cash for Winter Energy, Cash for Winter Heating Appliances, Cash for Winter NFI and Cash for Winter Utilities. As of the end of April 2024, there is still low uptake of SNFI winterization de-duplication, reaching UAH 2,376,000 (approximately USD 60,000). The set-up became live quite late in the winterisation assistance programme cycle and so the system could not be used, which explains this figure.

While BB is being used for de-duplication of MPCA, no other individual-level de-duplication module or system could serve other CVA or in-kind assistance packages until 2023.

⁷⁴ Lawler, Dave, Ukrainians use the same app to file taxes and track Russian troops, Axios, May 2023. Link: <https://www.axios.com/2023/05/26/ukraine-diia-app-fedorov-russian-troops>

⁷⁵ WFP, Building Blocks Ukraine Unintended Assistance Overlap Prevention Report, August 2022. Link: https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000146541/download/?_ga=2.161602300.1375018226.1704287182-722878204.1700554698

⁷⁶ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Ukraine RAIS+ Factsheet, Non-food Item (NFI) Distribution Application, February 2024

⁷⁷ Shelter Cluster Ukraine, Shelter Information Damage Assessment & Response (SIDAR), June 2023. Link: https://sheltercluster.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/public/docs/20230606_SIDAR_JuneUpdate.pdf?VersionId=7KahAtIFQbt.F2Hs6CTqMedRsNULE1_I

⁷⁸ ACTED, OCHA, Ukraine: Task Team 3 – Building Blocks Ukraine Unintended Assistance Overlap Prevention (UAOP) Report, August 2022

⁷⁹ Figures shared by WFP as of April 2024.

Within the Refugee Assistance Information System (RAIS) ecosystem, UNHCR developed and introduced RAIS+, which offers an end-to-end, transparent process with 10 partners currently on board, to accurately distribute, track and provide real-time data on NFIs distributions while avoiding duplication and minimizing fraud. This NFI distribution application is designed to allow partners-controlled access to the application and to take informed decisions promptly.

The Shelter Information Damage Assessment and Response Database (SIDAR) was developed in coordination with the authorities and Shelter/NFI partners in Ukraine and launched in September 2023. It is a joint Shelter Cluster and UNHCR initiative. It is a role-based database, able to track the entire life cycle of the humanitarian response for damaged housing by location, featuring records editing, exporting, sharing, analysing, and visualizing data.⁸⁰ As of May 2024, 97 organisations are using SIDAR, and 59,115 repairs (light, medium and heavy) were reported, including 693 Emergency Shelter kits.

Tasked by the HCT, an initiative to de-duplicate other CVA was set up by the ICCG. Terms of reference for this Intersectoral Task Force on De-duplication were released in November 2023⁸¹ and a roadmap for intra-sectoral and intersectoral de-duplication should be presented to the HCT in the first quarter of 2024. The potential for de-duplication shown with MPCA indicates that there is potential for increase in value for money across the response if more assistance packages are added to the de-duplication platform. For more details on potential enhanced use of the BB platform, see section 8.2. The need for streamlining de-duplication efforts and systems and enhancing interoperability with an inter-sectoral approach is apparent.

3.2 Beneficiary Preferences for Aid Modalities: Monitoring and Adapting Strategies

The CWG's Task Team 4 on Inclusion, Gender-based Violence (GBV) and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) provides technical guidance on integrating inclusive and context-appropriate approaches into the humanitarian cash response in Ukraine. It promotes accountability to affected populations through coordinated feedback mechanisms. Beneficiary preferences for assistance are monitored through IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) reports,⁸² Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessments (MSNA)⁸³ and Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM). A perceptual survey published in July 2023 by Ground Truth Solutions (GTS)⁸⁴ found that most interviewees preferred cash *"because they can spend the money on exactly what they need. This particularly applies to people in occupied territories. Food shortages mean consumers can never predict what they will find in stores, so when they see something they need, they stock up for the future. The only people who did not prefer cash were respondents from previously occupied communities, who said they could not buy everything they need because shops have not re-opened, and public transportation has not resumed since liberation."* This GTS qualitative study was based on 20 in-depth interviews and 10 focus group discussions including a total of 90 people in 5 oblasts. Due to the small sampling size, results are indicative.

A GTS study on perceptions of aid⁸⁵ in Ukraine in February 2023 found that for 63 per cent of people for whom aid had not met their needs, cash was their priority, and they had asked for it to be more widespread across regions due to its flexibility. Continuous monitoring of preferences by location, gender, age, diversity, and vulnerability is needed, along with feedback mechanisms and periodic discussion of beneficiary feedback in the CWG through its Task Team 4. The roll out of a GTS Cash Barometer study⁸⁶ in Ukraine as an independent accountability mechanism would also be highly useful to allow cash recipients to provide feedback on CVA and participate in decision-making.

⁸⁰ Shelter Cluster Ukraine, SIDAR Information Note Shelter Cluster Ukraine

⁸¹ Intersectoral Task Force on Deduplication, Terms of Reference, November 2023

⁸² IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix, Ukraine. Link: <https://dtm.iom.int/ukraine>

⁸³ REACH, MSNA Bulletin: Ukraine (November 2023), December 2023. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/2023-msna-bulletin-ukraine-november-2023-enuk>

⁸⁴ Ground Truth Solutions, Cash is King – If you can get it: Mapping the user journeys of cash recipients in Ukraine, July 2023. Link: <https://www.groundtruthsolutions.org/library/mapping-the-user-journeys-of-cash-recipients-in-ukraine>

⁸⁵ Ground Truth Solutions, Call for Communication, Collaboration and Cash: Perceptions of aid in Ukraine, February 2023. Link: <https://www.groundtruthsolutions.org/library/call-for-communication-collaboration-and-cash-perceptions-of-aid-in-ukraine>

⁸⁶ Ground Truth Solutions, "No-one has ever helped me like this." User journeys of cash recipients in Ukraine, December 2023. Link: <https://www.groundtruthsolutions.org/projects/mapping-the-user-journeys-of-cash-recipients-in-ukraine>

The CWG's PDM questionnaire includes a question on preferred modality (or "satisfaction with cash as a modality" in the case of the CWG questionnaire), which provides additional evidence on beneficiaries' preferred modality. Findings from beneficiary feedback should inform programming to increase relevance. Coordination between providers is key to ensure complementarity of cash, vouchers and in-kind aid based on need.

3.3 Assessing the Continued Feasibility of Cash Assistance Response

In an effort to inform cash-based interventions and better understand market dynamics in Ukraine, the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) was created by the CWG in March 2022. The initiative is guided by the CWG Task Team 2 on CVA Feasibility Assessments, co-chaired by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and international NGOs ACTED and REACH and supported by CWG members.⁸⁷ The JMMI conducts monthly market assessments across Ukraine through retailer interviews, customer surveys and online price monitoring. By gathering granular pricing data and other indicators, the initiative aims to provide vital context for the feasibility of cash-based assistance. The JMMI monitoring basket contains 20 core food and hygiene items, which help reveal local costs for essentials.

The August 2023 JMMI report⁸⁸ indicates that food and hygiene items continue to be widely available across most of Ukraine, with only 1 per cent of surveyed customers reporting limited availability. However, in regions in the south and east of Ukraine, which are under the control of the Government and close to the frontline, more significant disruptions have been observed. In the south, over half of surveyed retailers reported difficulties keeping their stores stocked, driven by access constraints and a lack of cash flow. Two-thirds of retailers in the south rely on a single supplier, increasing their vulnerability. Damages to market infrastructure were also reported in the east and south.

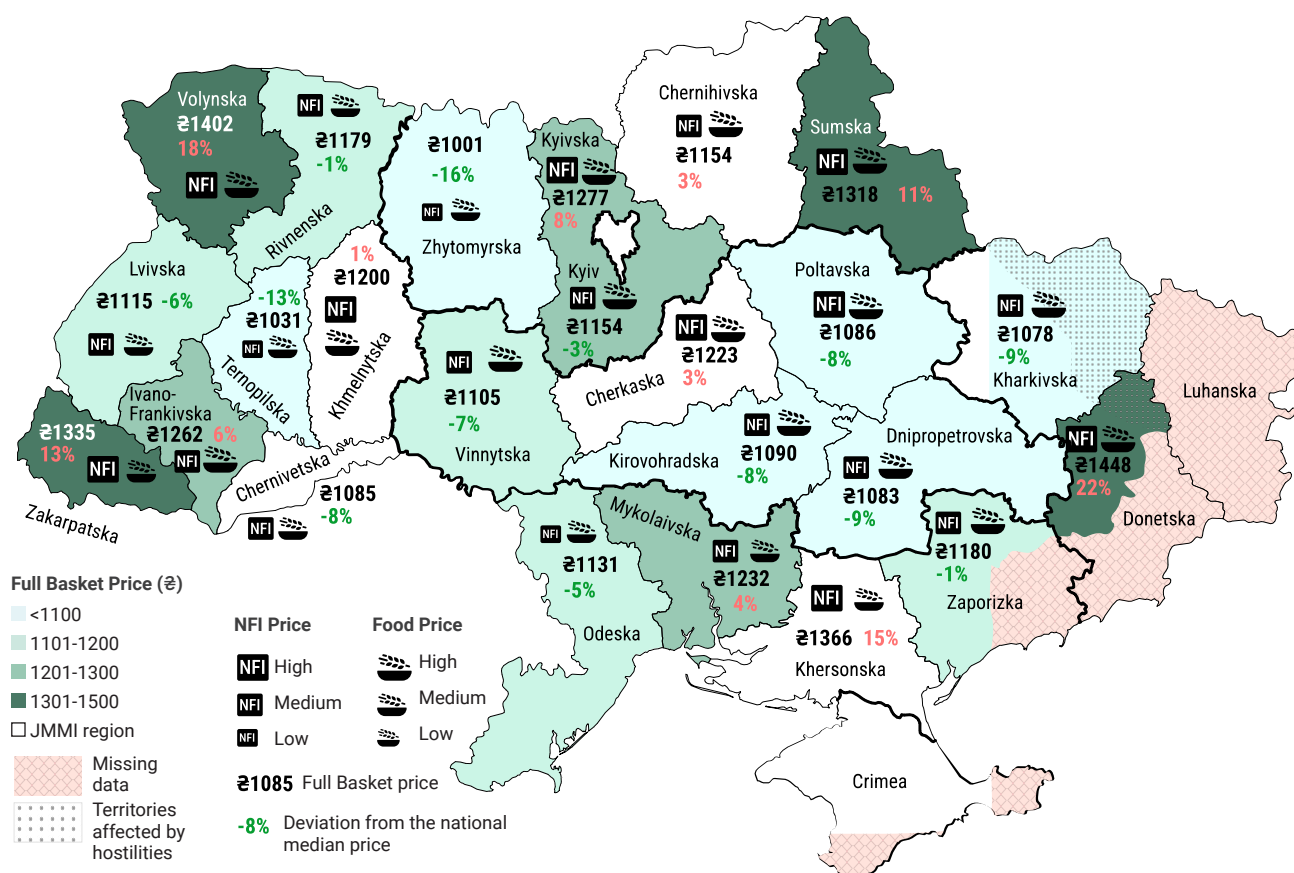


Figure 9. By region, median prices in UAH of food and non-food baskets, July 2023 (adapted by the PeReHID Initiative)⁸⁹

⁸⁷ ReliefWeb Response Ukraine Cash Working Group, CVA Feasibility Task Team (TT2). Link: <https://response.reliefweb.int/ukraine/cash-working-group-cwg/cash-working-group-task-team-2-delivery-mechanisms>

⁸⁸ REACH, Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) Ukraine Factsheet, August 2023. Link: https://repository.impact-initiatives.org/document/reach/a73aac80/UKR_JMMI_Factsheet_Round_17_August_2023.pdf

⁸⁹ REACH, Ukraine: Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) – July 2023. September 2023. Link: https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-joint-market-monitoring-initiative-jmmi-july-2023?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAiAivGuBhBEiWAWiFmYfcoJ42s2KhQaMaF4urFLxH84apz9K_ugzLeY5Vj-ghEqBNfqm9hoCL-cQAvD_BwE

Though the median cost of a basic food and non-food basket dropped 11 per cent from June to July 2023,⁹⁰ financial access barriers persist for many. Two-thirds of surveyed customers nationwide cited financial factors limiting their market access. Over half indicated that high prices remain an obstacle, especially in Chernihiv region, where 92 per cent of customers reported this challenge. A lack of affordability was also frequently cited in regions in the east. Fuel prices and transport costs compound the issues.

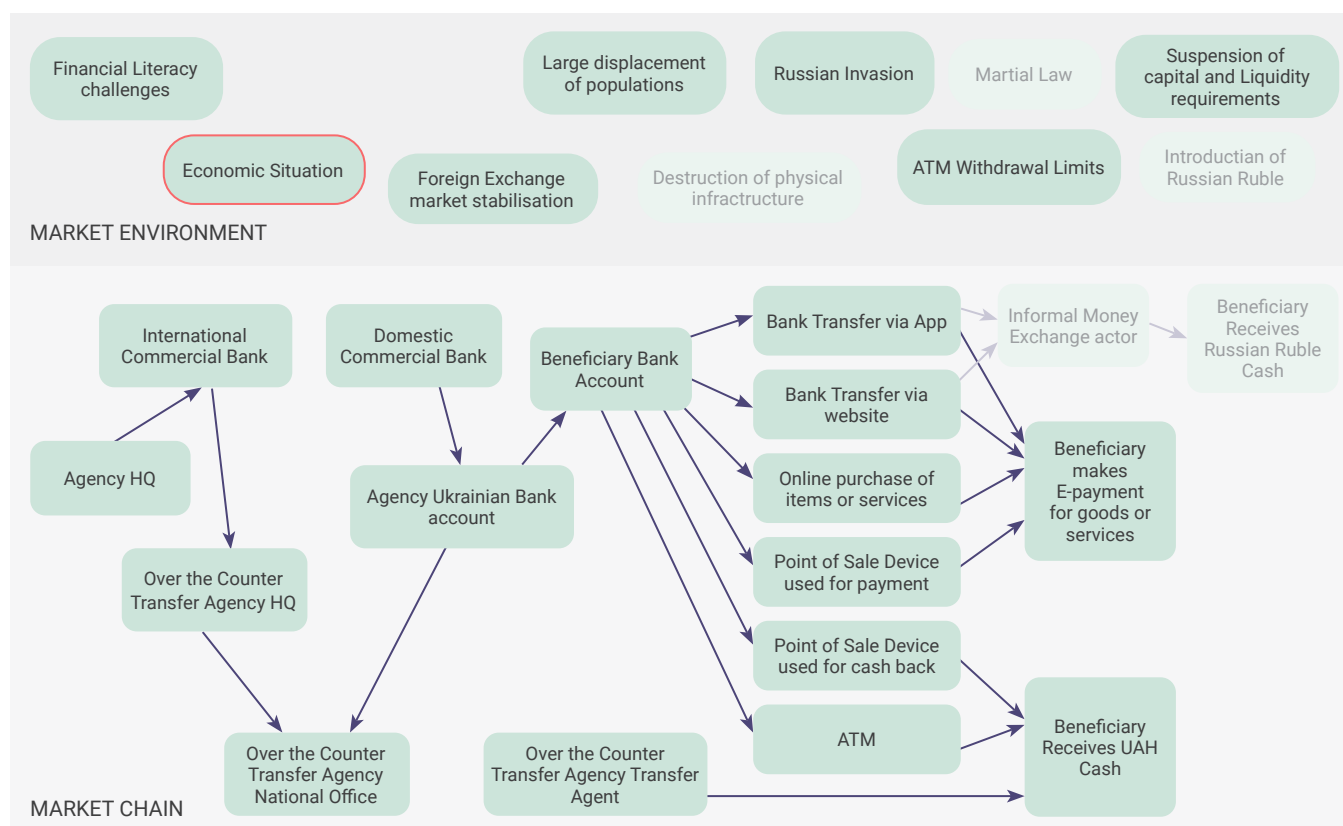
As reported by the National Bank of Ukraine in January 2023,⁹¹ inflation accelerated from the start of the full-scale war (to 26.6 per cent year on year in December 2022), influenced primarily by supply factors. Consumer prices were under strong pressure throughout the year.

3.4 Evaluating the Availability of Cash Assistance Delivery Channels

In 2022, the CWG embarked on a mapping exercise to identify operational financial service providers (FSPs) in accessible regions within Ukraine. It found that Ukraine has a highly developed financial sector, which in areas under the control of the Government of Ukraine has continued to operate and provide critical services. Over the last two years, humanitarian actors have been able to use these services to provide an unprecedented scale of cash assistance to the Ukraine population, mainly via direct bank transfers and over-the-counter cash via the post office system. Direct bank transfers have emerged as the predominant mechanism for cash delivery, utilized by approximately 80 per cent of humanitarian agencies. This was followed by cash transfer services through Western Union, though this method is currently used only by WFP and UNHCR.⁹²

The Ukrainian postal service, Ukrposhta, with access to even the most remote communities where other FSPs do not have a presence, is unmatched in its coverage. In addition to people being able to collect cash at any post office branch, Ukrposhta is able to cater for those with limited mobility by delivering cash to their homes. Social benefits, especially pensions, are delivered via Ukrposhta in remote rural areas.

Tracking of Funds from Agency HQ to beneficiary cash out - Ukraine



⁹⁰ REACH, Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) Ukraine Factsheet, August 2023. Link: https://repository.impact-initiatives.org/document/reach/a73aac80/UKR_JMMI_Factsheet_Round_17_August_2023.pdf

⁹¹ National Bank of Ukraine, Inflation Report, January 2023. Link: https://bank.gov.ua/admin_uploads/article/IR_2023-Q1_en.pdf?v=6

⁹² Byrnes, Thomas, Ukraine Response 2022, Financial Service Provider's market system mapping and process analysis, August 2022. Link: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/ukraine-response-2022-financial-service-providers-market-byrnes>

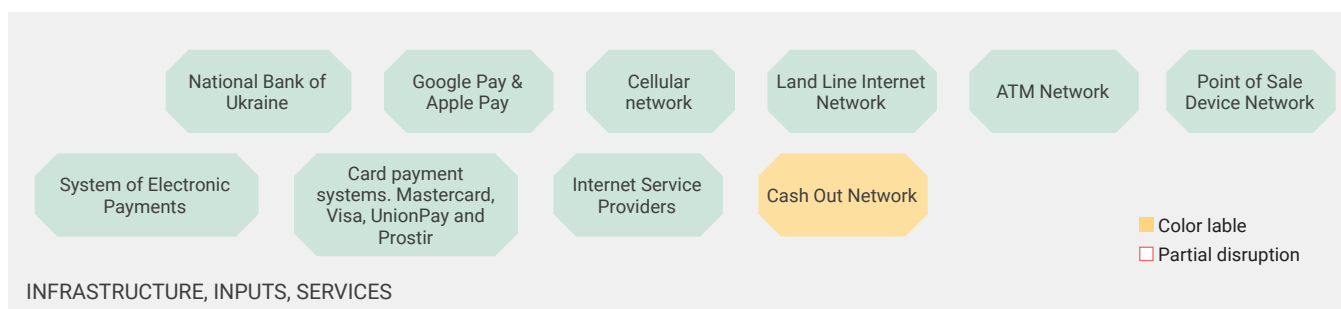


Figure 10. Market Mapping of FSP mechanisms to enable the transfer of cash in Ukraine, August 2022 (adapted by the PeReHID Initiative)

It is important to note that sanctions against Russia, combined with lack of access granted by the Government of the Russian Federation in areas under its temporary military control, limited not only available delivery channels but also access to beneficiaries to provide cash assistance in these areas.

The CWG continues to monitor the availability of financial service providers to enable cash assistance delivery in Ukraine through data gathered in PDM surveys and through the JMMI. Recent data from the CWG's JMMI in August 2023⁹³ indicates that while some disruption persists, banks, ATMs, Ukrposhta offices, and retail outlets largely have availability to facilitate cash transfers. Specifically, the JMMI found that 68 per cent of surveyed areas reported full availability of bank branches, though some limitations exist in southern regions. ATM availability remained consistent at 91% nationwide. Ukrposhta office availability declined slightly to 77% but without major restrictions. Retailers universally accept cash payments and most accept cards, mobile payments, and vouchers. In terms of vouchers, the research noted that some actors use value and commodity vouchers, however, the exact extent of their use was not possible to determine. Most actors use bank transfers/ATM cards or Ukrposhta as their delivery mechanisms.

In July 2023, a Multi-Purpose Cash Rapid Feasibility Tool⁹⁴ was developed by OCHA, REACH and ACTED to streamline the cash feasibility assessment process across actors. While this is a significant step towards having a standardised process regarding CVA in Ukraine, more needs to be done to ensure inter-cluster cash feasibility assessments and FSP mapping. The FSP mapping of March 2022 should be updated to reflect specifics of service provision and humanitarian agency user feedback over the course of the response, with each FSP's advantages and disadvantages listed, as well as to provide details on services available in frontline regions and areas retaken by the Government. At the same time, expanding humanitarian actors' understanding of the challenges linked to access to cash in areas under the temporary military control of the Russian Federation is also key, as it relates both to humanitarian cash transfers and government social assistance.

3.5 Development of the Humanitarian Minimum Expenditure Basket in Ukraine

In May 2023, Ukraine's HCT tasked the ICCG and CWG with developing a revised Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) for the humanitarian MPCA response.⁹⁵ The ICCG, according to the CWG 2022 Terms of Reference revision by the HCT, delegated responsibility to the CWG to make a recommendation on needs that should be met through MPCA, including financial needs.⁹⁶ Previously, the CWG followed the Ministry of Social Policy's (MoSP) subsistence minimum (published by the ministry on a monthly basis and including the minimum essential food basket, a set

⁹³ REACH, Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) Ukraine Factsheet, August 2023. Link: https://repository.impact-initiatives.org/document/reach/a73aac80/UKR_JMMI_Factsheet_Round_17_August_2023.pdf

⁹⁴ OCHA, REACH, Ukrainian Red Cross Society, Multi-Purpose Cash Rapid Feasibility Tool, July 2023. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/multi-purpose-cash-rapid-feasibility-tool?>

⁹⁵ IOM, OCHA, Ukrainian Red Cross Society, Ukraine Cash Working Group – Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) August 2023. September 2023. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-cash-working-group-minimum-expenditure-basket-meb-august-2023-enuk>

⁹⁶ OCHA, Ukraine Cash Working Group: Terms of Reference, October 2022, Manual and Guideline. October 2022. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-cash-working-group-terms-reference-october-2022>

of non-food items and essential services, consisting of 296 items) as a basis for MPCA values.⁹⁷ In order to determine an appropriate benchmark amount of humanitarian assistance that should be distributed as MPCA, the CWG facilitated analysis of the income gap between the actual subsistence level and the average income of populations in conflict-affected areas. Tracking this income gap has informed periodic review of the MPC transfer value since 2015.⁹⁸ In February 2022, during the CWG meeting, partners agreed that the MPCA transfer value should cover 100 per cent of the income gap using the subsistence level projected for April 2022. The amount of UAH 2,220 per person per month was endorsed for distribution during the initial rapid cash response in case of a sudden conflict escalation.

As MPCA expanded in 2022 and 2023 to reach over 9 million people, the need emerged for a humanitarian MEB specific to the context of full-scale war, rather than a more general poverty-based MEB. PDM data revealed gaps in the ability of affected people to meet basic needs with the original transfer value; MPCA actors requested that non-humanitarian costs fall outside the basket. There was also a push to strengthen cluster inputs based on assessed needs to enhance sectoral relevance and ownership. This followed an initial attempt to review the transfer value (but not the MEB) in August 2022, which was rejected by the HCT after discussions with the MoSP due to concerns about the ability of humanitarian agencies to meet a greater caseload of needs with a higher transfer value.

The MEB review was given the go-ahead by the HCT and developed in 2023 through a collaborative process led by the CWG and its MEB Task Force, together with activated clusters in Ukraine. The CWG analysed household expenditure data from the 2022 Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA) survey and income data from the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM). Clusters provided inputs on meeting basic needs according to global standards. The Food Security, WASH, Shelter, Health, and Protection Clusters provided sector-specific costs. Prices were obtained with support from partners like REACH, WFP, UNICEF, and private retailers. The resulting humanitarian MEB was endorsed by the HCT in August 2023 after analysis of household expenditure data and consultation across clusters.⁹⁹ It totals UAH 6,318 per person per month, encompassing food, hygiene, shelter, and other basic needs, which led to a raise in the transfer value from UAH 2,220 to UAH 3,600 per person per month for newly registered caseloads as of 1 October 2023 (see Table 2 below for details). This collaborative process demonstrates intersectoral coordination benefits. The CWG will continue facilitating six-month MEB reviews on behalf of the ICCG to keep MPCA aligned with evolving needs.

Item	Unit	Cost/pers/ month (UAH)
Drinking water	3L per day (90L per month)	415
Septic tank desludging costs (rural areas)	1500 UAH/ once per 4 years average	10
Toothbrush	1	29
Toothpaste	1 x 75ml	107
Soap (bars)	2 x 125 g	24
Shampoo	~200 ml	42
Razor	1 set of 2-3 individual blade pieces	38
Shaving cream	~200 ml	79
Wet wipes	1 pack x 15 pcs	11
Sanitary pads + liners	4 dots/size 4 (30 pcs per pack)	102
	1 dot/size 1 'Daily' Pads/liners (30 pcs/pack)	
Body cream	250 ml	169
Toilet Paper	6 rolls	61
Deodorant (neutral)* sustainable type	~200ml (150ml– 250ml)	55
Washing powder/gel for clothes	1kg	48
Dishwashing / Washing-up liquid	250ml	29

⁹⁷ Ukraine Cash Working Group, Ukraine: Calculations for the Actual Subsistence Minimum for 2022], January 2022. Link: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/ukraine/document/ukraine-calculations-actual-subsistence-minimum-2022-eng> (site is archived).

⁹⁸ OCHA, Ukraine Cash Working Group, Multipurpose Cash Guidance on Transfer Value, Regular and Rapid Response, February 2022. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-cash-working-group-multipurpose-cash-guidance-transfer-value-regular-and-rapid-response>

⁹⁹ IOM, OCHA, Ukrainian Red Cross Society, Ukraine Cash Working Group – Transfer Value Revision, August 2023, August 2023. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-cash-working-group-transfer-value-revision-august-2023-enuk>

Item	Unit	Cost/pers/ month (UAH)
Sponge for dish washing	1	27
General Household Bleach	250 ml	24
WASH total		1,270
Clothing and shoes	Expenditure-based	265
Utilities (electricity, gas, fuel for cooking)	Expenditure-based	861
Shelter maintenance	Expenditure-based. Costs associated with basic maintenance, such as plumbing, electrical work, and general upkeep of the dwelling.	220
Reinforced Bags	1 Unit x 60x50x40 cm	565
Bed linen sets	2 Units x Sheets: 145x210cm/Pillowcase: 70x70 cm	
Blankets	2 units x 140x200 m	
Towel sets	2 Units x 70 x140 cm/50x90cm	
Kitchen set	1 x kitchen set	
Jerrycan	1 unit x 10L	
Bucket	1 unit x 20L	
Shelter/NFI total	Expenditure-based + Rights-based	1,911
Health total a	Expenditure-based	492
Transportation	Expenditure-based	171
Communication	Expenditure-based	151
Protection total	Expenditure-based	321
Food total	Hybrid sphere - expenditure	2,324
Total		6,318

Table 2. MEB composition, units and prices, August 2023¹⁰⁰

3.5.1 Methodology for Determining the MEB in the Ukrainian Context

The MEB methodology used in Ukraine aims to calculate the cost of basic needs that are priorities for socio-economically vulnerable households in Ukraine, and that can be regularly monetized and accessed through markets. The MEB is calculated at the household level over a one-month period, with a household defined by the CWG as a group sharing daily expenses and living in the same shelter. The MEB encompasses multi-sectoral basic needs including recurrent costs for food, hygiene items, clothing, utilities, transportation, and basic shelter maintenance. By focusing on priorities that can be monetized each month, the MEB identifies the basket of essential, regular expenditures for vulnerable households, however it excludes rent.

- **Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster:** The food basket provides staple food items to meet 2,100 kcal per person daily, costing 2,324 UAH monthly. It uses a hybrid sphere and expenditure-based approach.
- **WASH Cluster:** The MEB includes basic hygiene items aligned with global standards, totalling 1,270 UAH monthly per person. Costs were set by a rights-based approach.
- **Shelter/NFI Cluster:** the MEB includes a regular Non-Food Item (NFI) kit. Clothing and footwear costs of 265 UAH monthly rely on expenditures data. Utilities average 861 UAH monthly based on actual costs to ensure basic energy and water access.
- **Protection Cluster:** The MEB incorporates communication and transportation to enable protection needs like maintaining social connections, for a total of 321 UAH. Costs draw from actual observed expenditures.
- **Health Cluster:** the MEB includes 492 UAH, based on expenditures.

¹⁰⁰ IOM, OCHA, Ukrainian Red Cross Society, Ukraine Cash Working Group – Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) August 2023. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-cash-working-group-minimum-expenditure-basket-meb-august-2023-enuk>

As the MEB methodologically focuses on regular monthly expenses, one-off needs are not covered. For example, large repairs or replacement of essential items would be addressed through complementary assistance; similarly, while the MEB is used to determine the value of MPCA which is mostly used to respond to war-related shocks such as displacement, the cost of recovering from these shocks (such as the cost of replacement of assets or related to settlement in a new location) are not conceptually considered, but are considered as cluster-specific interventions.

However, the CWG recognizes that even with regular basic needs covered by the MEB, additional one-off or seasonal support may be required at times. For instance, winterization assistance helps households with heating needs not accounted for in the MEB. Similarly, sector-specific interventions are required to meet non-recurrent needs like critical shelter repairs. Therefore, while the MEB covers recurrent basic needs through markets, it should be complemented by other tailored sectorial aid. It is therefore highly important to conduct an ongoing analysis of gaps beyond the MEB is therefore highly important.

3.5.2 Aligning MPCA Transfer Values with the MEB for Targeted Assistance in Ukraine

The HCT approved a revised transfer value of UAH 3,600 per person monthly (up from UAH 2,220 set in early 2022) for MPCA programming, effective as of October 2023, to align MPCA with the new MEB endorsed in August 2023 and to address reduced purchasing power resulting from high inflation. With expanded MPCA caseloads in 2022–2023 reaching over 6 million people, the CWG recommended revising the value based on an MEB-aligned gap analysis.

The CWG surveyed its members on methodologies, with consensus to assess the median income gap for households below the MEB (UAH 6,318) in conflict-affected regions, weighted by Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) caseload targets. Analysis used IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix data collected in May–June 2023. The median gap for targeted groups (IDPs, returnees, non-displaced) in nine conflict-affected regions totalled UAH 3,565. This gap derives from comparing the MEB costs to the median household income, indicating the typical shortfall in resources to meet priority needs.

The CWG recommended covering 100 per cent of this gap based on evidence of inadequate purchasing power derived from CWG members' post-distribution monitoring. The use of current income data and the MEB captured the impacts of Ukraine's rapidly rising prices. The focus on conflict areas aligned with concentrations of MPCA targets. The HCT established the revised value of 3,600 UAH monthly covering 100 per cent of the needs starting in October 2023, better enabling the programmes to meet basic needs. The CWG will facilitate regular reviews to keep MPCA aligned with evolving humanitarian priorities.

Arguably, a more granular approach could be taken to determining transfer value, taking into consideration specific needs of large vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities or children; additionally, income from state social assistance programmes which are already targeting specific vulnerability profiles could be taken into consideration in the future on household level in the future instead of relying on median income across all income streams including social assistance. This way, the MPCA value could be calculated in a dynamic manner, providing for more equitable assistance across the response. These considerations should be taken up by CWG and the response leadership going forward, deciding whether and to what degree one size fits all.

3.6 Tax Exemption Status for Humanitarian Cash Assistance

On 15 March 2022, the Ukrainian Parliament adopted a complex law on tax payment simplification for different categories of taxpayers, which included amendments to Article 170.¹⁰¹ The amended tax code article stipulated: *"targeted or non-targeted humanitarian assistance is not included into the tax charged income provided to an individual affected by the aggression of the Russian Federation during the martial law period."* The tax exemption reference is the following: p.3 point 7, Amendments to Article 170.7. The CWG interpreted this to mean that all humanitarian cash transfers were exempt from taxation, regardless of the status of the people concerned (IDPs or otherwise) and organization type (international NGOs, local partners, etc.). Despite reassurances from the CWG, NGOs continued to raise concerns regarding taxation of humanitarian aid, with lawyers interpreting the law differently.

¹⁰¹ Rada Law No.2120-IX dated 15 March 2022 Про внесення змін до Податкового кодексу України та інших законодавчих актів України щодо дії норм на період дії воєнного стану. Link: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2120-%D0%86%D0%A5#Text>

Despite the national tax code's provision for tax-exempt aid, local authorities were found to be levying taxes on cash assistance, undermining relief efforts for war-impacted civilians; the type of legal registration of humanitarian actors and targeting of non-displaced communities were among the factors that determined whether taxes were levied.

A concerted response by OCHA and the CWG led to a pivotal high-level discussion with governmental representatives. On 13 September 2023, a meeting between the humanitarian community and state authorities was convened to discuss issues related to taxation applied to different types of humanitarian cash assistance. The meeting was chaired by Vice Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk, Vice Prime Minister and involved representatives from the Ministry of Finance, MoSP, and the State Tax Administration.

The focus of the meeting was to reaffirm that humanitarian aid should not be taxed, a stance that adheres to international norms. Misinterpretations by local tax authorities had led to the inadvertent imposition of taxes. In response, the tax authority issued corrective guidelines to its regional counterparts and introduced a platform for addressing related inquiries. The CWG's role extended to proposing legislative reforms to eliminate ambiguities, ensuring that cash assistance by registered humanitarian organizations remains untaxed. However, business grants to entrepreneurs continue to be considered taxable income, and recipients of foreign aid are obligated to report it.

Despite these steps, many local organizations are perceived to have been inadvertently side-lined, often choosing unwillingly to shift from cash to in-kind assistance to avoid setbacks down the line on taxation issues down the line. This oversight has broader implications for the humanitarian response, diluting its quality due to the prevailing confusion. The debate has disproportionately centred on international bodies, with inadequate localization of the discourse.

Further clarification is necessary regarding the status of national NGOs concerning registration as humanitarian entities. During the September 2023 Livelihoods Technical Working Group¹⁰² meeting, a presentation by ACTED underscored that taxation for business grants – distinct from individual aid – should be enforced, with NGOs' business grants being recognized as taxable income for enterprises, subject to the standard income tax and an additional military levy.

Nevertheless, ambiguity lingers around the tax agent's role in assessing whether the recipient enterprise or the grant-providing organization is liable for tax payment. This issue remains a key point for further clarification.

In sum, collaborative efforts between humanitarian actors and Ukrainian authorities have been instrumental in reinforcing tax exemption for aid. However, the dialogue must delve deeper to navigate and rectify operational and legislative nuances, especially concerning local organizations' plight and the comprehensive impact on the humanitarian landscape.

3.7 Registration and Enrolment: Challenges of Scaling Response

In the complex humanitarian landscape of Ukraine in 2023, registration processes for CVA evolved to meet the changing needs of those affected by ongoing hostilities. Beneficiary registration and enrolment is either conducted through direct enrolment by humanitarian agencies, or through indirect enrolment using beneficiary lists shared by the Government of Ukraine.

Registration methods for MPCA have incorporated a blend of online self-registration systems, use of local authority databases, through eDopomoga and other government lists, in-person registration and verification, and registration over the phone – a mix necessitated by the fluidity of the humanitarian situation. In the immediate wake of the full-scale invasion, agencies swiftly registered internally displaced persons (IDPs) and administered cash assistance, utilizing a varied approach to enrolment contingent upon location. Early efforts combined digital registrations with existing local authority lists and direct community engagement. The registration approach used at the beginning of the war was challenged by the magnitude of the crisis and its complexity, but then offered numerous opportunities for digital innovations, including registration, enrolment and de-duplication.

To extend their reach for beneficiary registration and targeting, some humanitarian agencies entered into Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with the MoSP to access governmental beneficiary data. Privacy concerns initially hindered data sharing as the social protection system does not explicitly retrieve informed consent to share data to third parties, prompting the MoSP to introduce the eDopomoga (meaning e-assistance or 'There Is Help')

online platform, which required citizens' consent for data sharing.¹⁰³ Also, eDopomoga streamlined the data sharing process as bilateral data-sharing agreements with each humanitarian actor and for each proposed project were cumbersome and ineffective given the scale of the response. While using eDopomoga enabled humanitarian agencies to extend their reach in the initial phases of the response and effectively piggyback in the initial phases of the response on the government system which cross-checked the eDopomoga lists for some vulnerability markers across other government databases (e.g. disability register), it failed to maintain sufficient vulnerability data to inform targeting and enable impartial, needs-based humanitarian action, among other challenges.¹⁰⁴ It had no mechanism to update registered data, including periodically checking if registered people still needed assistance before sharing with partners. Many humanitarian stakeholders also believe that it led to major inclusion errors (resulting in coverage by the humanitarian response of non-humanitarian caseloads). During 2023, up to 11 partners secured MoUs with the MoSP, however, registration in the system has been suspended since October 2022 and as of August 2023, it was understood that no partners were using this registration and enrolment method anymore.

A Ground Truth Solutions cash user journey study¹⁰⁵ from July 2023 reports varying user experiences when registering for cash assistance in Ukraine. The study found overall preferences for online registration due to convenience and ability to track application status, but some people face technical issues and many fear online scams. People in occupied areas appreciate the availability of online forms and use messenger apps to send documents but some feel unsafe sharing their georeferenced location technology data, which is required to confirm their location. People who are housebound, such as mothers on maternity leave, women with babies, and people with disabilities tend to prefer online or phone applications and registrations. Older people often require support with online registration forms and seek help from younger or more digitally skilled friends, relatives, or neighbours. Others faced technical issues or needed help because the application forms were complicated or in English. Those who said they felt uncomfortable answering personal questions also preferred online registration.

The report also noted that some people believe applying in person could increase their chances of receiving assistance. Older people prefer to apply in person due to lack of digital literacy or digital devices, and because they appreciate face to face contact and additional support. However, they also report challenges such as long waiting lines and interruptions due to air raids, and transportation costs to registration sites are prohibitive for some. The requirement to bring every family member to registration presents difficulties for families with young children, older people, or those with disabilities. Some people also expressed feelings of discomfort or humiliation answering personal questions while being overheard by others. The study also found that some people do not register for any type of cash assistance at all due to concerns about data protection, lack of documents, lack of or poor connectivity, or because they do not believe that cash assistance is available. Preferences for registration method are influenced by the level of people's digital literacy, physical mobility, and trust.

Registration is further hampered by access constraints when technical verification of needs is necessary, such as in the case of shelter-focused standalone sectoral CVA which requires additional sector-specific targeting and on-site visits.

Overall, agile navigation of registration bottlenecks was necessary to scale the response in the beginning, and while for example sharing potential beneficiary lists by local authorities proved invaluable then, it showcased wider legislative challenges related to sharing of data from government registers with humanitarian actors.

¹⁰³ For a snapshot of eDopomoga, see Byrnes, Thomas, Overview of the Unified Information System of the Social Sphere (UISSS) and the eDopomoga System, STAAR, DAI Global UK Ltd., 2022. Link: https://socialprotection.org/sites/default/files/publications_files/STAAR%20Overview%20Paper%20of%20the%20Unified%20Information%20System%20of%20the%20Social%20Sphere%20%28UISSS%29%20and%20the%20eDopomoga%20System_0.pdf

¹⁰⁴ For details see CWG and CCD, Humanitarian CVA in Ukraine: Induction, October 2023.

¹⁰⁵ Ground Truth Solutions, Cash is King if You Can Get it: Mapping the user journeys of cash recipients in Ukraine, July 2023.

3.8 Data Protection and Data Sharing: Status Quo and Challenges

The Ukraine humanitarian response is the largest cash-based response to date and relies heavily on digital tools and platforms. This unique nature of the response raises concerns about the collection and sharing of beneficiaries' personal data. Ukraine has a legal framework for data protection, the Law of Ukraine on Personal Data Protection, introduced on 1 June 2010, which aims to shield the civil and human rights of Ukraine's citizens, emphasising the right to personal privacy amidst the challenges posed by data processing.¹⁰⁶ In addition, a draft law to harmonise the data protection law with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of the European Union was recently submitted to the Ukrainian Parliament. If ratified, this law could come into effect as early as 1 January 2024.

Most humanitarian organisations providing CVA in Ukraine operate under a cohesive framework, primarily coordinated by the CWG with a primary focus on MPCA. Each organisation uses its own established protocols encompassing data sharing, storage, and protection. On the social protection system level, with the eDopomoga platform suspended, there is no direct link for humanitarian agencies to leverage the wealth of data available within government databases. This translates into revival of bilateral MoUs between large humanitarian actors and the MoSP. While necessary, this is in principle detrimental to increased alignment between the social protection and humanitarian systems. On the other hand, sharing data by humanitarian actors with the Government, while respecting humanitarian principles, would contribute to more efficient alignment, planning, and resource allocation between the two systems. It is important to mention that Decree No.509 on Registration of IDPs (amendments as of 2016) states that "Information about the personal data of internally displaced persons may be transferred to the UN agencies and the International Committee of the Red Cross with the consent of the applicant or his/her legal representative to provide assistance." In fact, all data is shared only on the basis of a relevant MoU with international organisations. A Draft Law on Personal Data envisages a data sharing procedure with third countries and international organisations. Currently the situation with data sharing can be resolved either through MoUs or through a decree of the Cabinet of Ministers.

In the context of this highly digitised response, the Collaborative Cash Delivery Network (CCD) and Ground Truth Solutions (GTS) embarked on a qualitative study¹⁰⁷ to measure the awareness and importance of data protection for cash applicants and to understand their concerns. The study findings showed that prospective cash recipients must provide a lot of information to CVA providers during registration, including documentation to confirm status or details. People found that they are being asked for sensitive information and most did not receive information about how their personal data would be used and stored.

As data sharing and data governance are cross-cutting issues that directly influence alignment between the social protection and humanitarian system, several recommendations were recently introduced both in the above-mentioned paper by GTS/CCD and in the operational alignment mapping between the social protection system and humanitarian response by CCD,¹⁰⁸ with contributions by PeReHID Initiative's Technical Assistance Facility (PI TAF). The following recommendations were collated and adapted from these sources:

- Efforts to establish data-sharing agreements and other arrangements to allow the safe transfer of individual data between the Government and international organizations need to be standardized and harmonized between actors to avoid the current ad hoc arrangements. High-level discussions with the Government are needed to set a standard approach to facilitate coordination and collaboration with humanitarian organizations.
- On system coordination, it is important to continue to strive for a nationally led information management system (or at least one that is interoperable with government systems), where through individual consent, humanitarian organizations' aid could be found easily on government websites, facilitating both registration and enrolment, and de-duplication of the humanitarian response.
- Practice data minimisation. For example, where possible, refrain from storing (photo) copies of passports, identification cards, and tax IDs when the document numbers and visual verification upon registration would suffice.

¹⁰⁶ Ground Truth Solutions, Balancing Aid and Privacy: Perceptions of data protection policies for cash assistance in Ukraine, September 2023, Collaborative Cash Delivery Network, September 2023. Link: https://www.collaborativecash.org/_files/ugd/eba6ae_33e8838412a94fb18623b04a38aee073.pdf

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ CCD, Reflection Paper: Operational Alignment of Humanitarian Cash Programming with Ukraine's Social Protection System, September 2023.

- Invest in better information sharing on how cash providers collect, use, and store personal data with CVA applications; this is directly correlated with trust. Focus especially on older persons and repeat information-sharing during the application process. Printed infographics could help, for people to refer to in future.
- Raise awareness of what personal data protection is and why it is important, in addition to communicating data policies.
- Provide telephone lines for registration of older persons and less digitally literate people, especially for organisations that already provide remote registration through online forms and chatbots.

3.9 Alignment of Cash and Voucher Assistance with the Social Protection System

In Ukraine, the need to strengthen the linkage between humanitarian MPCA (and more widely CVA) and the national social protection system has been discussed since the beginning of the humanitarian crisis in late February 2022. Since then, several approaches to support linkages between humanitarian CVA and the national social protection system have been implemented, with varying degrees of success. Key efforts include:

- In May 2022, the CWG created a specific team, called Task Team 5 (TT5), dedicated to linking Humanitarian Cash and Social Protection with the objective of facilitating discussions on how humanitarian MPCA could complement existing social benefits and to ensure greater coverage as well as more adequate, predictable, timely, comprehensive, sustainable, and cost-effective support to affected populations in Ukraine. The Ukraine informal Donor Cash Forum's point of contact supported the creation of TT5 and provided additional support through deployment of a Social Protection Technical Assistance, Advice, and Resources Facility (STAAR) expert by the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). Led by WFP and UNICEF, TT5 completed a series of key products (e.g. mapping of existing social protection schemes, engagement with MoSP, donors and partners). However, TT5 did not gain traction and was deactivated in July 2023 after lying dormant since the beginning of 2023.
- As mentioned above, on 30 June 2022, donor countries including the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations department (EU/DG ECHO), Germany, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States published the Common Donor Messaging on Humanitarian Cash Programs in the Response in Ukraine. Key messages on social protection linkages included *"support linking to and coordinating with inclusive shock-responsive social protection systems in Ukraine (vertical and horizontal); humanitarian MPCA should be complementary and ensure people in need receive humanitarian MPCA in line with the humanitarian principles; here and when feasible, we support the transitioning of the humanitarian caseload to social protection schemes and development stakeholders."*
- In December 2022, humanitarian donors and UN agencies, in a meeting facilitated by UNICEF and presented to the UN Humanitarian Coordinator/Resident Coordinator, came together to draft a concept note on the PeReHID Initiative (PI) for linking cash transfers and shock-responsive social protection in Ukraine. In May 2023, a governmental order (decree) was passed on the PI. In the summer of 2023, the PeReHID Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) commenced its work to support the transition of humanitarian caseloads into a more shock-responsive social protection system, in collaboration with the Government of Ukraine, humanitarian donors, UN agencies, and national and international NGOs.
- Meanwhile, the CCD has deployed experts on social protection and cash and commenced work on operational guidance for the alignment of humanitarian programming with the social protection system, resulting in the publication of two papers with support from the Ukraine Cash Consortium.¹⁰⁹

While the policy environment was conducive towards increased alignment between the humanitarian response and the social protection system, it is important to note that the humanitarian response was largely social protection system-agnostic in its programming. Alignment work commenced in Summer 2023, when CCD and the TAF came together and started actively working on building linkages between the systems. CCD's papers were a major positive influence in this regard and served as a strong tool for advocacy and awareness-raising on the humanitarian system side. Concurrently, the PI has conceptualised the transition and alignment process, with this study being a key component.

4. Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance

The Cash Working Group (CWG) spearheads two key cash assistance packages: Rapid Emergency Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (R-MPCA), which delivers urgent support to new IDPs and war-affected communities when needs are acute following new spells of violence or for retaken territories; and Emergency Cash Assistance (ECA), which provides aid to vulnerable groups based on vulnerability assessments. Together, these modalities aim to cover basic needs with flexible, dignified support, for a recommended period of three months (which can be extended based on reassessment after this initial period). They play a complementary role in the humanitarian response in Ukraine.

The choice between R-MPCA and ECA depends on the context. ECA is suitable for more secure and stable regions allowing vulnerability assessments, while R-MPCA becomes essential in remote, severely war-affected areas where immediacy is paramount. They offer a well-rounded and adaptable cash assistance strategy, ensuring that limited aid is targeted correctly while still enabling humanitarian actors to rapidly reach those in urgent need, while also addressing wider vulnerabilities.

Decreasing Overall Funding and Increasing Funding Gap

The total funding allocated to MPCA¹¹⁰ was substantial, standing at USD 1.2 billion in actual transfers in 2022 and 542 million as of August 2023. The funding gap of 32 per cent was observed in 2022. As of August 2023, the funding gap was at 3%. (see Figure 11 and Figure 12).

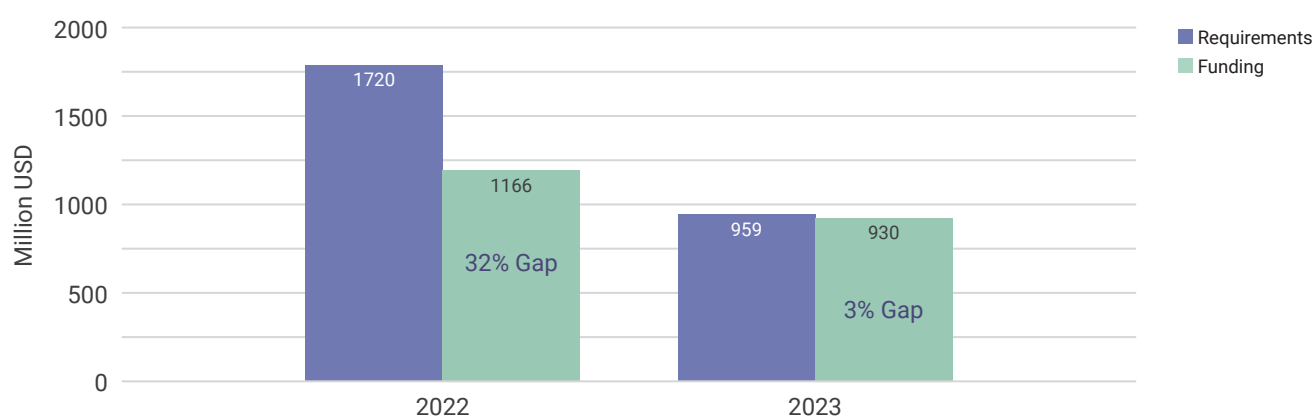


Figure 11. MPCA funding in 2022 and 2023 (Source: FTS, July 2024)

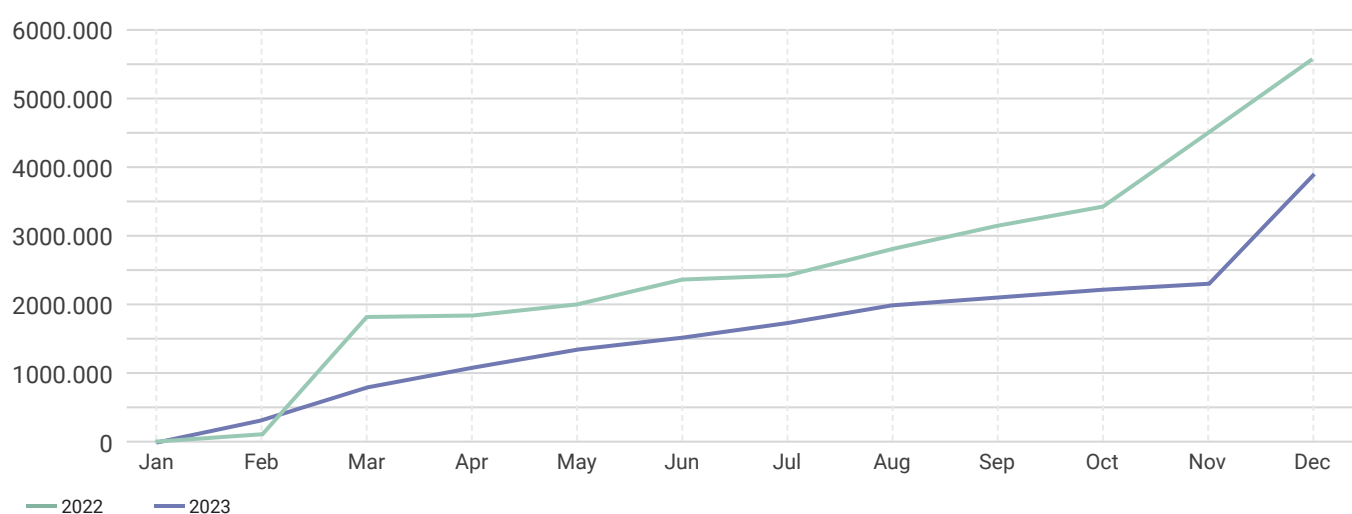


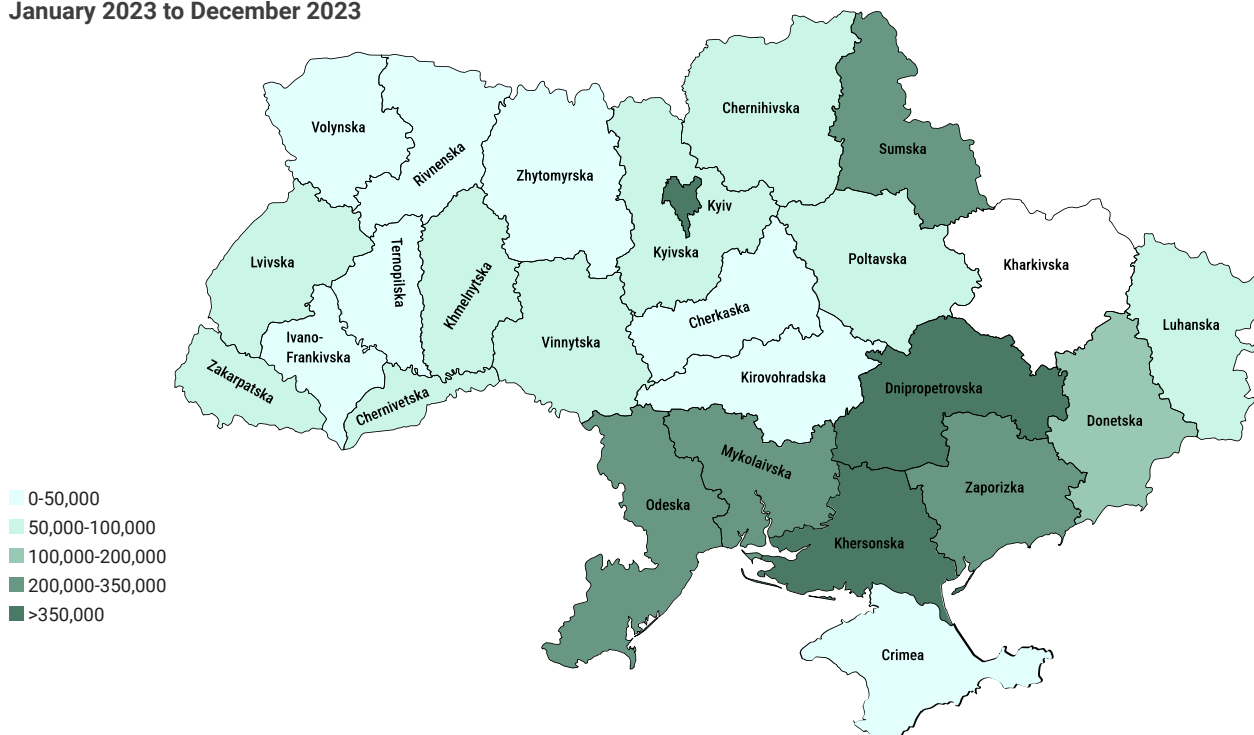
Figure 12 MPCA funding development in 2022 and 2023

¹¹⁰ Refers only to MPCA transfer value and doesn't include programme support cost and recovery costs.

Geographical Coverage between 2022 and 2023

Targeting between 2022 and 2023 focuses increasingly on the east and south of Ukraine, moving closer to the areas affected by active hostilities. This is due to increasingly refined targeting, optimised allocation of limited resources, and the scaled capacity of humanitarian actors to deliver assistance in the east and south which was not available in the early stages of the response.

January 2023 to December 2023



January 2022 to December 2022

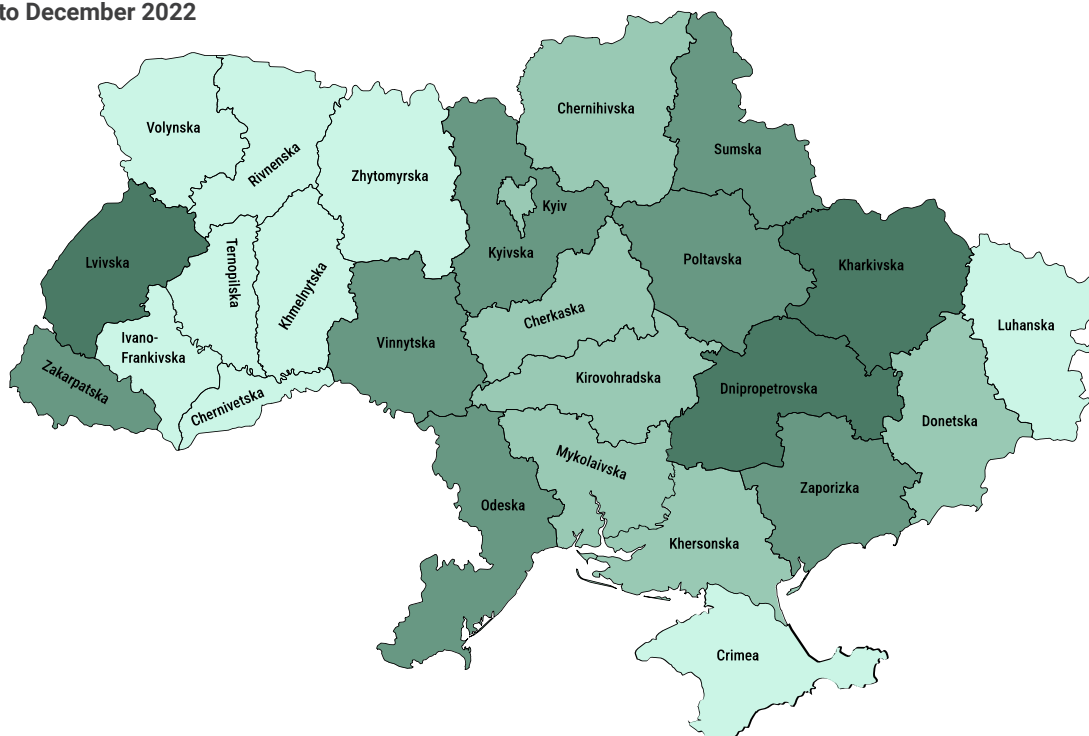


Figure 13. Concentration of people assisted by MPCA in 2022 and 2023

Difficulties in Estimating Regional Distribution

While planning for 2023 envisioned well-distributed caseloads across frontline regions, assuming R-MPCA would be a predominant assistance package, the reality saw more ECA being distributed due to a more static frontline, less frequent displacements, and a lower total population residing in frontline areas, with planning figures standing at 63 per cent for R-MPCA and 37 per cent for ECA as detailed in Table 3. In contrast, R-MPCA only accounted for 20 per cent of MPCA. Urban areas are assisted considerably more than rural ones. The intersection of operational feasibility and ability to address areas with severe needs remains challenging.

Multi-sectoral objective	Duration	%	# People targeted	Value (USD)	Total cost	Total cost (US\$) including 20% support cost
MPCA Objective 1: Provide rapid emergency multi-purpose cash assistance to meet the immediate needs of up to 2.8 million people subsequent to a war-related shock.	3 months	63%	2,805,206	\$60	\$504,936,990	\$605,924,388
MPCA Objective 2: Provide emergency multi-purpose cash assistance to up to 1.63 million vulnerable people to help them meet their basic needs.	3 months	37%	1,632,919	\$60	\$311,827,140	\$374,192,568
Total			4,438,124			\$958,634,784

MPCA Coverage (Achievements/Targets) January 2023 to December 2023

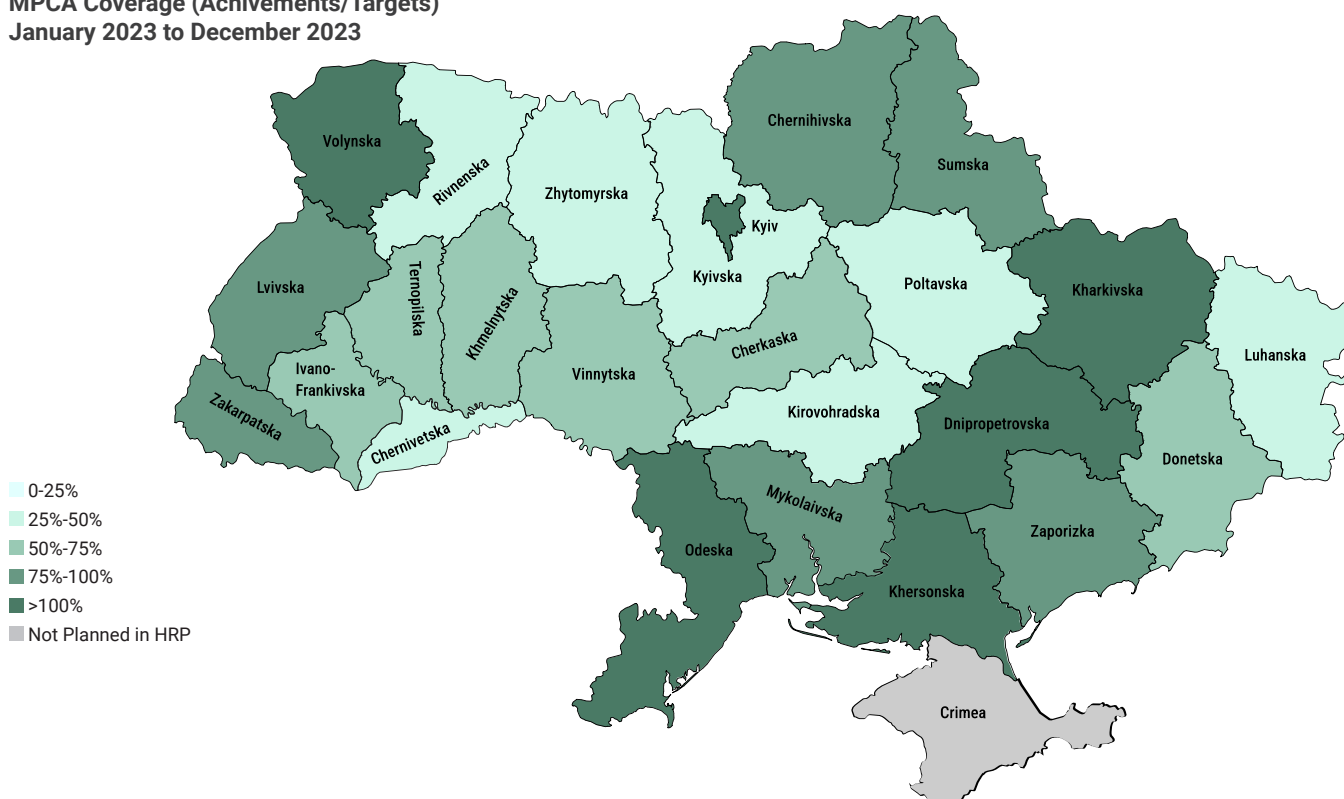


Figure 14. MPCA planning vs actual caseloads in 2023 (Source: CWG, December 2023)

Targeting Overview

Targeting increasingly prioritizes older people, especially women, and deprioritizes children. However, in the absence of detailed analysis, this shift could be explained in many ways: it may reflect the population structure of geographic areas to which the focus has shifted; it could be a function of access as urban areas are easier to reach; and, finally, in 2022 MPCA caseload included people on the move who finally settled in the EU, which could explain the decrease in the share of children and adult women.

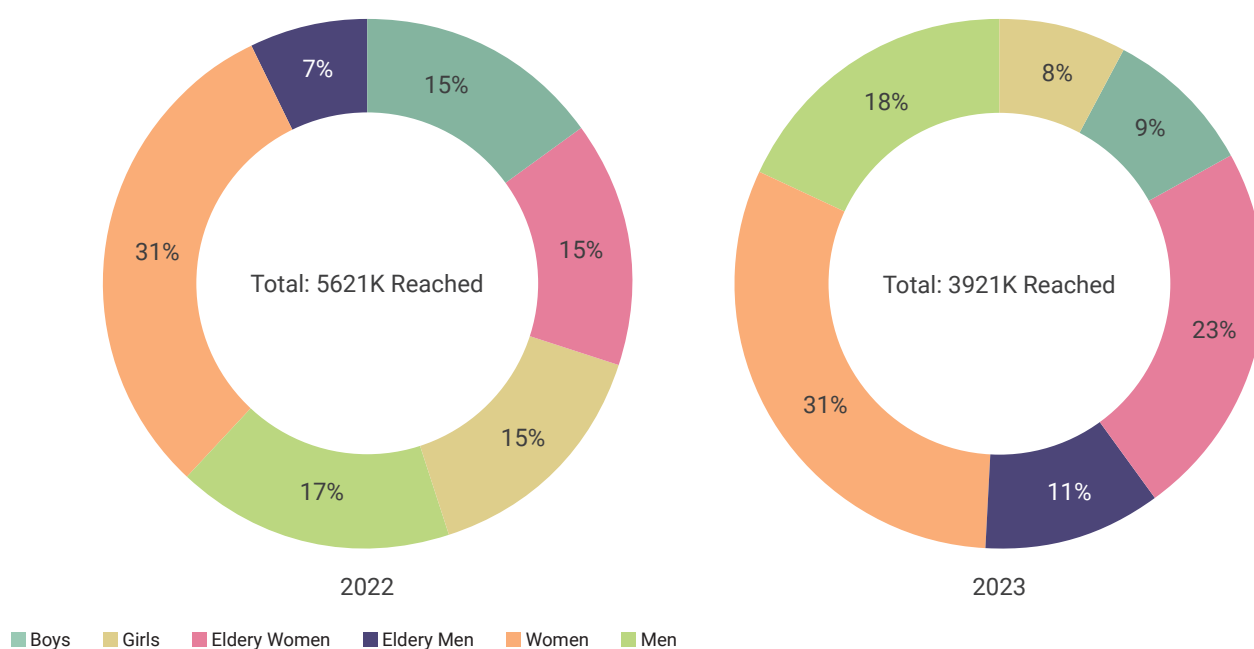


Figure 15. Number of beneficiaries assisted by MPCA disaggregated by age and sex, until mid-September 2023

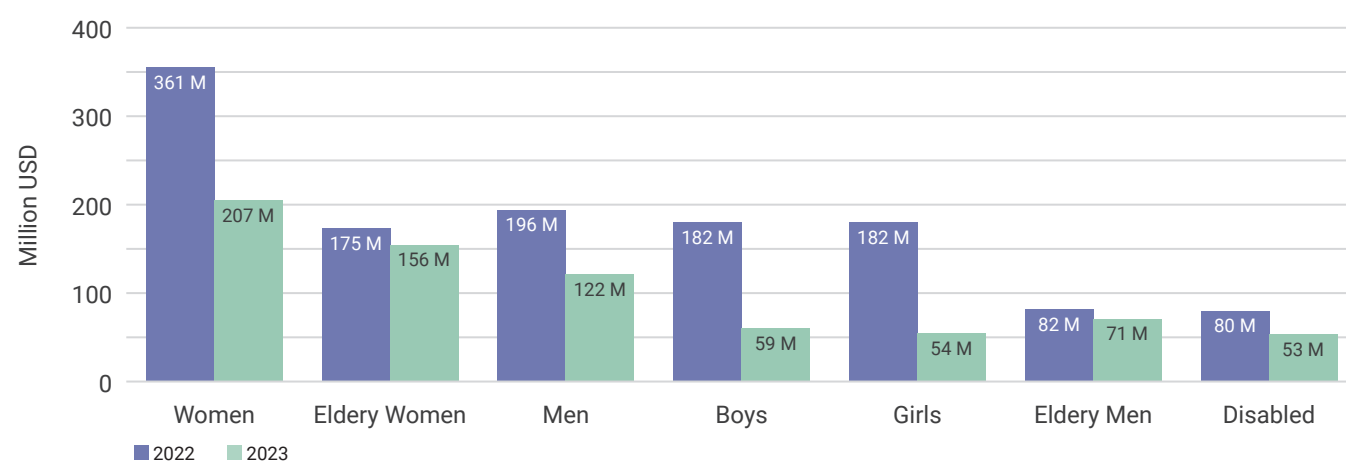
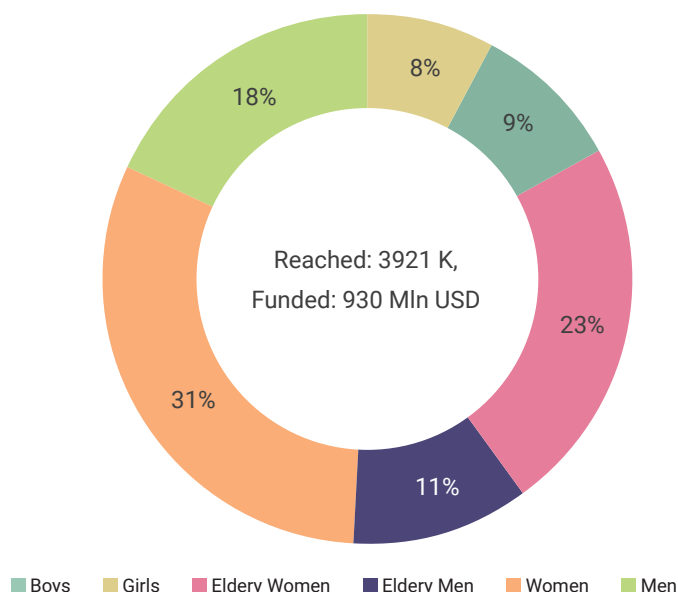


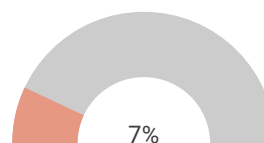
Figure 16. MPCA investments in 2022 and 2023 by age, sex, and disability¹¹¹

¹¹¹ The share of persons with disabilities assisted is not available broken down by age and sex; the figure displayed represents the total share of persons with disabilities assisted by MPCA.

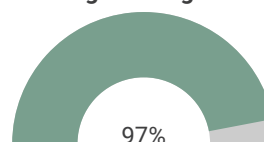
People Reached by Age-Gender As of December 2023 (ICCG)



% of Disabled As of December 2023 (ICCG)



Funding Coverage As of December 2023 (FTS)



People Reached Against HRP Targets As of December 2023 (ICCG)

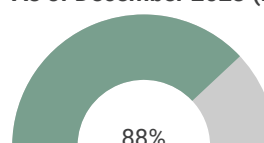


Figure 17. MPCA – Number of people reached disaggregated by age and gender, as of December 2023

Despite challenges, adaptive and coordinated cash assistance remains essential amid swirling instability. Enhanced analysis, resources, and localization could dramatically widen MPCA's reach to alleviate hardship at scale. For now, MPCA provides a lifeline for recipients, but strengthening its scope and impact remains an imperative.

4.1 Rapid Emergency MPCA (R-MPCA)

Objective	Provide immediate, short-term support to households affected by sudden shocks like war, displacement, or natural disasters, when local authorities lack capacity to fully meet needs.
Target Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Households displaced from areas of active hostilities Households residing in areas of active hostilities Households recently and originally displaced from areas 30 kilometres or less from areas of active hostilities or active combat (line of contact) Households residing in areas 30 kilometres or less from areas of active hostilities or active combat (line of contact)
Triggers for Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recently internally displaced persons (IDPs) who have fled areas of active hostilities within the past 30 days Households currently residing in areas within 30 km of active clashes Evacuees urged to leave conflict-affected areas by authorities Households in newly accessible areas considered affected by humanitarian actors or authorities Residents in areas with over eight daily shelling incidents in the past week, or at least one shelling incident in the past two weeks Populations experiencing severe infrastructure disruptions including water, electricity, network coverage, and gas outages exceeding 12 hours daily for most residents
Transfer Value	UAH 3,600 per person and per month, average household size has been on average 2.5, ¹¹² so the average UAH per household per month is UAH 9,000 (USD 247.18 ¹¹³)
Frequency	Usually, one-off transfer covering three months, ¹¹⁴ but no agreement or specific recommendations

¹¹² According to MSNA 2023, the average household size is 2.48.

¹¹³ FX conversion provided for clarity, but note the rate is floating so this is the UAH value in USD as of 12 October 2023.

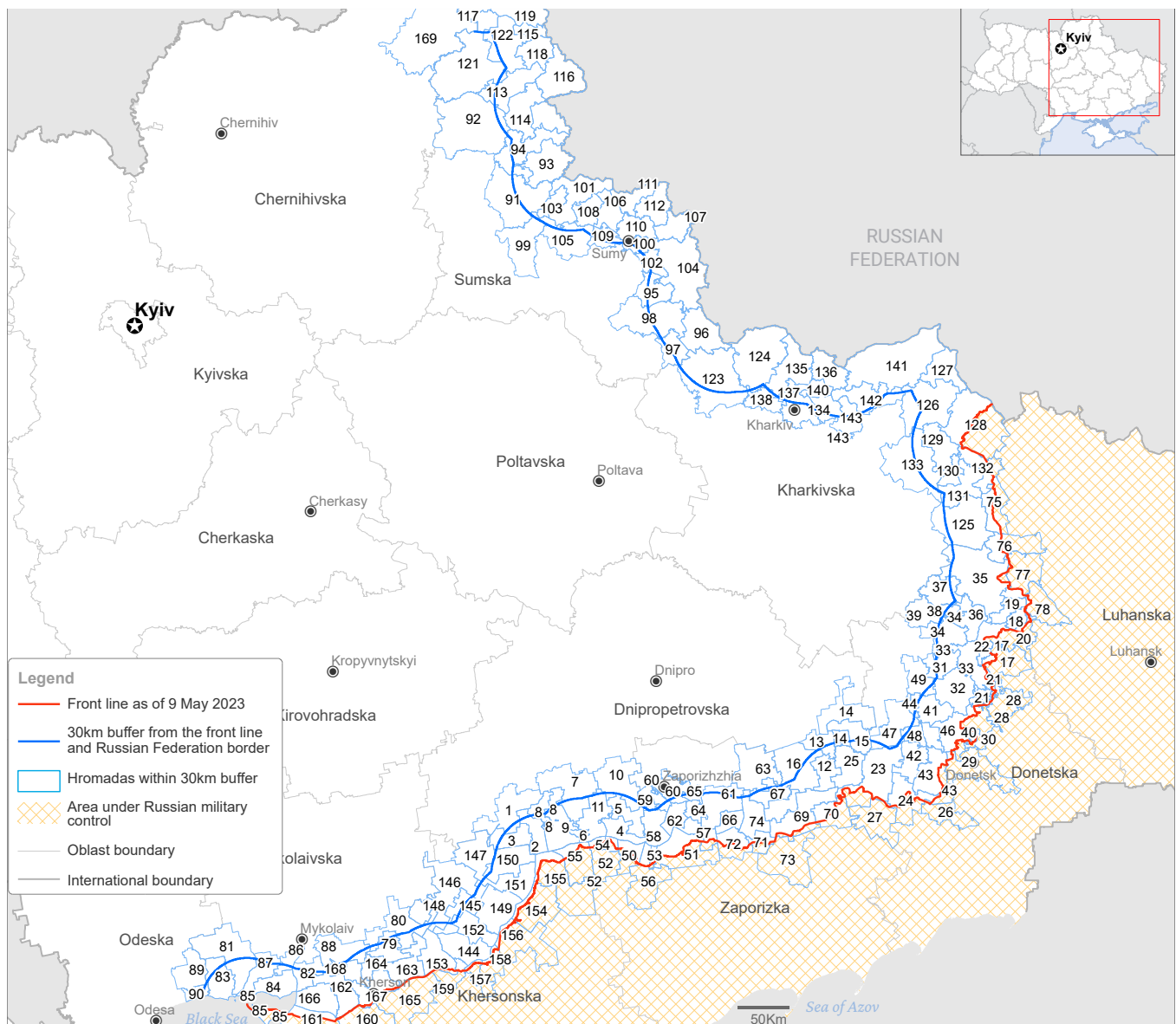
¹¹⁴ In 2023, the CWG reported that some agencies opted for a six-month duration. However, this does not align with the CWG's guidance. Extensions beyond three months are only recommended if a re-assessment is conducted at the end of the initial three-month period and if additional funding is available.

Duration	Three months as general and recommended practice
Modalities	Unrestricted/unconditional cash
Coordination Mechanism	CWG
Monitoring	Post distribution monitoring MPC Dashboard

R-MPCA acts as frontline cash assistance for newly displaced households and those facing sudden shocks when local capacity is overwhelmed. Its core objective is to provide urgent, short-term aid, especially in active conflict zones, as shown in Figure 18, where in-depth assessments are challenging.

- The primary target groups for R-MPCA are:
- New IDPs displaced within the past 30 days from areas of active hostilities or from the 30 km buffer zone
- Households in areas within 30 km of active clashes
- Evacuees urged to flee by authorities
- Residents experiencing intense disruptions like outages

MPC response: areas falling under 30km buffer from the front line and international border



Estimated population in Hromadas within the 30km buffer from the front line and international border*

1. Apostolivska	29k	56. Malobilozerska	11k	112. Yunakivska	4k
2. Hrushivska	8k	57. Stepanivska	4k	113. Berezhivska	6k
3. Zelenodolska	15k	58. Bilenkivska	8k	114. Hlukhivska	28k
4. Marhanetska	30k	59. Dolynska	22k	115. Druzhnivska	7k
5. Myrivska	14k	60. Zaporizka	498k	116. Esmanska	3k
6. Nikopolska	98k	61. Komyshevska	6k	117. Znob-Novhorodska	5k
7. Pershotravnevska	17k	62. Kushuhumska	9k	118. Sveska	5k
8. Pokrovska	24k	63. Novomykolaivska	8k	119. Seredyno-Budska	9k
9. Pokrovska	19k	64. Novooleksandriivska	4k	120. Shalyhynska	3k
10. Tomakivska	23k	65. Stepnenska	4k	121. Shostkynska	58k
11. Chervonohryhorivska	20k	66. Tavriiska	3k	122. Yampil'ska	9k
12. Velykomykhailivska	4k	67. Ternuvatska	2k	123. Bohodukhivska	24k
13. Malomykhailivska	6k	68. Vozdvyzhivska	2k	124. Zolochivska	15k
14. Mezhyvska	11k	69. Hulaiopil'ska	12k	125. Borivska	8k
15. Novopavlivska	2k	70. Malynivska	2k	126. Velykoburlutska	8k
16. Pokrovska	25k	71. Malotokmachanska	2k	127. Vilkhuvatska	3k
17. Bakhmut'ska	67k	72. Orikhivska	13k	128. Dvorichanska	9k
18. Zvanivska	4k	73. Polohivska	17k	129. Kindrashivska	3k
19. Siverska	14k	74. Preobrazhenska	4k	130. Kupianska	24k
20. Soledarska	22k	75. Kolomyichyska	3k	131. Kurylivska	6k
21. Toretska	36k	76. Krasnorichenska	12k	132. Petropavlivska	3k
22. Chasovoivarska	10k	77. Kreminska	33k	133. Shevchenkovska	8k
23. Velykonovosilkivska	27k	78. Lysychanska	94k	134. Vilkhivska	7k
24. Vuhledarska	27k	79. Horokhivska	5k	135. Derhachivska	23k
25. Komarska	8k	80. Snihurivska	16k	136. Lypetska	5k
26. Olhynska	29k	81. Berezhanska	10k	137. Malodanylivska	10k
27. Staromlynivska	17k	82. Halatsynivska	3k	138. Solonysivska	19k
28. Horlivska	148k	83. Koblivska	7k	139. Kharkivska	692k
29. Donetsk	551k	84. Kutsurub'ska	6k	140. Tsykunivska	8k
30. Yasynuvatska	32k	85. Ochakivska	5k	141. Vovchanska	18k
31. Druzhkivska	45k	86. Radsadivska	5k	142. Starosaltivska	4k
32. Illinivska	13k	87. Chornomorska	4k	143. Chuhuivska	15k
33. Kostiantynivska	63k	88. Shevchenkovska	10k	144. Beryslav'ska	5k
34. Kramatorska	105k	89. Vyzhyska	14k	145. Borozenska	1k
35. Lymanska	62k	90. Yuzhenska	17k	146. Velykooleksandriivska	7k
36. Mykolaivska	17k	91. Burynska	21k	147. Vysokopil'ska	5k
37. Sviatohirska	13k	92. Krolevetska	33k	148. Kalynivska	1k
38. Slovianska	94k	93. Novoslobidska	3k	149. Mylivska	3k
39. Cherkaska	8k	94. Putyv'ska	13k	150. Novovorontsov'ska	4k
40. Avdiivska	20k	95. Boromlianska	7k	151. Novooleksandriivska	2k
41. Hrodivska	10k	96. Velykopysarivska	11k	152. Novoraiska	2k
42. Kurakhivska	35k	97. Kyrykivska	6k	153. Tiahynska	4k
43. Marinska	40k	98. Trostianetska	33k	154. Velykolepetyska	4k
44. Myrnohrad'ska	30k	99. Nedryhailivska	15k	155. Verkhnorohachytska	4k
45. Novohrodovska	13k	100. Bezdrytska	4k	156. Hornostaiv'ska	5k
46. Ocheretynska	26k	101. Bilopil'ska	19k	157. Kakhov'ska	8k
47. Pokrovska	65k	102. Verkhnosyrovatska	8k	158. Liubymiv'ska	3k
48. Selydivska	22k	103. Vorozhbianska	6k	159. Novokakhov'ska	13k
49. Shakhiv'ska	5k	104. Krasnopil'ska	19k	160. Holoprystanska	14k
50. Blahovishchenska	7k	105. Mykolaivska	11k	161. Chulakivska	3k
51. Vasylivska	15k	106. Mykolaivska	7k	162. Bilozerska	6k
52. Vodianska	21k	107. Myropil'ska	5k	163. Dariv'ska	5k
53. Dniprorudnenska	5k	108. Richkivska	5k	164. Muzykivska	1k
54. Enerhodarska	17k	109. Stepanivska	15k	165. Oleshkivska	13k
55. Kamiansko-Dniprov'ska	22k	110. Sumska	233k	166. Stanislav'ska	3k
		111. Khotivska	7k	167. Kherson'ska	103k
				168. Chornobaiv'ska	5k
				169. Novhorod-Siverska	20k

* Estimated population as of August 2022

Figure 18. Areas falling within the 30 km buffer zone, as of May 2023 (adapted by the PeReHID Initiative)¹¹⁵¹¹⁵ OCHA, Ukraine MPC Response: areas falling under 30km buffer from the front line and international border, May 2023. Link: <https://www.unocha.org/publications/map/ukraine/ukraine-mpc-response-areas-falling-under-30km-buffer-front-line-and-international-border-12-may-2023>

R-MPCA has clear triggers for eligibility, including recent displacement, proximity to clashes, forced evacuations, and infrastructure disruption. The standard transfer value is UAH 3,600 per person per month, based on MEB methodology estimating the income gap. One-off payments aim to cover three months. R-MPCA forms a critical rapid response system during acute crises, providing urgent cash to newly displaced and frontline communities when extensive assessments are impossible. It rapidly injects cash amidst sudden shocks, before longer, more targeted assistance can be operationalised, and stimulates local markets through cash injections. So far in 2023, R-MPCA has only accounted for 20 per cent of MPCA. This is largely due to the relatively small number of new IDPs and the population size in frontline areas directly affected by air strikes or shelling.

The 2023 HRP aims to provide R-MPCA to up to 2.8 million individuals over three months, at a total cost of USD 504,936,990, rising to USD 605,924,388 and including 20 per cent support costs. However, only a fraction of this has been utilized so far in 2023. R-MPCA forms a critical rapid response system during acute crises, providing urgent cash to newly displaced and frontline communities when extensive assessments are impossible.

4.2 Emergency Cash Assistance (ECA)

Objective	Provide urgent multi-purpose cash assistance to vulnerable conflict-affected households to meet basic needs.
Target Groups	Households displaced for over 30 days; vulnerable households in at-risk areas and falling below the minimum subsistence level following the assessment; households headed by a minor under 18 years or a caregiver whose score is not more than double the minimum subsistence level; large families with six or more members may also warrant special consideration if their score marginally exceeds the threshold.
Triggers for Assistance	Displacement for over 30 days; residing in at-risk areas within 40 km of frontlines; deemed socio-economically vulnerable per eligibility assessment.
Transfer Value	UAH 3,600 (USD 98.87) per person and per month, average household size has been on average 2.5, so the average UAH per household per month is UAH 9,000 (USD 247.18)
Frequency	Usually, a one-off transfer covering three months, but no agreement or CWG recommendations.
Duration	Three months as general and recommended practice
Modalities	Unrestricted/unconditional cash
Coordination Mechanism	CWG
Monitoring	Vulnerability assessment, including socio-economic criteria to determine eligibility Post-Distribution Monitoring MPC Dashboard

Emergency Cash Assistance (ECA) complements R-MPCA by providing aid to vulnerable households based on vulnerability assessments. Its objective is to meet basic needs through sustained monthly transfers while durable solutions are under development.

The primary target groups for ECA are:

- Households displaced for over 30 days
- Vulnerable residents of high-risk areas

ECA eligibility relies on certain socio-economic vulnerability criteria¹¹⁶ which aim to examine factors like demographics, displacement status, income sources, documentation status, shelter and living conditions, and other key factors. The PMT has been piloted and findings are currently being compiled. ECA continues to meet urgent needs in a flexible, dignified manner while longer-term solutions are developed.

Most agencies provide one-off assistance for three months, even if there are no recommendations from the CWG. The CWG provides guidance, but organizations make autonomous decisions based on mandates and resources. Some agencies making bank transfers split the total transfer amount into monthly instalments. In case of international transfers, multiple transfers were also utilised to stay below the capital control limit of UAH 5,400 for international transfers. This disbursement approach allows agencies to provide continued assistance while staying within Ukraine's capital control rules.

¹¹⁶ IOM, OCHA, Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance Targeting Framework, May 2023. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/multi-purpose-cash-assistance-targeting-framework-may-2023-enuk> and Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance Endorsed Emergency Targeting Framework, August 2023. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/multi-purpose-cash-assistance-endorsed-emergency-targeting-framework-august-2023>

4.3 Intersectoral Strategy and Planning for Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance

As mandated by the ICCG, the CWG in Ukraine, in line with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee-endorsed (IASC) cash coordination model, undertakes an intersectoral response analysis and strategy development for MPCA and then makes recommendations to the ICCG, which reviews and endorses the recommendations for inclusion in the HRP or escalates the recommendations for discussions and agreement at the HCT level, if there is need for strategic decisions concerning the shape of the response. The current intersectoral response analysis does not detail linkages between sector-led CVA programming with preliminary discussions happening at Dnipro sub-national CWG level.

The scale of MPCA has adapted over time based on changing needs, resources, and capacity. In 2023, the HRP targeted 4.44 million people for MPCA, with USD 958.6 million in funding required. For 2024,¹¹⁷ the target has been decreased to 2.07 million people¹¹⁸ (a 54 per cent reduction compared to 2023), given reduced funding projections, an increased transfer value and a few partners largely phasing out of MPCA towards social protection top-ups. The budget requirement is USD 677.5 million for a three-month MPCA duration. Geographical focus remains on the heavily impacted east and south.

HRP 2023 MPCA Target		HNRP 2024 Target	
Oblast	Target	Oblast	Target
Dnipropetrovska	414,881	Kharkivska	344,739
Kharkivska	383,325	Zaporizka	256,816
Donetska	346,773	Dnipropetrovska	222,984
Zaporizka	341,052	Khersonska	218,198
Sumska	288,031	Mykolaivska	186,887
Mykolaivska	285,940	Donetska	186,838
Odeska	264,396	Sumska	151,466
Luhanska	264,130	Odeska	146,010
Khersonska	257,602	Kyivska	68,575
Chernivetska	202,169	Chernivetska	55,171
Poltavska	200,943	Poltavska	37,595
Kyivska	188,325	Chernihivska	34,071
Kirovohradska	163,339	Lvivska	33,618
Lvivska	104,927	Khmelnyska	21,208
Zhytomyrska	90,589	Cherkaska	17,643
Vinnytska	88,535	Luhanska	16,530
Khmelnyska	87,913	Vinnytska	15,286
Chernihivska	85,800	Kirovohradska	13,725
Zakarpatska	71,105	Kyiv	9,743
Cherkaska	66,827	Ivano-Frankivska	8,703
Kyiv	65,728	Zhytomyrska	8,527
Ivano-Frankivska	63,979	Zakarpatska	7,661
Rivnenska	49,335	Ternopil'ska	2,496
Ternopil'ska	43,936	Volyn'ska	1,664
Volyn'ska	18,545	Rivnenska	1,664
Aut. Republic of Crimea	0	Aut. Republic of Crimea	0
Sevastopol	0	Sevastopol	0
Total	4,438,125	Total	2,067,818

Table 4. MPCA targets by region for 2023 and 2024

¹¹⁷ <https://data.humdata.org/dataset/019de7ad-8043-4755-b1fb-f84ce4b961a5/resource/1b18d457-e000-40de-b442-f79d83d72d76/download/ukraine-2023-hrp-response-activities-and-targets-for-hdx-20230425.xlsx>

¹¹⁸ Cash Working Group, Ukraine CWG Response Planning PPT, 27 September 2023

4.4 Targeting of Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance

4.4.1 Targeting Development: No-Regrets, Vulnerability Categories, Vulnerability Ranking

The no-regrets approach is defined by the IASC within their Standard Operating Procedures of the Humanitarian system-wide scale-up activation¹¹⁹ as the immediate allocation of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) by the Emergency Relief Coordinator within 72 hours of the crisis, and the deployment of the Inter-Agency Rapid Response Mechanism to support in-country needs and coordination. In the CALP Network's thematic paper related to Ukraine,¹²⁰ it is referred to as the foregoing of certain verification steps and acceptance of a certain degree of inclusion error to more quickly assist people in need.

As of March 2022, the CWG agreed to have an inclusion-focused targeting framework,¹²¹ with criteria allowing blanket inclusion of specific groups with no articulated exclusion criteria. Meeting one or more criteria was justification for inclusion but did not necessarily mean CWG actors would exclude people based on any specific criteria being met or not. The CWG targeting guidance has the value of recommendations and organisations would remain autonomous to select targeting criteria relevant to their mandate and assistance objectives, with the potential addition of commonly agreed vulnerability criteria.¹²²

As the response continued, agencies began to refine their strategies, enhancing inclusion by reinforcing collaboration with local authorities and incorporating more in-person verifications. However, the categorical eligibility of the initial methods proved less effective than vulnerability-based targeting, leading to a pivot towards increased on-the-ground direct registration approaches and related community outreach.

From August 2022 and with recognition that resources were limited, the targeting framework was revised¹²³ to prioritize those with specific needs for MPCA. The targeting framework covered two key components: first, those who are in rapid emergency situations and require fast, ad-hoc MPCA disbursements, and second, those in emergency settings who require cash disbursements due to protracted displacement, and those meeting certain social-economic vulnerability criteria.

Target groups were proposed for two overall categories of assistance:

R-MPCA to meet the needs of:

- IDP households which have been displaced within the last 30 days
- Households residing in areas of armed conflict where conflict is ongoing
- Households affected by sudden shelling

ECA to meet the needs of:

- IDP households displaced for more than 30 days and who meet socio-economic and vulnerability criteria
- Households residing in areas where armed conflict has taken place in the last four months, who meet socio-economic and vulnerability criteria

¹¹⁹ Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), Standard Operating Procedures, Humanitarian System-Wide Scale-up Activation, Protocol 1: Definition and Procedures, November 2018. Link: <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/sites/default/files/migrated/2020-11/Protocol%201.%20Humanitarian%20System-Wide%20Scale-Up%20Activation-%20Definition%20and%20Procedures%2C%202018.pdf>

¹²⁰ Tanea, Diana and Vicente Palacios, Registration, Targeting and Deduplication: Emergency Response inside Ukraine, Thematic Paper, CALP Network, August 2022. Link: <https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Registration-Targeting-and-Deduplication-Emergency-Response-inside-Ukraine-Thematic-paper-1.pdf>

¹²¹ Ukraine CWG Task Team 1 on Targeting – Targeting strategies and criteria, 22 March, 2022

¹²² Definitions of households: 1) Households (HH) with children – extracted from demographic data of HH adult members plus child members (whether personal data or total number of boys/girls); 2) Single-headed HH – extracted from demographic data of HH adult members; 3) Female-headed HH – extracted from demographic data of HH adult members; 4) HH with pregnant/lactating women – extracted from vulnerability criteria; 5) HH with elderly (including single/elderly-headed HHs) – extracted from demographic data of HH adult members; 6) HH with disabled (mental or physical) members – extracted from vulnerability criteria; 7) HH with members who have chronic illness/medical conditions – extracted from vulnerability criteria.

¹²³ OCHA, Ukraine Cash Working Group, Task Team 1: Targeting Framework – August 2022. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-cash-working-group-task-team-1-targeting-aug-2022>

In conclusion, it is likely that categorical targeting, both in the initial phase and after more comprehensive vulnerability targeting guidelines were introduced in August 2022, caused some groups to be over or under-assisted compared to others as the vulnerability categories lacked weights which led humanitarian actors to weigh them according to their mandates, developing individual disconnected vulnerability models. This assumption cannot be fully verified as MPCA is currently reported across both R-MPCA and ECA, however, as ECA has been the predominant MPCA assistance package, it is highly likely.

Organization	Number of Beneficiaries	Girls	Boys	Women	Men	Elderly Women	Elderly Men	Disabled
Action Against Hunger (AAH)	24220	10%	11%	25%	15%	25%	14%	20%
Adventist Development and Relief Agency Ukraine (ADRA Ukraine)	43529	10%	10%	28%	21%	20%	11%	8%
Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)	154744	6%	7%	24%	22%	26%	15%	14%
Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund Deutschland e.V. (ASB)	18600	19%	20%	33%	10%	13%	5%	14%
CARE Ukraine (CARE)	12595	8%	9%	23%	9%	33%	17%	6%
CARITAS-SPES Ukraine (CSPESUA)	2618	5%	6%	19%	14%	35%	20%	1%
Caritas Odesa (Caritas Odesa)	3964	11%	12%	26%	11%	27%	14%	15%
Caritas Ukraine (CaritasUA)	92764	11%	12%	21%	9%	31%	16%	29%
Caritas-Spes Odesa (CSPES Odesa)	5213	14%	15%	30%	13%	20%	8%	5%
Cesvi Fondazione Onlus (CESVI)	3324	23%	25%	31%	8%	11%	3%	15%
ChildFund Deutschland (CFDE)	251	12%	24%	39%	19%	5%	1%	15%
DanChurchAid (DCA)	264	12%	14%	21%	12%	24%	17%	7%
Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	6534	12%	14%	23%	14%	24%	13%	0%
Dorcas Ukraine (DUA)	24591	13%	14%	26%	12%	23%	12%	44%
Estonian Refugee Council (ERC)	60457	19%	20%	31%	14%	11%	6%	7%
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)*	40312	10%	12%	26%	22%	18%	12%	10%
HEKS/EPER Swiss Church Aid (HEKS-EPER)	14347	9%	12%	26%	19%	22%	12%	18%
Help - Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe eM. (HELP e.V.)	2189	4%	4%	28%	23%	24%	18%	9%
HelpAge International (HAI)	4075	0%	0%	0%	0%	72%	28%	19%
Humanity & Inclusion (HI)	2347	14%	15%	25%	21%	16%	10%	25%
Hungarian Interchurch Aid (HIA)	2432	16%	16%	25%	7%	25%	11%	6%
International Medical Corps (IMC)	335	0%	0%	31%	9%	40%	20%	24%
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	376425	8%	9%	29%	20%	23%	12%	6%
International Rescue Committee (IRC)	44077	11%	12%	28%	21%	18%	10%	11%
Joint Emergency Response in Ukraine (JERU)	64984	12%	12%	28%	17%	21%	11%	11%
Medair (Medair)	16966	14%	15%	26%	14%	20%	12%	14%
Mercy Corps (MC)	143777	10%	11%	29%	21%	20%	10%	32%
Nippon International Cooperation for Community Development	400	15%	11%	32%	23%	11%	8%	15%
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)*	116073	24%	27%	27%	15%	5%	2%	5%
People In Need (PIN)	119901	11%	12%	31%	19%	18%	10%	6%
Plan International (PI)	2423	23%	22%	36%	15%	3%	1%	6%
Polish Humanitarian Action (PAH)	6501	6%	7%	17%	12%	37%	21%	46%
Pomogaem (PMG)	454	22%	25%	28%	10%	12%	3%	15%
Right to Protection (R2P)	40785	17%	18%	29%	12%	16%	9%	5%
SOS Children's Villages (SOSCV)	13067	31%	32%	35%	2%	0%	0%	2%
Save the Children (SCI)	90402	12%	12%	26%	19%	20%	12%	26%
Sign of Hope (SoH)	430	0%	0%	0%	0%	77%	24%	23%
Soleterre (Soleterre)	1526	17%	19%	24%	13%	18%	10%	16%
Solidar Suisse (SSW)	2268	13%	15%	18%	9%	30%	16%	21%
Solidarites International (SI)	15234	10%	10%	37%	17%	16%	9%	13%

Organization	Number of Beneficiaries	Girls	Boys	Women	Men	Elderly Women	Elderly Men	Disabled
Triangle Generation Humanitaire (Triangle)	5178	19%	20%	30%	11%	13%	6%	6%
Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS)	223468	10%	12%	19%	28%	12%	20%	11%
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	220181	23%	25%	31%	15%	4%	1%	9%
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	565263	10%	10%	28%	15%	24%	12%	7%
Unity for the Future (UFF)	7475	26%	27%	33%	7%	5%	3%	22%
Volkshilfe Österreich (Volkshilfe)	3606	30%	21%	25%	25%	0%	0%	0%
WeWorld - ChildFund Alliance (WW)	1944	15%	15%	23%	29%	9%	10%	9%
Welthungerhilfe (WHH)	1022	14%	16%	33%	21%	10%	6%	9%
Women Consortium of Ukraine (WCU)	1585	12%	13%	26%	23%	17%	9%	9%
World Food Programme (WFP)	1278519	0%	0%	37%	19%	33%	10%	0%
World Vision International (WVI)	131472	14%	13%	41%	19%	8%	4%	15%
ZOA (ZOA)	5631	12%	11%	26%	16%	25%	10%	6%

* Data on age and gender disaggregation is absent for certain beneficiaries. While the 'Total Number of Beneficiaries' encompasses all beneficiaries, the percentage was computed solely using age and gender information.

Table 5. Targeting Profile of Different CWG Partners for 2022, as reported by the CWG

Organization	Number of Beneficiaries	Girls	Boys	Women	Men	Elderly Women	Elderly Men	Disabled
Action Against Hunger (AAH)	16637	10%	11%	24%	13%	26%	15%	20%
Adventist Development and Relief Agency Ukraine (ADRA Ukraine)	29632	9%	9%	28%	22%	20%	11%	6%
Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)	133201	6%	6%	24%	22%	27%	15%	17%
Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund Deutschland e.V. (ASB)	6821	19%	20%	37%	11%	9%	4%	13%
CARE Ukraine (CARE)	5147	2%	3%	20%	10%	42%	23%	6%
CARITAS-SPES Ukraine (CSPESUA)	2108	3%	4%	16%	14%	40%	24%	0%
Caritas Odesa (Caritas Odesa)	1703	12%	14%	28%	10%	23%	11%	15%
Caritas Ukraine (CaritasUA)	86651	11%	12%	21%	10%	31%	16%	30%
Cesvi Fondazione Onlus (CESVI)	3326	23%	25%	31%	8%	11%	3%	15%
DanChurchAid (DCA)	264	12%	14%	21%	12%	24%	17%	7%
Dorcas Ukraine (DUA)	21301	14%	14%	27%	12%	22%	11%	46%
Estonian Refugee Council (ERC)	49106	19%	21%	32%	14%	10%	5%	7%
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)*	20721	10%	12%	26%	21%	20%	12%	15%
HEKS/EPER Swiss Church Aid (HEKS-EPER)	10411	9%	12%	25%	20%	23%	12%	16%
Help - Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe eM. (HELP e.V.)	258	12%	10%	30%	23%	17%	10%	11%
HelpAge International (HAI)	324	18%	25%	18%	15%	16%	9%	22%
Hungarian Interchurch Aid (HIA)	1044	14%	16%	23%	8%	26%	13%	6%
International Medical Corps (IMC)	281	0%	0%	31%	9%	40%	20%	24%
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	330957	8%	9%	29%	20%	22%	12%	6%
International Rescue Committee (IRC)	31208	10%	11%	22%	19%	24%	15%	11%
Joint Emergency Response in Ukraine (JERU)	49759	12%	13%	29%	18%	19%	9%	9%
Medair (Medair)	3394	14%	14%	26%	16%	20%	11%	8%
Mercy Corps (MC)	104417	11%	12%	30%	21%	18%	9%	30%
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)*	96062	26%	29%	26%	13%	4%	2%	5%
People In Need (PIN)	6478	10%	11%	31%	21%	18%	10%	15%
Plan International (PI)	1369	22%	20%	38%	15%	4%	1%	6%

Organization	Number of Beneficiaries	Girls	Boys	Women	Men	Elderly Women	Elderly Men	Disabled
Polish Humanitarian Action (PAH)	3151	6%	7%	16%	14%	37%	20%	35%
Right to Protection (R2P)	40785	17%	18%	29%	12%	16%	9%	5%
Save the Children (SCI)	68752	12%	13%	26%	18%	19%	11%	25%
Soleterre (Soleterre)	1473	17%	19%	24%	13%	18%	10%	16%
Solidar Suisse (SSW)	1844	13%	15%	18%	8%	31%	15%	21%
Solidarites International (SI)	13857	10%	10%	37%	17%	16%	10%	13%
Triangle Generation Humanitaire (Triangle)	4459	20%	21%	30%	11%	12%	5%	4%
Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS)	223442	14%	14%	15%	20%	15%	21%	11%
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	189684	27%	30%	25%	16%	2%	1%	11%
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	441100	8%	9%	34%	22%	18%	9%	1%
Unity for the Future (UFF)	4057	22%	23%	34%	9%	8%	4%	31%
Volkshilfe Österreich (Volkshilfe)	2508	20%	19%	29%	16%	10%	6%	12%
WeWorld - ChildFund Alliance (WW)	1944	15%	15%	23%	29%	9%	10%	9%
Welthungerhilfe (WHH)	1022	14%	16%	33%	21%	10%	6%	9%
Women Consortium of Ukraine (WCU)	1000	9%	10%	27%	25%	19%	10%	5%
World Food Programme (WFP)	1236182	4%	1%	26%	20%	36%	13%	0%
World Vision International (WVI)	31641	11%	12%	33%	14%	20%	10%	15%
ZOA (ZOA)	2475	12%	8%	27%	19%	26%	9%	8%
Total	3281956	9%	9%	27%	19%	25%	12%	7%

* Sometimes data on age and gender disaggregation is absent, in such cases the 'Total Number of Beneficiaries' encompasses all beneficiaries, the percentage was computed solely using age and gender information.

Table 6. Targeting Profile of Different CWG Partners for 2023, as reported by the CWG

4.4.2 Current Targeting Framework: Speed and Stability Pathways and Challenges with Proxy Means-Testing

As the response matured, and funding was becoming less abundant while operational capacities to register potential beneficiaries substantially increased, more emphasis was put on rationalising the available resources to target the most vulnerable. This inevitably translated into a push to move away from targeting based on vulnerability categories towards vulnerability ranking for ECA as shown in the figure below:

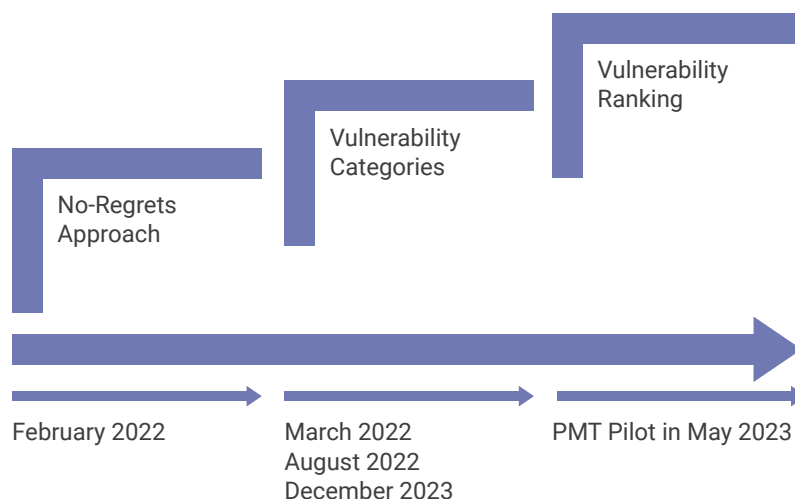


Figure 19. ECA targeting development

In November 2022, Task Team 1 was reconvened to further revise the targeting framework for MPCA in Ukraine.¹²⁴ This process resulted in refinement of categories of assistance to:

- R-MPCA to target those displaced from and residents close to areas of active hostilities, and
- ECA for those in protracted displacement or residing further way from the frontline.

R-MPCA is designed to promptly address the critical basic needs of individuals and households who have recently been or are currently directly impacted by the war, specifically in areas where a comprehensive vulnerability assessment is not operationally viable. ECA is a programme designed to support conflict-affected individuals and households that do not qualify under the R-MPCA framework. Its goal is to help these groups meet their critical needs through consumption support, specifically in areas where a full vulnerability assessment is feasible.

ECA targets households displaced for more than 30 days or those residing more than 40 km from the frontline, which are found to be socio-economically vulnerable following a type of Proxy Means Test (PMT) that was under piloting as of September 2023 by UNHCR and IOM and estimates household consumption based on several factors such as household demographics, head of household employment status, type of shelter, access to utilities, and possession of essential civil documentation. The PMT was based on analysis from data from a multi-sector needs assessment at household level.

The PMT consists of a household questionnaire and scoring model. A household qualifies for ECA if its estimated consumption falls below the inflation-adjusted minimum subsistence level (MSL), currently set at UAH 5,865 per person per month. However, exceptions exist and households with any adult member in full-time employment, including self-employment, are ineligible, even if their score falls below the MSL. Households headed by a minor (below 18) or a primary caregiver would be eligible if their score is above but not more than double the MSL.

Results from PMT scoring framework piloting are currently being analysed and, based on the findings, a decision will be taken whether to formally endorse it. The aim of the framework was to understand, at household level, whether different demographic, physical, infrastructural, and economic characteristics predict proxies for 'vulnerability'. Vulnerability was defined through 'expenditure', or a lack of ability to spend enough to cover essential needs. Through the modelling, variables were found that were able to predict consumption levels of households (e.g. owning a smartphone predicts an increase in consumption, and missing civil documents predicts a decrease in consumption). For each variable, it was deduced why the model predicted such a consumption trend (e.g. owning a smartphone represents the ability to afford one, and access to the internet meaning access to news, opportunities, online work, etc.; missing civil documents was predicted to decrease consumption as it could represent difficulty in accessing services and formal employment).

The proposal is to use this PMT modelling to predict if a household's level of consumption is below or above the inflation-adjusted MEB, and to include in humanitarian cash programmes anyone who falls under the consumption threshold (depending on funding allowances).

Several organizations have raised key concerns regarding this proposed approach:

- The model did not include data (or the sample was too small) on some traditional protection variables (e.g. unaccompanied children, female single parents, caretaking responsibilities) and disability did not show up as associated with consumption, despite the dataset including it. This may have also been the case considering that it was established based on Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA) data and thus shares its potential limitations.
- Ukraine has reliable income data and therefore, questions have been raised as to whether a PMT is necessary in the Ukraine context (PMTs are normally used in contexts where income data is unavailable, and assumptions need to be made about people's income levels).
- Despite the modelling testing an exclusion error of 6 per cent, PMTs are notoriously exclusionary when applied in the field and are also more expensive to administer (more admin is needed to collect and process data, etc.). Agencies are still waiting for the results of the pilots to see if they deem the PMT accurate.

¹²⁴ IOM, OCHA, Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance Targeting Framework, May 2023. June 2023. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/multi-purpose-cash-assistance-targeting-framework-may-2023-enuk?>

As of October 2023, agencies employed a mixed approach to beneficiary identification and registration, combining online and in-person methods as feasible. With the fluid situation, obtaining a detailed breakdown of targeting approaches in use is not possible for this report, even though a high-level overview of targeting criteria used by humanitarian actors is maintained by the CWG.¹²⁵ While the PMT model is being piloted, it is clear that limitations to categorical targeting persist and that if not PMT, another model that enables vulnerability ranking is needed to ensure needs-based distribution of the limited available resources. The targeting landscape continues to evolve with the protracted war, requiring ongoing adaptation and coordination within the CWG.

4.4.3 Emergency MPCA Guidelines: Enabling Local Coordination for Emergency Response

The Emergency MPCA Guideline developed by the sub-national CWG was endorsed by national CWG partners on 28 August 2023 and is reviewed by the sub-national CWG Emergency MPCA Task Force Team every two months (or depending on needs).

The Emergency MPCA Guideline¹²⁶ aims to provide the foundation to work towards a common goal in a coordinated manner when responding to emergency situations. Emergency requires immediate action to complement local authorities' responses when needed and to be implemented in close coordination with them and with the Inter Cluster Working Group (ICWG). Even if cash assistance, including MPCA, is only one of the available emergency response modalities, it might require more time than other types of aid distribution due to registration, de-duplication, and delivery processes. So far, there is no evidence to support this argument. However, flexibility, standardization, coordination, and collaboration frame this guideline, while it adopts a beneficiary-focused approach.

The flowchart presented below in Figure 20 highlights the eight steps recommended in case of emergencies where MPCA is relevant, with defined tasks, responsible stakeholders, and clear timeframe and communication channels.

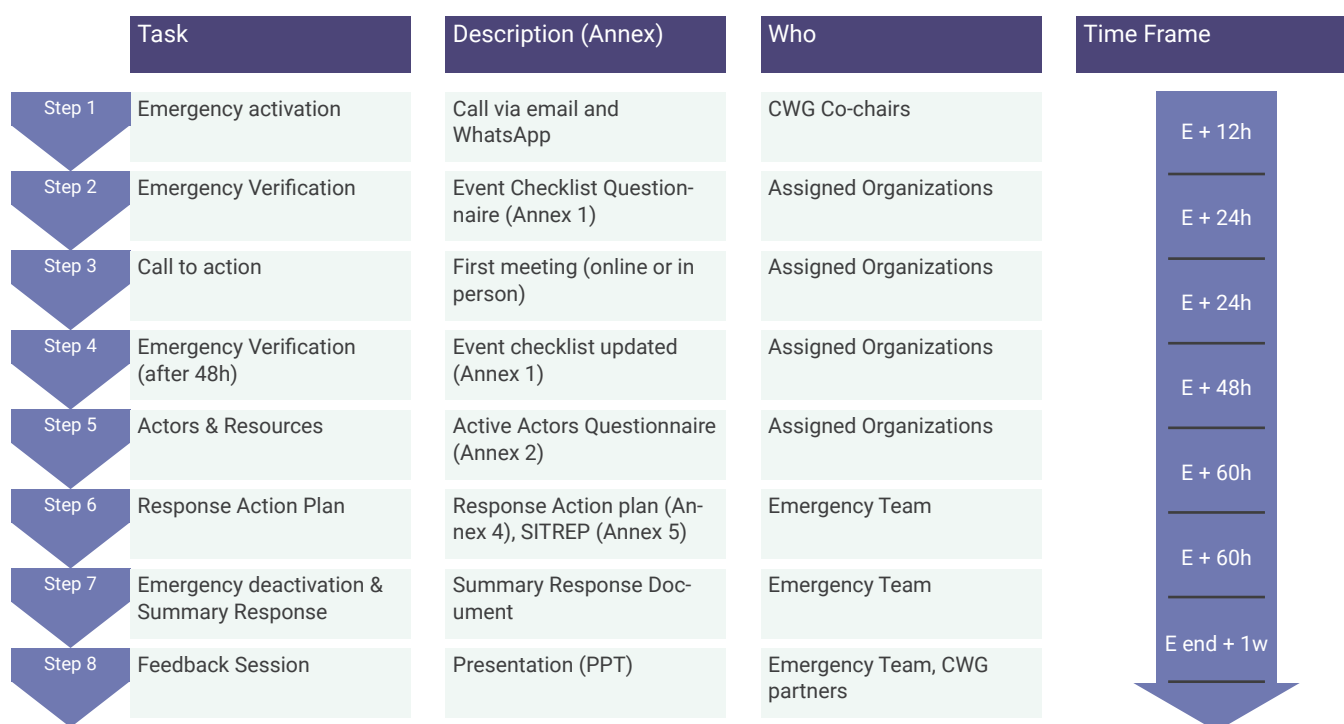


Figure 20. Emergency MPCA flowchart (adapted by the PeReHID Initiative)

¹²⁵ It is important to note that the overview is not consistently maintained, with some actors appearing in the list occasionally; this could indicate either changes in their programming with MPCA being potentially discontinued, or lack of systematic engagement by the actors distributing MPCA. There are four overviews available as of October 2023: August 2023: [https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-multi-purpose-cash-programmes-information-affected-population-16-march-2023-enuk](https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-multi-purpose-cash-programmes-information-affected-population-thu-aug-31-2023-enuk?_gl=1*1fu4yj4*_ga*NzcOTk3MjE1LjE2OTIxODgwMDg.*_ga_E60ZNX2F68*MTY5OTMwMjQ3NC4yNS4wLjE2OTkzMjE0NzQuNjAuMC4w; March 2023: <a href=); September 2022: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-multi-purpose-cash-programmes-information-affected-population-14-september-2022-enuk>; April 2022: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-multi-purpose-cash-programmes-information-affected-population-20-april-2022>

¹²⁶ IOM, OCHA, Ukraine Cash Working Group - Emergency Multipurpose Cash Assistance, Guideline as of 28 August 2023, September 2023. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-cash-working-group-emergency-multipurpose-cash-assistance-guideline-28th-august-2023-enukr>

Three potential and frequent scenarios are proposed in the current context of Ukraine:

- mass movement of people
- military-related event
- natural hazards and man-made events

The guideline introduces a new concept into the Ukraine CVA response, zooming in on area-based coordination of CVA. It provides a solid basis and understanding of organizations functioning in specific areas and their interaction with local authorities. This is an ongoing process, where evidence and lessons learned are generated to enhance efficiency. A collaborative approach with strong involvement of local authorities has the potential to foster better alignment between the humanitarian CVA response and assistance provided by the Government in general, and the social protection system in particular. It also guides resource allocation as only a limited number of responders are assigned to response to a particular emergency, preventing 'over assistance'.

4.5 Findings and Recommendations on Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance

Key Findings

- MPCA has formed a cornerstone of Ukraine's humanitarian response, delivering the bulk of emergency assistance. As reported by the CWG, in 2023 partners had planned 63 per cent R-MPCA and 37 per cent ECA. At the end of the year, a poll showed they estimated having done 20 per cent R-MPCA and 80 per cent ECA. This trend can be accounted for by the lack of frontline movement and new IDPs.
- Beneficiary targeting evolved from status-based eligibility towards more needs-based, applying multi-dimensional vulnerability criteria. However, calibration of targeting strategies and MPCA package design is needed to better delineate the humanitarian space and enable vulnerability ranking in the light of diminishing resources.
- The development of a humanitarian Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB), endorsed in August 2023, enabled alignment of MPCA transfer values (increasing from UAH 2,200 to UAH 3,600) with the costs of basic living needs amidst high inflation, which represented 26.6 per cent at the end of 2022.
- Efforts to de-duplicate MPCA have been crucial in ensuring efficiency of aid distribution. In 2023, prevention of unintended overlap resulted in savings amounting to USD 163.2 million.
- The area-based coordination of MPCA faced challenges with cases of geographic overlap between agencies, which could be reduced by investing in preparedness and coordination. The Emergency MPCA Guideline introduced in August 2023 represents a significant improvement.

Key Recommendations

- While Rapid MPCA (R-MPCA) addresses immediate needs, is trigger based, and prioritises speed, it requires a move away from a blanket approach, especially for frontline areas unaffected by direct shocks. A parallel focus must be maintained on more targeted assistance, the Emergency Cash Assistance (ECA), which aims to provide long-term assistance for protracted caseloads. The implementation of ECA should be more focused on life-saving assistance in areas where the Government is unable to provide social assistance. However, calibrating the business case for ECA is essential as areas where CVA is feasible correlate and often overlap with areas where state social protection benefits are accessible. This is especially important in view of Transitional Cash Assistance that uses government programmes as delivery vehicles for humanitarian assistance (vertical expansion of some of the existing social safety nets).
- The MPCA targeting model needs to be reviewed to enable vulnerability ranking while adopting a social protection lens and, optimally, to serve as a basis for (or element of) an inter-sector vulnerability assessment framework. This may involve review of R-MPCA and ECA modalities.
- Regular (at least annual) MEB reviews are needed to maintain adequacy of MPCA. Benchmarks, such as inflation change over a three-month period that would trigger MEB review should be set by the CWG in collaboration with the HCT. Equally, MEB reviews should be time-boxed to ensure evaluations are effective, including adequate

review of the transfer value, recalibrating it with the number of people in need and resourcing available. Closer coordination with the Government related to MPCA transfer value is encouraged, moving away from a one-way consultative process.

- The referral mechanism between MPCA and other sectors for improved area-based coordination should be strengthened, fostering best practice such as the Emergency MPCA Guideline to inform equitable and coordinated distribution of assistance.

5. Sectoral Deployment of Cash and Voucher Assistance

This section scrutinizes the deployment of CVA within four key sectors characterized by their use of CVA programming: 1) Food Security and Livelihoods, 2) Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, 3) Non-Food Item and Shelter, and 4) Protection. It assesses the alignment of CVA with the strategic response and cluster objectives in these sectors. This exploration highlights the nuanced application of CVA, from broader MPCA addressing basic needs, to more targeted sector-specific cash top-ups and standalone CVA initiatives valid as of October 2023, when data were available. To maintain consistency, we assessed, for each cluster, the following three layers:

1. Sector needs included in MPCA.
2. Sector-specific needs addressed via CVA top-up programmes responding to seasonal needs. These top-ups utilise MPCA as a delivery vehicle, building on MPCA targeting strategy.
3. Sector-specific needs addressed via stand-alone CVA programmes. These programmes are targeted using sector-specific targeting strategies and technical expertise.

5.1 Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster

The Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster (FSLC) in Ukraine, led by the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and Food and Agriculture Organization in Ukraine, coordinates emergency food assistance and fosters economic self-sufficiency for conflict-affected populations, focusing on immediate food access and restoration of livelihoods.¹²⁷

In 2022, the number of people in need of food and livelihood assistance jumped by 845 per cent, from 1.1 million in 2021 to 9.3 million. Food insecurity became an issue in most parts of Ukraine, particularly affecting rural households and small-holder farmers. Through 70 partners, 12.2 million Ukrainians nationwide received food and livelihood assistance in 2022, including in-kind food parcels, emergency rations, and different forms of livelihood support activities.¹²⁸ Most food assistance was provided in three regions: eastern Donetsk and Kharkiv and southern Zaporizhzhia oblasts. As a result, 50 per cent of the people reached received general food assistance, 40 per cent emergency food kits, 8 per cent hot meals, while the remaining 2 per cent received various livelihood support.

By September 2023, food assistance in Ukraine reached 2,709,433 people, achieving 74 per cent of the Humanitarian Response Plan's target. A diverse array of aid was provided: 78.7 per cent received general food parcels, 9.5 per cent got rapid response rations, 11.6 per cent benefited from hot meals, and 0.2 per cent were given relief vouchers. Aid distribution prioritized IDPs (32 per cent), non-displaced residents (65 per cent), and returnees (2 per cent), with women making up 61 per cent of the recipients. Most of the assistance was focused on frontline regions: Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolaiv, and Sumy oblasts. Forty partners reported on this coordinated effort, with 77 entities executing the plan. This network included national and international organizations dedicated to addressing the food crisis in Ukraine.

¹²⁷ Food Security Cluster, About [Ukraine], accessed November 4, 2023

¹²⁸ OCHA, Ukraine, Humanitarian Response

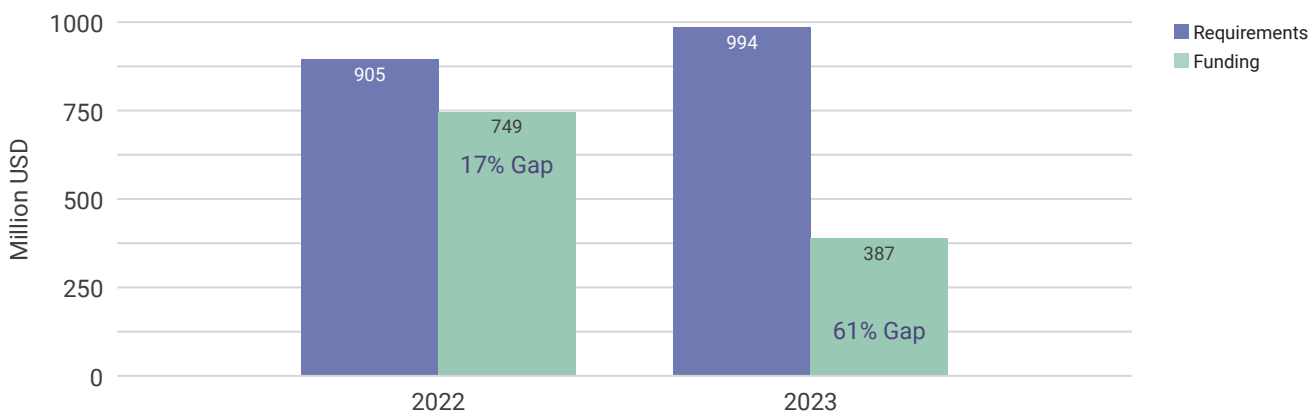


Figure 21. Food Security and Livelihoods – Funding by year (Source: FTS, January 2024)

Coverage (Actual/Planning) January 2023 to December 2023

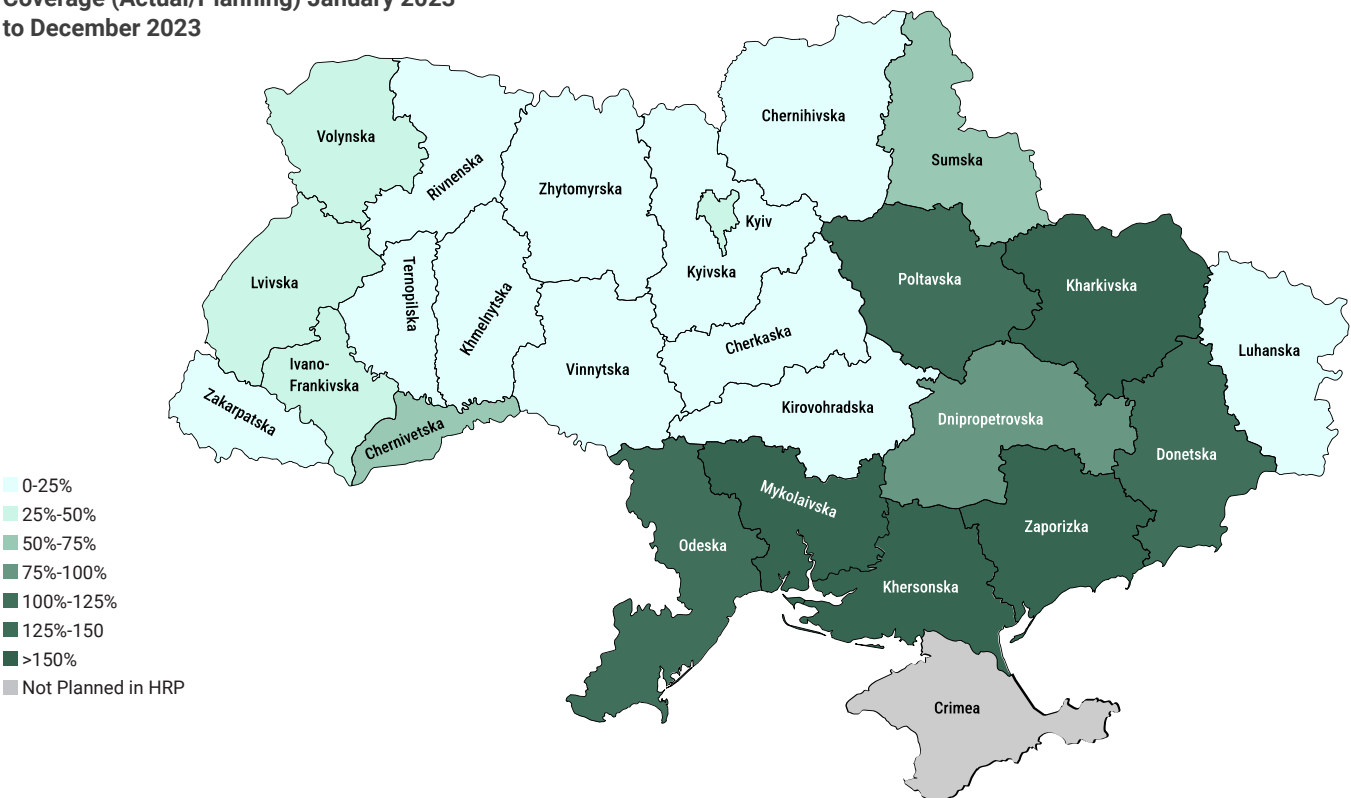
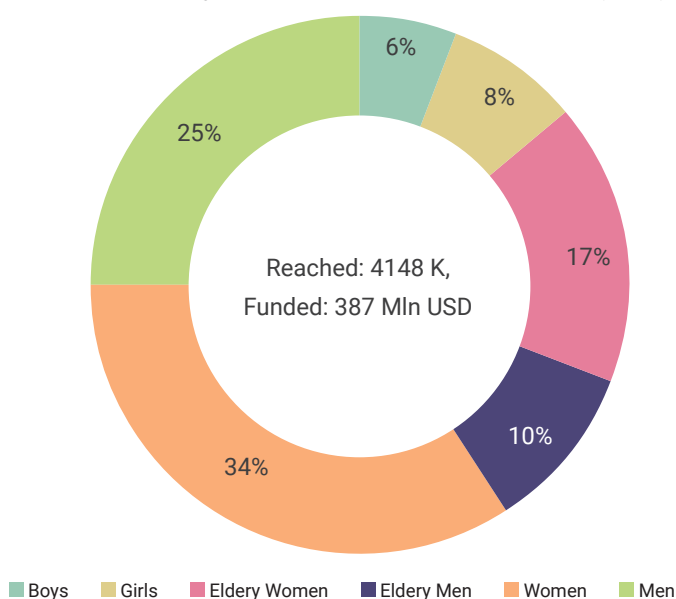
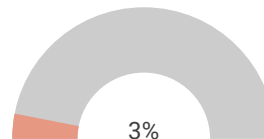


Figure 22. Food Security and Livelihoods – Planning vs actual caseloads in 2023 (Source: FSLC, December 2023)

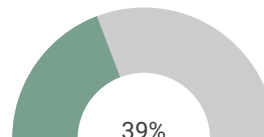
People Reached by Age-Gender As of December 2023 (ICCG)



% of Disabled As of December 2023 (ICCG)



Funding Coverage As of December 2023 (FTS)



People Reached Against HRP Targets As of December 2023 (ICCG)

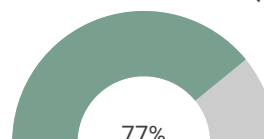


Figure 23. Number of people reached disaggregated by age and gender, as of December 2023

5.1.1 Response Strategy

The FSLC has crafted a unified strategy and established a conceptual framework to support war-affected vulnerable households in Ukraine. In the HRP 2023, the FSLC outlined two specific sectoral objectives:

- Objective 1: To ensure immediate access to food for food-insecure people through life-saving assistance.
- Objective 2: To strengthen vulnerable conflict-affected households' self-reliance and contribute to their economic capacity by protecting and restoring agricultural and non-agricultural livelihoods.

Prioritizing IDPs, war-affected non-displaced persons, returnees, rural families, income-less individuals, older people, persons with disabilities, and large households, the FSLC provides a combination of in-kind food assistance, voucher assistance, agriculture and livestock inputs, non-agricultural inputs, and cash assistance (mainly MPCA).¹²⁹

While the highest number of beneficiaries living in hard-to-reach areas received in-kind food assistance, the FSLC is refining its market-based approach to select the adequate type of assistance, increase effectiveness, strengthen coordination at sub-national levels, and enhance de-duplication of MPCA and in-kind food assistance beneficiaries. In addition, the FSLC provides guidelines on targeting, modality selection, transfer values and food basket composition to align partners' response, ensuring that financial assistance is in line with market prices and that food parcels meet caloric requirements: 2,100 kcal for the severely food insecure and 1,600 kcal for the moderately food insecure daily. The FSLC relies on the JMMI for up-to-date market data, vital for shaping assistance that is relevant to specific economic conditions.

Continued analysis of market functionality, affordability trends and vulnerability is key to evidence-based assistance putting people at the centre of their own recovery. Regular review of the food basket cost and market monitoring enables the FSLC to recommend adjustments when significant food price changes are detected.

5.1.2 Sector Needs Included in MPCA

The support delivered by the FSLC was augmented by MPCA provided to households, designed to cover the equivalent value of the food basket, which enables the purchase of 2,100 kcal per person per day. The monthly cost of these calories is set at UAH 2,324, ensuring families can afford adequate nutrition despite the conflict, however, the specific needs of more narrowly defined target groups such as children or people with disabilities were not considered in this cost calculation.

¹²⁹ Humanitarian Action, Ukraine Humanitarian Response Plan 2023, Food Security and Livelihoods. Link: <https://humanitarianaction.info/plan/1124/ge/7100#page-title>

5.1.3 Sector-Specific CVA Top-Up Programmes

There are currently no recommended FSLC sector-specific CVA top-up programmes, as it is considered that some of its in-kind programmes, especially food assistance, replace MPCA when it is not suitable to use cash to address basic needs due to disruptions in market functionality, access, or beneficiary preferences. Potential upcoming FSLC CVA top-up programmes will need to ensure that they respond to specific needs not covered within the MEB.

5.1.4 Sector-Specific Standalone CVA Programmes

Sector-specific standalone CVA programmes are tailored interventions aimed at achieving precise objectives within a given sector. These programmes distribute CVA that recipients can use to purchase items necessary for their livelihoods, while requiring sector-focused technical planning, quality control, and implementation by expert teams.

In an attempt to mend the fabric of disrupted livelihoods, the FSLC champions CVA to enable the procurement of essential agricultural and livestock inputs. Approximately 60 per cent of the 3 million individuals targeted for agricultural production support will receive sector-specific cash grants, empowering vulnerable farming households to acquire the means – such as seeds, tools, and livestock – essential to resuming their agricultural activities. Additionally, a quarter of these individuals will obtain assistance tailored to bolstering non-agricultural livelihoods, including small business grants. While currently a general scope of activities is defined by the FSLC,¹³⁰ only Cash for Food was recently standardised by the FSLC in Ukraine.¹³¹ The Cash for Food transfer amount is set to UAH 1,500 per person per month, with a ceiling of five people per household. The amount is calculated as follows: the transfer value is based on the gap between the MEB food component and assessed food expenses of households with the lowest economic capacity:

- MEB food component: UAH 2,324 per person per month
- Median food expenses of households in the first decile of economic capacity: UAH 899 per person per month

Transfer value (MEB food component – food expenses): UAH 1,425 per person per month, rounded up to UAH 1,500 per person per month.

5.2 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Cluster

In Ukraine, the national and sub-national Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Cluster is coordinated by UNICEF. The cluster brings together UN agencies and NGOs ensuring effective WASH responses across the country.

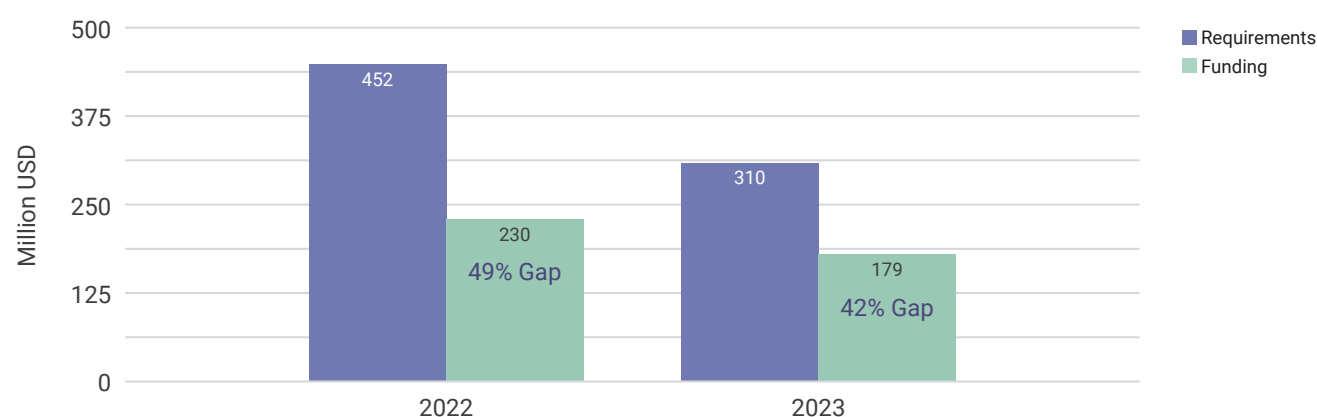


Figure 24. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene – Funding by year (Source: FTS, January 2024)

¹³⁰ Ukraine Food Security & Livelihoods Cluster, Ukraine Emergency Livelihoods Response: Scope of Activities. 2023. Link: https://fscluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/fscl_livelihoods_interventions_en_0.pdf

¹³¹ Ukraine Food Security & Livelihoods Cluster, June 2024. Link: <https://fscluster.org/ukraine/document/fscl-guidance-sectoral-cash-transfers>

Coverage (Actual/Planning) January 2023 to December 2023

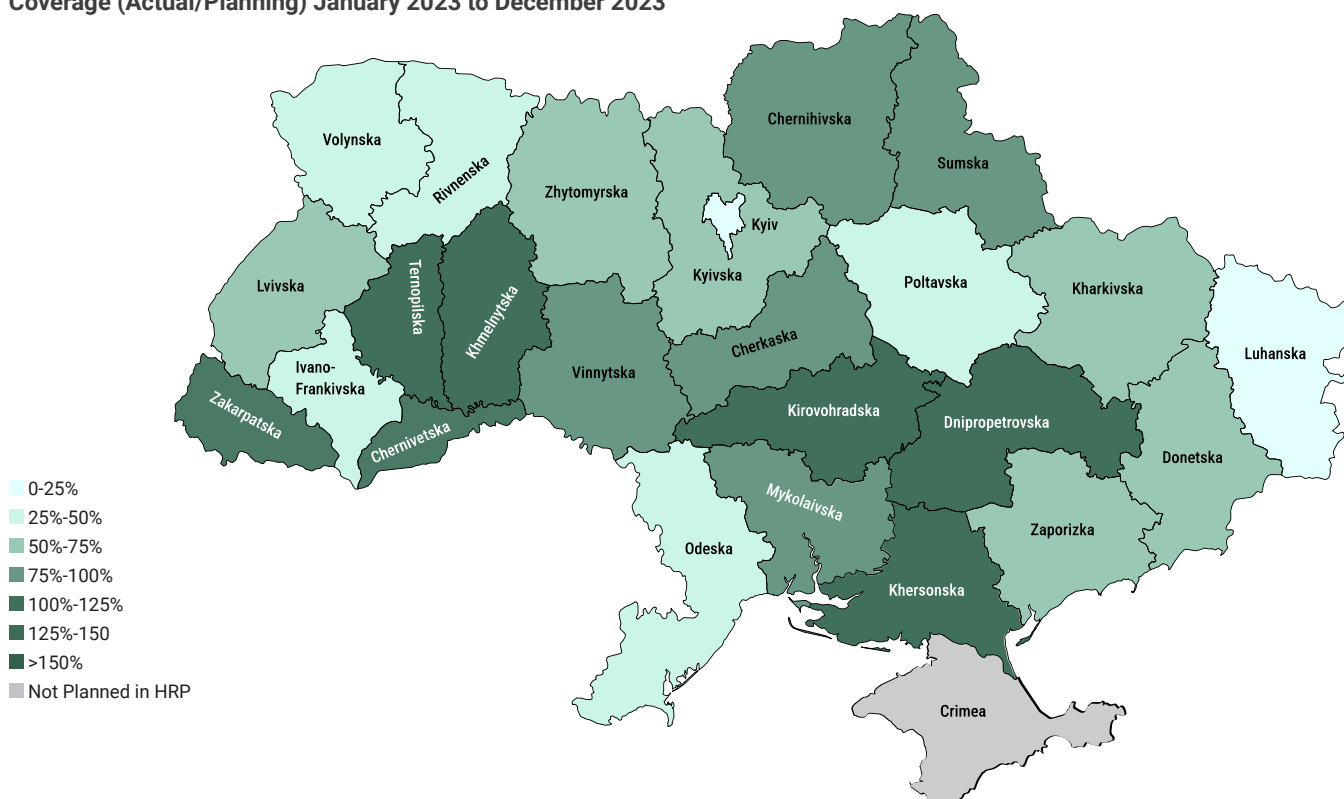


Figure 25. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene – Planning vs actual caseloads in 2023 (Source: GWC, December 2023)

5.2.1 Response Analysis

The WASH Cluster in Ukraine is focused on ensuring that people in vulnerable situations and affected by the war can access essential WASH services. The cluster has outlined three specific sectoral objectives in HRP 2023 aligned with providing life-saving multi-sectoral assistance (SO1) and enabling access to basic services (SO2).

- Objective 1: Addresses the necessity for the most vulnerable, including those with disabilities and minority groups, to have access to basic WASH services and hygiene materials.
- Objective 2: Seeks to enhance WASH facilities in terms of quantity, accessibility, safety, and privacy, particularly in healthcare facilities, schools, and collective centres. The provision of personal hygiene and cleaning supplies supports basic infection prevention and control.
- Objective 3: Is about supporting service providers in the operation and maintenance of water, sanitation, and waste management systems, as well as infrastructure improvements.

The WASH Cluster strategy is to work with local authorities and responders, targeting populations through different prioritizations: emergency response and repairs in frontline areas (48.8 per cent of the target population); damage repairs and service expansion in areas with IDP concentrations (25.4 per cent), and gap-filling in other sectors in tertiary priority areas (25.8 per cent). A significant part of the response includes repairing water and wastewater systems, prioritizing conflict-affected settlements and areas with high numbers of IDPs or vulnerable households. This can involve the provision of generators, treatment supplies, and equipment for maintenance.

5.2.2 Sector Needs Included in MPCA

The Ukraine WASH Cluster has worked with the CWG to include the average costs of recurrent basic needs for water, sanitation and household hygiene items in the MEB (Table 7) that informs the MPCA transfer value. This enables MPCA to cover costs of regular water, sanitation and household hygiene items. The value of the items totals UAH 1,270 monthly per person. Costs were set by the WASH Cluster and CWG using a rights-based approach. However, the specific needs of more narrowly defined target groups such as children or people with disabilities were not considered.

Item	Unit	Cost/pers/month (UAH)
Drinking water	3L per day (90L per month)	415
Septic tank desludging costs (rural areas)	1500 UAH/ once per 4 years average	10
Toothbrush	1	29
Toothpaste	1 x 75 ml	107
Soap (bars)	2 x 125 g	24
Shampoo	~200 ml	42
Razor	1 set of 2-3 individual blade pieces	38
shaving cream	~200 ml	79
Wet wipes	1 pack x 15 pcs	11
Sanitary pads + liners	4 dots/size 4 (30 pcs per pack) 1 dot/size 1 "Daily" Pads/liners (30 pcs/pack)	102
Body cream	250 ml	169
Toilet Paper	6 rolls	61
Deodorant (neutral)• sustainable type	~200 ml (150 ml– 250 ml)	55
Washing powder/gel for clothes	1 kg	48
Dishwashing /Washing-up liquid	250 ml	29
Sponge for dish washing	1	27
General Household Bleach	250 ml	24
WASH total		1,270

Table 7. WASH basket composition, units and prices, August 2023

5.2.3 Sector-Specific CVA Top-Up Programmes

Currently there are no recommended WASH sector-specific CVA top-up programmes as the corresponding sectoral needs are either covered by MPCA or by standalone in-kind programmes which replace MPCA when it is not feasible due to disruptions in market functioning or due to beneficiary preferences/capacity to use cash to access basic needs. Potential upcoming WASH CVA top-up programmes will need to ensure that they respond to specific needs not covered within the MEB.

5.2.4 Sector-Specific Standalone CVA Programmes

The desk review was not able to identify any WASH Cluster sector-specific standalone CVA programmes. Potential upcoming WASH standalone CVA programmes will need to ensure that they respond to specific needs not covered within the MEB and that the corresponding targeting strategy is elaborated.

5.3 Shelter and Non-food Item Cluster

UNHCR leads coordination of the SNFI Cluster in Ukraine, alongside the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) as national co-chair and People in Need as co-chair in the Eastern Hub.

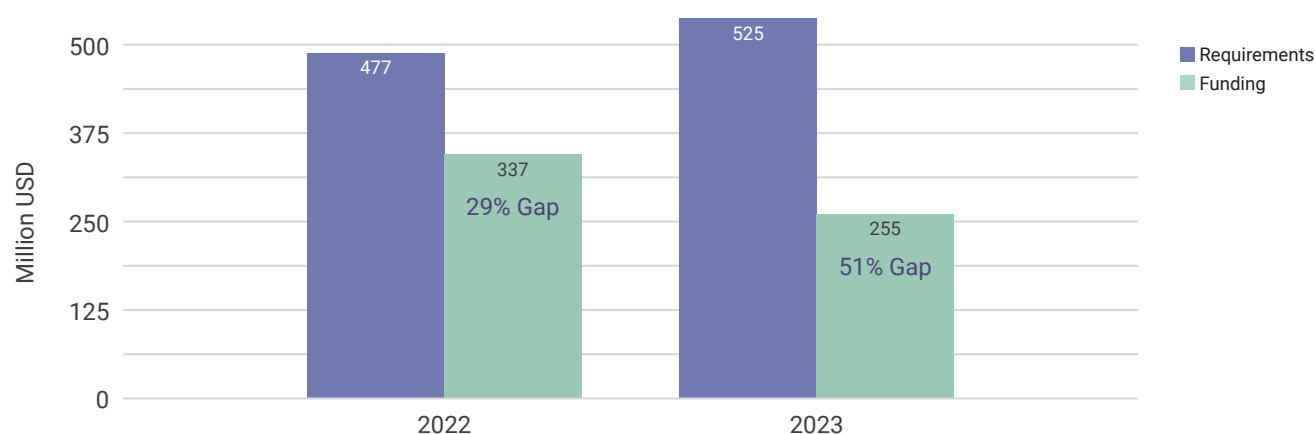


Figure 26. Shelter and Non-Food Items – Funding by year (Source: FTS, January 2024)

Coverage (Actual/Planning) January 2023 to December 2023

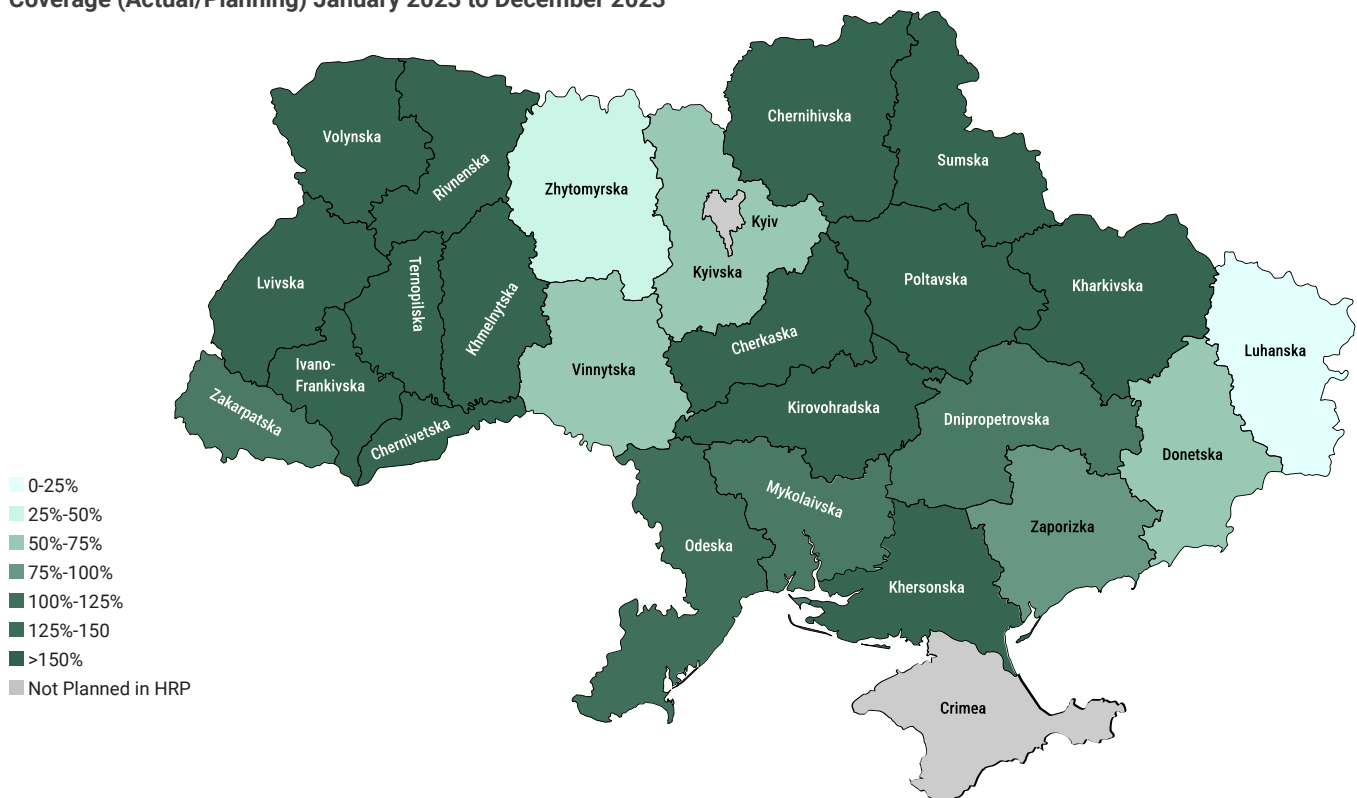
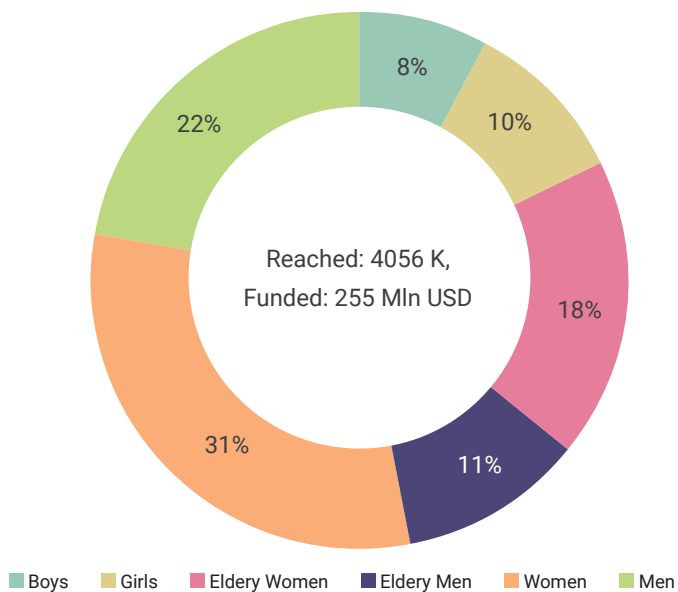
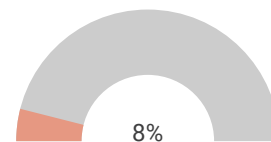


Figure 27. Shelter and Non-Food Items – Planning vs actual caseloads in 2023 (Source: SNFI Cluster, December 2023)

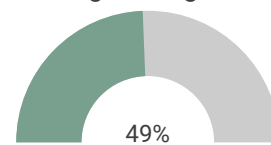
People Reached by Age-Gender As of December 2023 (ICCG)



% of Disabled As of December 2023 (ICCG)



Funding Coverage As of December 2023 (FTS)



People Reached Against HRP Targets As of December 2023 (ICCG)

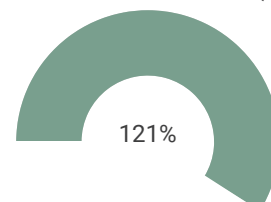
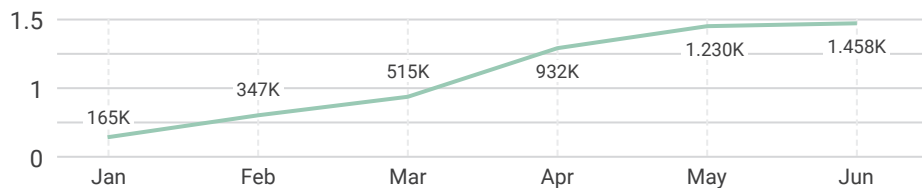


Figure 28. Shelter and NFI – Number of people reached disaggregated by age and gender, December 2023

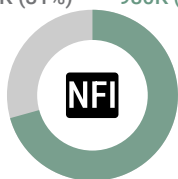
Progress Against Targets Across Ukraine

January 1st - January 30th 2023

1.45M
People reached
with shelter & NFI

Provision of NFIs **980,482**

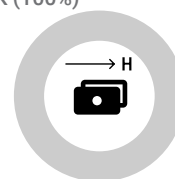
448K (31%) 980K (69%)

Heavy repairs **968**

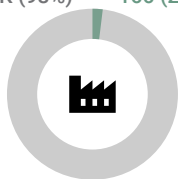
279K (22%) 968K (78%)

Hosting family support **0**

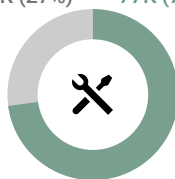
108K (100%)

Temporary/Prefab housing **166**

8K (98%) 166 (2%)

Light & medium repairs **76,730**

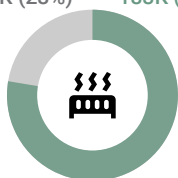
29K (27%) 77K (73%)



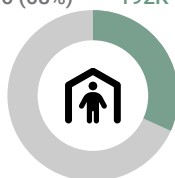
Non HRP Activities

Non-standard NFIs **361,765**Winter heating appliances **182,993**

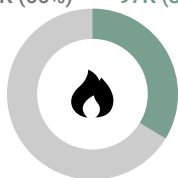
55K (23%) 183K (77%)

Emergency shelter kits **191,859**

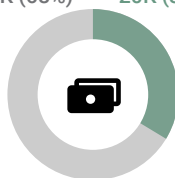
416 (68%) 192K (32%)

Provision of generators **207,954**Winter energy needs **96,872**

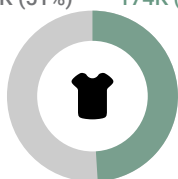
188K (66%) 97K (34%)

Rental support **20,374**

43K (68%) 20K (32%)

Reconstruction **181**Winter Clothes **174,365**

184K (51%) 174K (49%)

Collective site refurbishment **49,541**

90K (65%) 50K (35%)

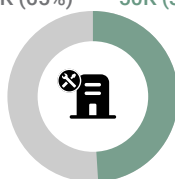


Figure 29. Shelter and NFI activities' progress against targets across the country (adapted by the PeReHID Initiative)

5.3.1 Response Analysis

The SNFI Cluster has outlined specific sectoral objectives in HRP 2023, integrating a needs-based approach and mainly focusing on three specific areas of intervention:

- Objective 1: To provide life-saving S/NFI support to conflict-affected IDPs, returnees, and non-displaced people.
- Objective 2: To deliver emergency S/NFI assistance to mitigate the impacts of harsh winter weather for IDPs, returnees and non-displaced people, while minimizing the environmental impact.
- Objective 3: To ensure adequate housing solutions for IDPs, returnees, and non-displaced people and to foster linkages to a longer-term response.

All the areas consider cross-cutting themes such as inclusion, protection, Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), housing land and property (HLP), environmental issues, and promotion of a greener NFI response.

The strategic objectives of the Ukraine SNFI Cluster are crafted to address both immediate and long-term needs of those impacted by the conflict. The primary goal is to provide vulnerable populations, displaced or otherwise, with appropriate shelter and non-food items, utilizing both in-kind assistance and CVA. The cluster's strategy aligns with the Global Shelter Cluster's June 2023 guidance, which advises integrating SNFI components into an MEB to address sectoral needs via MPCA programmes. In collaboration with the CWG, the cluster has incorporated the average cost of basic NFI needs into the MEB, allowing MPCA to address regular NFI requirements through local markets. Nonetheless, specific shelter and NFI needs are met through targeted interventions outside the MPCA framework, ensuring that the full spectrum of needs is addressed comprehensively.

To streamline the operational activities of its 35 registered reporting partners and 80 implementing partners, the SNFI Cluster has published several guidance documents and recommendations, specifically on winterisation,^{133 134} and on light and medium repairs of houses and apartments.¹³⁵ These guidelines and key initiatives underscore the complexity of shelter needs, advocating for specific interventions under expert supervision. They suggest that while MPCA can cover recurring expenses like fuel for cooking, more substantial needs might warrant additional, dedicated sector-specific assistance. This approach ensures that the cluster's response is not just a stopgap but leads to sustainable shelter solutions.

In Ukraine, the SNFI Cluster responds to two kinds of needs:

Rapid Emergency NFI Needs: In line with Objective 1 of emergency shelter and NFI provision, the SNFI Cluster provides tailored support for non-recurrent, higher-cost household items damaged or lost due to the conflict. This recognizes that sporadic, disaster-related needs differ from the regular NFI purchases covered through MPCA based on average costs.

For displaced and non-displaced families, standard household kits help meet urgent needs, containing essentials like bedding, kitchen sets, hygiene items, and water storage containers. The composition aligns with minimum standards, procurement focuses on quality, and distribution aims for sufficiency. For non-displaced families sheltering in bomb shelters, specialised kits are provided, prioritizing thermal comfort through items like sleeping bags, ground mats, and blankets. Solar lamps enable light and phone charging. Exact figures on modality breakdowns are not currently available as this information is not currently collected by the SNFI Cluster. However, by directly providing complete kits when needed, or the equivalent market value when suitable, the cluster can fill critical gaps, complementing MPCA's standard transfer value. Strengthening monitoring and reporting systems is vital to gather evidence on outcomes and assistance modalities.

Winter Shelter and NFI Needs: The Ukraine SNFI Cluster addresses winter shelter and NFI needs through targeted cash top-ups and standalone programmes, not MPCA. These programmes provide a critical lifeline amidst compounding crises, filling gaps as social protection systems are overwhelmed.

¹³³ Global Shelter Cluster, Shelter Cluster Winterization Recommendations, 2023/2024, August 2023. Link: <https://sheltercluster.org/ukraine/documents/shelter-cluster-winterization-recommendations20232024>

¹³⁴ Shelter Cluster Ukraine, Cash Based Interventions, Rental Assistance Recommendations and Guidelines for Ukraine, Version 2.1., October 2023. Link: https://sheltercluster.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/public/docs/Shelter%20Cluster%20Recommendations%20on%20Cash%20for%20Rent_V2_1.pdf?Version-Id=vfsusTC_aepC.xuF6ksCHFv12TTOIExx

¹³⁵ Shelter Cluster Ukraine, Cash Based Interventions, Implementation Guidelines for Light & Medium Repairs of Houses & Apartments, Version 1, 30 May 2023, July 2023. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/cash-based-interventions-implementation-guidelines-light-medium-repairs-houses-apartments-version-01-30-may-2023>

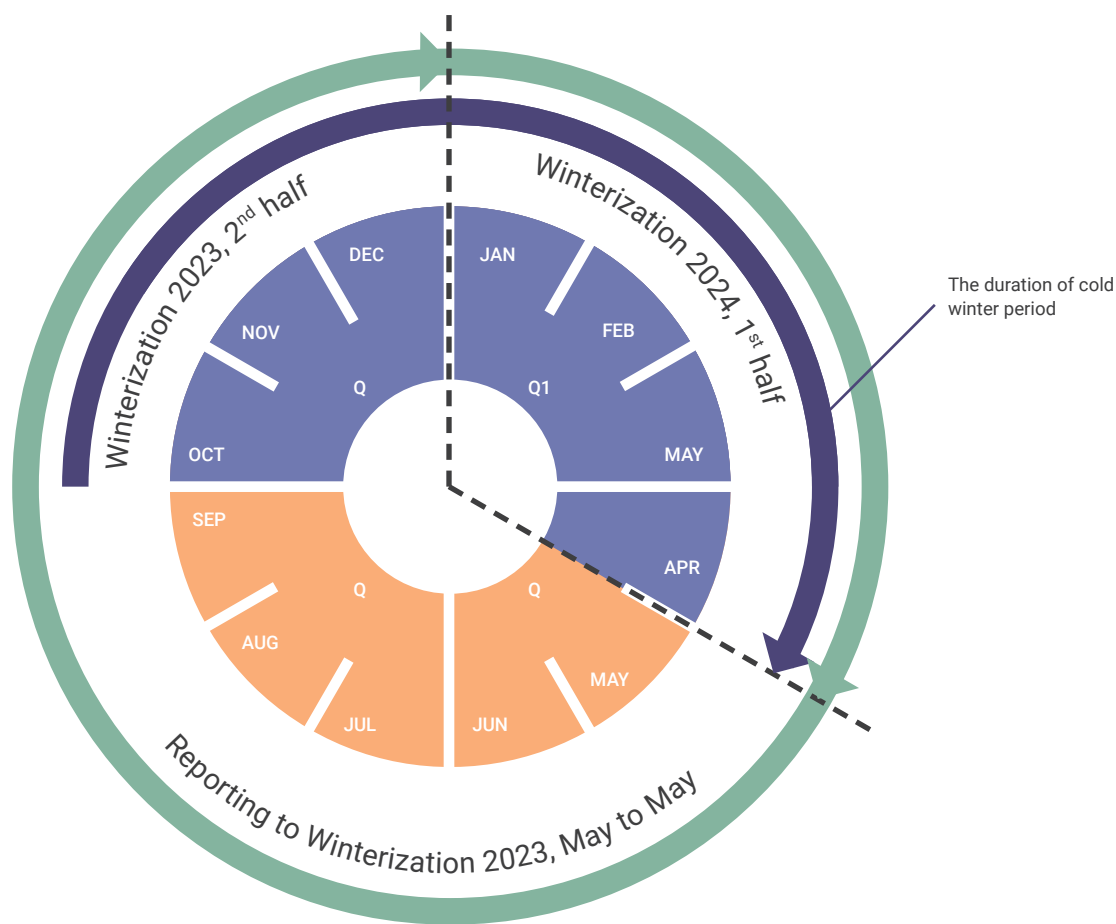


Figure. 30 Winterization Chart for 2023–2024, as agreed by cluster partners (adapted by the PeReHID Initiative)

Geographical areas of focus have therefore been prioritized based on areas with a high concentration of collective sites, a high concentration of IDPs renting accommodation or being hosted, areas recently retaken by the Government, areas with difficult access to services and markets, frontline and isolated areas, and areas with a concentration of damaged houses and apartments (see Table 8).¹³⁶

		NFIs						SHELTER		
	Recommended winterization activities and implementation modalities by area	HH winterization items	Invincibility kits	Winter clothing	Heating Appliances	Solid Fuel	Cash for Utilities	Repair in CSs		Cash for rent
WESTERN HUB	areas with high concentration of collective sites	Cash or In-kind	In-kind	Cash or In-kind	Cash or In-kind			Cash or In-kind		Cash
	areas with high concentration of IDPs renting accommodation or being hosted	Cash or In-kind	In-kind	Cash or In-kind	Cash or In-kind		Cash			Cash
CENTRAL & NORTHERN HUB	areas with high concentration of collective sites	Cash or In-kind	In-kind	Cash or In-kind	Cash or In-kind			Cash or In-kind		Cash
	areas with high concentration of IDPs renting accommodation or being hosted	Cash or In-kind	In-kind	Cash or In-kind	Cash or In-kind		Cash			Cash
	newly accessible area, areas with difficult access to services and markets	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind		Cash or In-kind		
	frontline and isolated areas	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind		In-kind		
	areas with concentration of damaged houses and apartments	Cash or In-kind	In-kind	Cash or In-kind	Cash or In-kind	Cash or In-kind	Cash			Cash

136 Global Shelter Cluster, Ukraine Winterization Recommendations, 2023–2024, August 2023. Link: <https://sheltercluster.org/ukraine/documents/shelter-cluster-winterization-recommendations20232024>

		NFIs						SHELTER		
EASTERN HUB	newly accessible area, areas with difficult access to services and markets	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind			Cash or In-kind	
	areas with high concentration of collective sites	Cash or In-kind	In-kind	Cash or In-kind	Cash or In-kind			Cash or In-kind		Cash
	frontline and isolated areas	In-kind		In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	Cash		In-kind	
	areas with concentration of damaged houses and apartments	Cash or In-kind	In-kind	Cash or In-kind	Cash or In-kind	Cash or In-kind	Cash			Cash

Table 8. Prioritization Matrix 2022–2023 (adapted by the PeReHID Initiative)

In addition, target groups for winterisation support have been prioritized and targeted based on a system of successive filters to choose, in a responsible way, the final recipient of the assistance,¹³⁷ as clearly highlighted in Figure 31 below.

Consistently with the role of complementarity with State's initiatives, focus of shelter and NFI humanitarian agencies' winterisation programmes should be all families who:

1. in general, will have their winterisation needs unmet because:

- unable to access basic winterisation means
- not receiving winterisation-related state support (state subsidies or other winterisation programmes; see chapter 6)
- have not received any assistance last year.

↓ **and, at the same time,**
and more specifically

2. live in the areas identified as priority areas for winterisation assistance:

- in western, northern and central oblasts:
 - areas with high concentrations of collective sites
 - areas with high concentration of IDPs renting accommodation or being hosted
- in central and eastern oblasts: areas with high concentrations of collective sites newly accessible areas; areas with difficult access to services and markets - frontline and isolated areas = areas with concentration of damaged houses and apartments

↓ **and, at the same time,**

3. belong to one of the prioritised target groups:

- displaced families in collective sites
- non-displaced families in war-damaged areas
- non-displaced and returnee families in damaged houses
- displaced, non-displaced and returnee families in substandard houses
- displaced, hosting, non-displaced and returnee families not able to pay for utility bills

↓ **and, at the same time,**

4. belong to one or more of the vulnerability groups:

- people with disability or injury
- people with chronic illness or serious medical conditions
- older people (60+)
- women and children at risk
 - single heads of households, and/or women who are the main caregivers for the family
 - adolescent boys and girls, unaccompanied children
 - pregnant and lactating women
 - women and children with an additional vulnerability with no support system

Figure 31. Successive filters for beneficiary selection (adapted by the PeReHID Initiative)

¹³⁷ Ibid.

5.3.2 Sector Needs Included in MPCA

The Ukraine SNFI Cluster has worked with the CWG to include the average costs of recurrent basic NFI needs in the MEB. This enables MPCA to contribute to meeting regular NFI requirements accessed through local markets. However, specific needs of more narrowly defined target groups such as children or people with disabilities were not considered when designing the NFI section of the MEB. The total value of the Shelter NFI transfer in the MPCA is currently UAH 1,911 (see Table 9).

MEB Composition, units and prices of as 3 August 2023

Item	Unit	Cost/pers/month (UAH)
Clothing and shoes	Expenditure-based	265
Utilities (electricity, gas, fuel for cooking)	Expenditure-based	861
Shelter maintenance	Expenditure-based. Costs associated with basic maintenance, such as plumbing, electrical work, and general upkeep of the dwelling.	220
Reinforced Bags	1 Unit x 60x50x40 cm	565
Bed linen sets	2 Units x Sheets: 145x210cm/Pillowcase: 70x70 cm	
Blankets	2 units x 140x200 m	
Towel sets	2 Units x 70 x140 cm/50x90cm	
Kitchen set	1 x kitchen set	
Jerrycan	1 unit x 10L	
Bucket	1 unit x 20L	
Shetter/NFI total	Expenditure-based + Rights-based	1,911

Table 9. Shelter/NFI Basket, August 2023

5.3.3 Sector-Specific CVA Top-Up Programmes

This section outlines the SNFI Cluster's approach for providing sector-specific CVA top-up programmes to address urgent winterisation and ongoing shelter needs. These top-up programmes provide one-time or recurring cash transfers to cover basic shelter and NFI needs (included winter-related ones) which are not sufficiently met through MPCA. The programmes are designed and implemented with involvement of sectoral experts to ensure appropriate, dignified assistance.

5.3.3.1 Cash for Winterization NFI Items

Objective	Assist vulnerable households lacking resources to independently prepare for winter through cash for fuel, warm clothing and heating appliances.
Target Groups	Displaced families in collective centres, vulnerable families in damaged homes, IDPs in substandard shelters, unable to afford winter items
Triggers for Assistance	Onset of winter
Transfer Value	Variable based on items, around USD 200–300 per household
Frequency	One-time
Duration	One-time for the winter season
Modalities	One-time for the winter season
Coordination Mechanism	Shelter and NFI Cluster
Monitoring	Post-distribution monitoring

Cash for Winterization NFI transfers provide urgent support to vulnerable groups lacking essential supplies as freezing temperatures arrive. The modality targets beneficiaries including displaced families in collective centres, those hosted in inadequate conditions, and vulnerable non-displaced families unable to independently prepare for winter. The programme distributes one-time cash transfers prior to winter, with values of around USD 200–300 per household. This enables people to procure vital seasonal supplies like blankets, winter clothing, fuel, and heating appliances based on needs and local market availability. Where feasible, the modality flexibility empowers recipients to choose items supporting resilience. In locations where market access is constrained, in-kind distributions remain the sole option.

Electric heating - Home Kit				
Recommended quantities (per HH) and indicative prices 2023-2024				
Item	Quantity	Unit cost	SubTotal	Specifications
Electric heater convector or Oil-filled	1 pc	150 USD	150 USD	Power: max 1.5kw Wall-mounted and self-standing Type A: convector with steel or ceramic surface Or Type B: Oil-filled radiators
Fuse	1 pc	3 USD	3 USD	16A, Type - C
Cable	15 m	0.9 USD	13 USD	15 meters of cable (3 x 2.5 mm)
Foil polyethylene foam canvas	10 m2	3 USD	30 USD	Thickness: 0.4 cm minimum
Mounting foam	1 pc	7.3 USD	7 USD	850 ml bottle
Windows acrylic sealant	3 pc	3 USD	9 USD	300 ml tube operating temperature range: -20 °C/ +75 °C
TOTAL			212 USD	

Table 10. Electric heating, home kit – recommended quantities and indicative prices for 2023–2024

Winter Clothing set			
Composition and indicative prices 2023-2024			
Item	Cost	Item	Cost
Winter jacket	85-105 USD	Winter hat	5-8 USD
Winter boots	40-60 USD	Winter scarf	5-8 USD
Thick socks	5-8 USD	Thermal underwear	40-50 USD

Table 10. Electric heating, home kit – recommended quantities and indicative prices for 2023–2024

In line with Global Shelter Cluster guidance, the tailored approach avoids over-reliance on assistance modalities such as MPCA vis-à-vis specific sectoral needs. However, persistent data constraints hamper monitoring and evidence gathering on outcomes and impact. This underscores the need for strengthened systems and analysis as the dynamic response evolves.

Despite limitations, this timely assistance provides a lifeline for vulnerable groups as temperatures plunge. It mobilizes life-saving aid, laying the groundwork for more sustainable social protection and government-led winterization efforts in the future. While the programme cannot address all gaps, it mitigates detrimental exposure to the elements through a modality that promotes empowerment and self-determined recovery. Cash remains an integral tool during this volatile period but must be balanced with wider efforts to ensure war-affected populations can weather harsh conditions.

5.3.3.2 Cash for Winterization for Solid Fuel and Utilities

Objective	Facilitate procurement of heating fuel for vulnerable households in high conflict zones during winter.
Target Groups	Conflict-affected households in hard-to-reach areas relying on solid fuel for heating but facing unaffordable fuel costs
Triggers for Assistance	Onset of winter
Transfer Value	USD 264–1,800 to cover locally appropriate fuel supply based on needs
Frequency	One-time
Duration	One-time for the winter season
Modalities	Cash where markets allow, otherwise in-kind distributions
Coordination Mechanism	Shelter Cluster
Monitoring	Process monitoring, post-distribution checks

In addition to household winterization items, the SNFI Cluster coordinates CVA to enable purchase of fuel for heating. This recognizes that vulnerable families often rely on solid fuels like firewood, coal, and pellets due to disrupted access to central heating systems. The programme targets conflict-affected populations in hard-to-reach areas where fuel markets remain functional but unaffordable. It prioritizes families in damaged homes, collective centres, and other displaced households facing prohibitive costs for adequate fuel.

Solid fuel - Home Kit				
Recommended quantities (per HH) and indicative prices 2023-2024				
Item	Quantity	Unit cost	SubTotal	Specifications
Solid fuel heater stove*	1 pc	200-400 USD**	200-400 USD	Indicative price for locally manufactured Burzhuika stoves (cast iron or steel; heating area = 35 m ²) example product: Buleryan (classic, steel; heating area = 40 m ²)
Exhaust pipe	1 pc	250 USD	250 USD	5 m + wall cross + Insulated
Galvanized iron sheet	1 pc	20 USD	20 USD	1 x 2 x 0.0005m
Foiled polyethylene foam canvas	10 m ²	55 USD	55 USD	8mm thickness (+screws+ batons)
Windows acrylic sealant	3 pc	3 USD	9 USD	300 ml tube operating temperature range: -20 °C...+75 °C
TOTAL			634 USD	
Solid fuel supply	6 m ³	85 USD	510 USD	
Example: Fire wood				
TOTAL with fuel:			1144 USD	
			OR	
Solid fuel supply	2.25 MT	450 USD	1015 USD	Example: Coal is referenced here particularly for NGCA. But other parts of country could still be in need of coal as well.
Example: Coal				
TOTAL with Coal:			1649 USD	

* There is a certain type of Burzhuika that are suitable for enclosed spaces and can be used for cooking. For smaller enclosed housing units we recommend these. The latest reported price is around 200 \$.

** The 400 \$ Burzhuika may not have the cooking option, and it is more suitable for larger areas and open spaces.

Table 12. Solid fuel heating – quantities recommended and indicative prices for 2023–2024

Heating Sources - Equivalence Table						
Quantities for one HH for one season and indicative prices 2023-2024						
Kind	Quantity		Unit	Unit Price	Total Coast (USD/season)	Notes
Coal	recommended	4	MT	200-400 USD	1800	Unit price does not include transportation.
	minimum	2	MT		900	
Firewood	recommended	8	m³		680	Unit price does not include transportation. Cheaper than coal, but requires tending. In very specific cases is not recommended for elderly or disabled persons.
	minimum	4	m³		340	
Briquettes	recommended	5.	MT		1440	Unit price does not include transportation.
	minimum	2.	MT		720	Easier to handle than coal. Recommended in case of unavailability of coal.
Pellets	recommended	6.0	MT		1800	Unit price does not include transportation.
	minimum	3.0	MT		900	Easier to handle than coal (recommended for elderly); requires special stoves.
Gas	recommended	2,400	m³		528	
	minimum	1,200	m³		264	
Electricity	recommended	13,500	kW		945	
	minimum	7,000	kW		490	
Centralised heating	recommended	15	Gcal		690	Recommended amount of assistance refers to the whole season (6 months). The minimal amount means coverage of 3 winter months.
	minimum	7.5	Gcal		345	

Table 13. Fuel cost overview – quantities recommended and indicative prices for 2023–2024¹³⁸

5.3.4.1 Cash for Winterization for Solid Fuel and Utilities

Objective	Enable vulnerable homeowners to conduct essential repairs improving structural integrity, weatherization, and living conditions.
Target Groups	Registered and non-registered IDPs originally from the most heavily conflict-affected areas currently staying in collective centres; those sheltering in educational facilities, at risk of eviction from their current rental accommodation; referrals from Protection actors.
Triggers for Assistance	<p>Identification of houses/apartments damaged by conflict or neglect that require essential repairs to meet minimum standards of safety, function, and weatherization. This could be assessed through site visits, referrals from authorities, etc. Verification that residents meet vulnerability criteria such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displaced households from heavily conflict-affected areas • Households in collective centres or temporary shelters • Low-income homeowners unable to independently fund repairs • Protection referrals <p>Confirmation that required repairs qualify as 'light' (limited damage) or 'medium' (more extensive issues) based on Shelter Cluster guidance.</p> <p>Verification at each stage that conditional requirements have been met to release the next cash instalment, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement of required materials • Completion of repairs to adequate quality standards • Approval from technical specialists
Transfer Value	<p>On a case-by-case basis, depending on technical assessment.</p> <p>Light repairs (in single-family detached houses): USD 1,500–2,500</p> <p>Light repairs (in multi-story apartment buildings): USD 500–1,000</p> <p>Medium repairs (in single-family detached houses): USD 2,500–4,000</p> <p>Medium repairs (in multi-story apartment buildings): USD 1,000–2,000</p>
Frequency	<p>One-off payment for small-cash grants <USD 1,500</p> <p>Two conditional instalments for grants of >USD 1,500, depending on milestones reached (e.g. completion of the roof)</p>
Duration	N/A, until done
Modalities	Cash
Coordination Mechanism	Shelter and NFI Cluster
Monitoring	Process monitoring

The Cash for Light and Medium Shelter Repairs programme provides grants to homeowners and collectives to conduct essential fixes improving structural integrity, weatherization, and living conditions. It targets houses and apartments damaged by conflict and long-term neglect, prioritizing unsafe structures inhabited by vulnerable residents. The goal is comprehensive, tenant-driven repairs restoring safety, dignity, and function.

Cash can be paired with training and technical guidance and is accompanied by monitoring to uphold minimum standards and safety. This ensures repairs not only recover damaged structures, but also embed resilience against future risks in line with the 'build back better' approach. Technical verification of completed work triggers each new instalment for high-value repairs. However, data constraints persist, undermining evidence on outcomes and impact. Significant operational challenges also impact monitoring and accountability. Despite limitations, the programme uplifts some of Ukraine's most at risk families by restoring safe, functional homes amidst compounding crises. It provides a lifeline through a modality that empowers, while advocacy continues for housing and social protection systems capable of sustainable, equitable recovery.

5.3.4.2 Cash for Rent

Objective	Provide housing allowances to IDPs and vulnerable households to secure safe, dignified shelter.
Target Groups	Registered and non-registered IDPs originally from the most heavily conflict-affected areas, currently staying in collective centres; those sheltering in educational facilities, at risk of eviction from their current rental accommodation; referrals from Protection actors. Non-displaced in need of temporary accommodation while their homes are repaired. All profiles (returnees, IDPs, non-displaced) in need of accommodation and referred through other protection programmes.
Triggers for Assistance	Imminent eviction, inability to pay rent, referral from protection actors.
Transfer Value	UAH 5,000 base rate (start-up grant) plus top-ups by family size and location Utility costs are added to the base rate in different amounts for winter and summer months
Frequency	Instalments of one, two, or three-month intervals; exception for protection referral cases
Duration	Six calendar months plus three additional months for protection cases; households can become eligible for a repeated intake
Modalities	Cash
Coordination Mechanism	Shelter and NFI Cluster
Monitoring	Process monitoring including digital mechanism, post-distribution monitoring (PDM), sharing beneficiary lists to prevent duplication

The provision of Cash for Rent assistance has formed a key part of the shelter response, empowering IDPs in vulnerable situations to secure safe housing amidst compounding crises. The SNFI Cluster developed guidance in August 2022¹³⁹ to promote coordinated, dignified aid and thoroughly updated it in October 2023.¹⁴⁰

Eligibility focuses on at-risk groups, primarily registered and non-registered IDPs from heavily conflict-affected areas; those in collective centres, or educational facilities where classes may imminently return; households threatened with eviction, and protection referrals.

Priority	Target Critee	Jpggested Verification Documen
ALL	Vulnerable IDPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official identification document for each household member IDP certificate Proof of pension documents Proof of state assistance or support provided Proof of medical conditions Proof of specialist educational requirements Certificate of disability
1	IDPs located initially in the most heavily conflict-affected areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proof of address of origin Proof of damage to property of origin
2	IDPs currently staying in Collective Sites Prioritising those sheltering in educational facilities due to return to educational activities in early September 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration lists from Collective Site authorities or Camp Management actors
3	IDPs at risk of eviction from their current rental accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proof of current rental agreement Evidence of previous payments for rent
4	IDPs living in crowded housing. That does not meet the minimum adequate standards of 7.5 m ² per person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-declared through registration mechanism Visual check of property
5	Referrals from Protection actors including Camp Management, Protection, GBV (Gender Based Violence), MHPSS (Mental Health and Psychosocial support) Clusters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication (non-sensitive) between verified Protection agencies Specifications on the individual Cash for Rent assistance requirements
6	Non displaced affected population during the repair period of their home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certification of damages (SIDAR, Act of damaged object...) Referral by agencies carrying out repair works

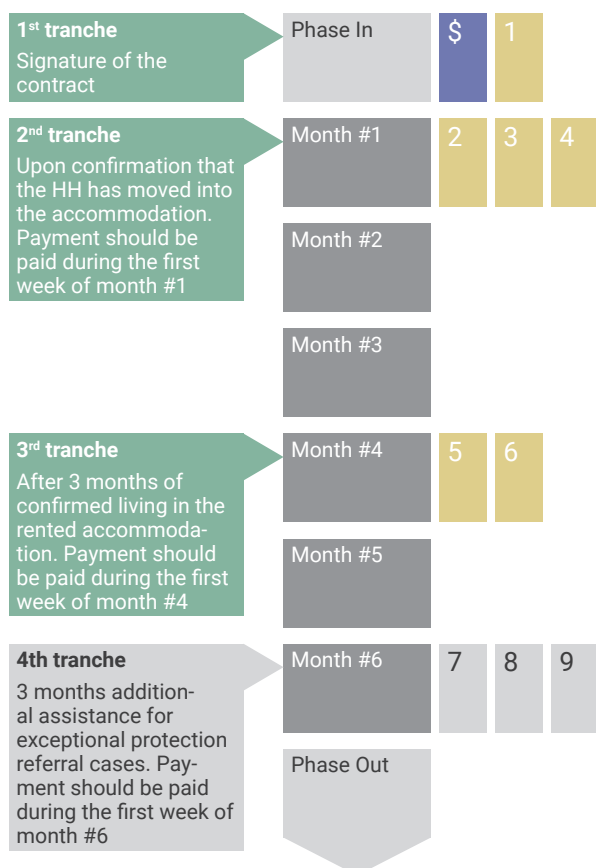
Table 14. Verification of Cash for Rent documents based on priorities

¹³⁹ Global Shelter Cluster, Shelter Cluster Recommendations on Cash for Rent, Version 2, August 2022. Link: <https://sheltercluster.org/ukraine/documents/shelter-cluster-recommendations-cash-rent-august-2022>

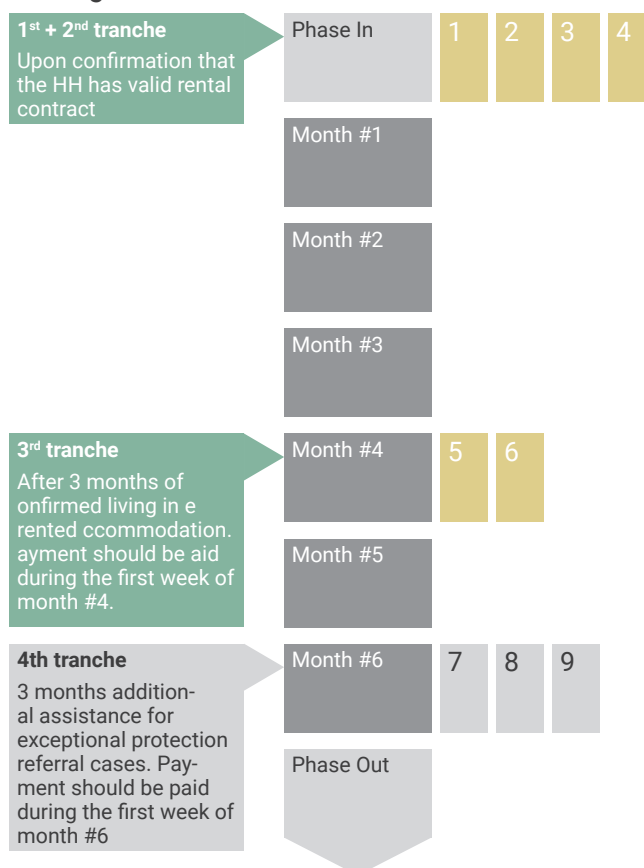
¹⁴⁰ Shelter Cluster Ukraine, Cash Based Interventions, Rental Assistance Recommendations and Guidelines for Ukraine, Version 2.1., October 2023. Link: https://sheltercluster.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/public/docs/Shelter%20Cluster%20Recommendations%20on%20Cash%20for%20Rent_V2_1.pdf?Version-Id=vfsusTC_aepC_xuF6ksCHFv12TTOIEEx

The calculation of a suitable Cash for Rent assistance package considers several factors, including a start-up grant, monthly rent payments and contribution for seasonal utility fees. The transfer amount for Cash for Rent is set based on regularly updated Rental Market Assessments (RMA) relevant for the region where the household is renting; costs for covering utilities is added to the transfer amount and varies between winter (October–March) and summer months (April–September). Cash is distributed in one to three months instalments over a six-month duration, unless considered as a protection management case, in which case it can be extended by an additional three months. The cash transfer is conditional on the tenants having a written rental agreement with the landlord.

New Rental



Existing Rental



\$ Start-up Grant: Up to 1-month deposit	# A month Rent + utility bills for month #: Utility bills should be calculated as per winter (Oct-March) or summer months (April-September)	# For exceptional cases, Rent + utility bills for month If: Utility bills should be calculated as per winter (Oct-March) or summer months (April-September)
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Figure 32. Cash for Rent payment schedule (adapted by the PeReHID Initiative)

A standardized package brings coherence, but implementation allows flexibility. Cash is transferred directly to beneficiaries, not landlords. While formal leases are ideal and represent 67 per cent of the population surveyed by UNHCR in their RMA of August 2023, informal verbal agreements are still common. The latest guidance proposes standard lease agreements, available in Ukrainian and English, and a due diligence checklist, to harmonize this process. The assistance aims to provide a lifeline, not fully subsidize rents which vary significantly across Ukraine's regions. Transfer amounts were calculated based on IDP rental data.

Targeting and coordination present challenges. Registration draws from various sources – government IDP databases, collective centres, community groups, and protection referrals. Verification procedures aim to validate eligibility and housing status between instalments. Minimum standards are provided for PDM; however, no standardised PDM survey form is currently available; similarly, complaint mechanisms are recommended, but not centrally delivered. There is no dedicated de-duplication mechanism, instead coordination on sub-national shelter cluster hub level is recommended.

5.3.4.3 Cash for Insulation of Substandard Houses¹⁴¹

Objective	Provide urgent grants before winter for essential repairs to improve insulation and thermal performance of under-insulated homes.
Target Groups	IDPs in allocated houses needing insulation upgrades; residents of substandard shelters.
Triggers for Assistance	Onset of winter
Transfer Value	Variable based on repairs, around USD 200–500 per household
Frequency	One-time for winter season
Duration	One-time for winter season
Modalities	Cash
Coordination Mechanism	Shelter and NFI Cluster
Monitoring	Process monitoring

The Insulation of Substandard Houses programme provides grants for essential winterization upgrades. It targets IDPs relocated to poorly insulated homes, residents of substandard shelters, and vulnerable families in war-damaged houses. The goal is to boost thermal performance and heat retention through vital repairs prior to winter. Eligible repairs include insulating roofs and walls, sealing gaps and leaks, replacing damaged windows and doors with energy efficient alternatives, and installing or upgrading heating systems.

Home ceiling insulation kit				
Item	Quantity	Unit cost	SubTotal	Specifications
OPTION 1	40 m ²	9.2 USD	368 USD	Thickness: 100 mm Density: 25 kg/m ³ or more Dimensions: 1000 x 500mm (1 sheet)
Extruded polystyrene foam panels				
OPTION 2	40 m ²	5 USD	200 USD	Thickness: 100 mm Density: 30 kg/m ³ or more Dimensions: depends on the type (plates/rolls)
Basalt wool panels or rolls				
Tarpaulin	3 pcs	15 USD	45 USD	Dimensions: 4000 x 5000mm (effective area: 20 m ²) Weight: minimum 190 gr/m ² +/-20g/m ² Gross weight per piece: approx. 4.27 kg
Other complementary materials			40 USD	Screws, lath, staples, and other complementary material needed for the installation of the insulation
Insulation foam	1 pc	7.3 USD	7 USD	850 ml bottle
TOTAL option 1			460 USD	Please be aware that Polystyrene is flammable and can catch fire easily
TOTAL option 2			292 USD	

Table 15. Home Ceiling Insulation Kit

¹⁴¹ Shelter Cluster Ukraine, Ukraine Winterization Recommendations 2023/2024, Version 1.1. Link: https://sheltercluster.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/public/docs/Winterization%20Recommendations%2023-24%20v1.1_0.pdf?VersionId=TjcAZtt3zwqnKkDhJz5OrwQhd4bdzDZj, p.12

Windows replacement				
Item	Quantity	Unit cost	SubTotal	Specifications
Prefabricated windows (pvc)	up to 5 pcs	150 USD	750 USD	Prefab PVC window package (frame + glazing) Triple-glazing (two insulating cells in between panes) Class of glazing: M1 or M2 $R_{q\ min}$ (Thermal Insulation): 0.7 or 0.9 m ² *K/W Depending on the zone
Polystyrene foam panels	15 m ²	5.1 USD	76.5 USD	Thickness: 100 mm Density: 30 kg/m ³ or more Dimensions: depends on the type (plates/rolls)
Plasterboard (drywall)	15 m ²	4.7 USD	70.5 USD	Type: moisture resistant Thickness: 12.5 mm

Table 16. Windows replacement

Cash grants are provided on a one-time basis before winter, with varying transfer values based on specific repair needs but averaging USD 200–500 per household. Where feasible, repairs are done by beneficiaries themselves to promote self-recovery. Complementary guidance on asbestos safety is provided, given its widespread historical use in construction and the health-related risks it poses.

The assistance helps fulfil critical winterization needs that overburdened state programmes cannot fully address. It provides a lifeline for vulnerable groups including older persons and persons with disabilities who are most impacted by inadequate housing conditions during freezing winters. Promoting weather-resistant, thermally efficient shelters also supports durable solutions, with improved habitability extending beyond one winter season. While data constraints remain, monitoring and feedback loops continue to be strengthened.

5.4 Protection Cluster

UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster in Ukraine, alongside the local NGO Right to Protection (R2P) as co-chair. Collaboration with the Protection Cluster also takes place with protection mainstreaming and stand-alone protection guidance.

A Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Task Force was formed by members of the Gender-Based Violence Sub-Cluster and the CWG in April 2022, to support GBV mainstreaming within cash programming. The task force's role is to review tools, assessments and plans for the roll-out of CVA but also to provide a GBV Risk Analysis of CVA for the Ukraine context.¹⁴² In addition, a rapid gender analysis (RGA) aims to better understand specific needs, priorities, opportunities, and barriers to services and life-saving assistance available across crisis-affected populations.¹⁴³ In January 2023, the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency UNFPA finalised and launched a guidance on how to design and set up cash assistance in GBV case management, which underlines the importance of having a robust and structured system for managing GBV cases and critical prerequisites for integrating cash assistance within GBV case management protocols.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² ACTED, OCHA, Protection Cluster, Gender-based Violence (GBV) Risk Analysis for Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) in Ukraine, June 2022. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/gender-based-violence-gbv-risk-analysis-cash-and-voucher-assistance-cva-ukraine>

¹⁴³ CARE, Rapid Gender Analysis Brief: Ukraine, October 2023. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/rapid-gender-analysis-brief-ukraine-october-2023>

¹⁴⁴ Global Protection Cluster, UNFPA Guidance: How to Design and Set up Cash Assistance in GBV Case Management, February 2023. Link: <https://gbvaor.net/node/1811>

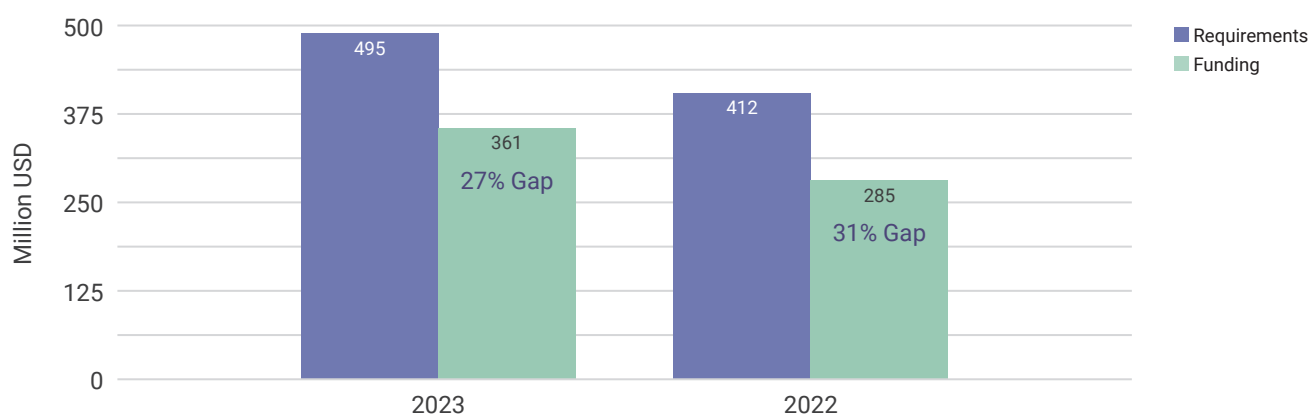


Figure 33. Protection – funding by year (Source: FTS, July 2024)

Coverage (Actual/Planning) January 2023 to December 2023

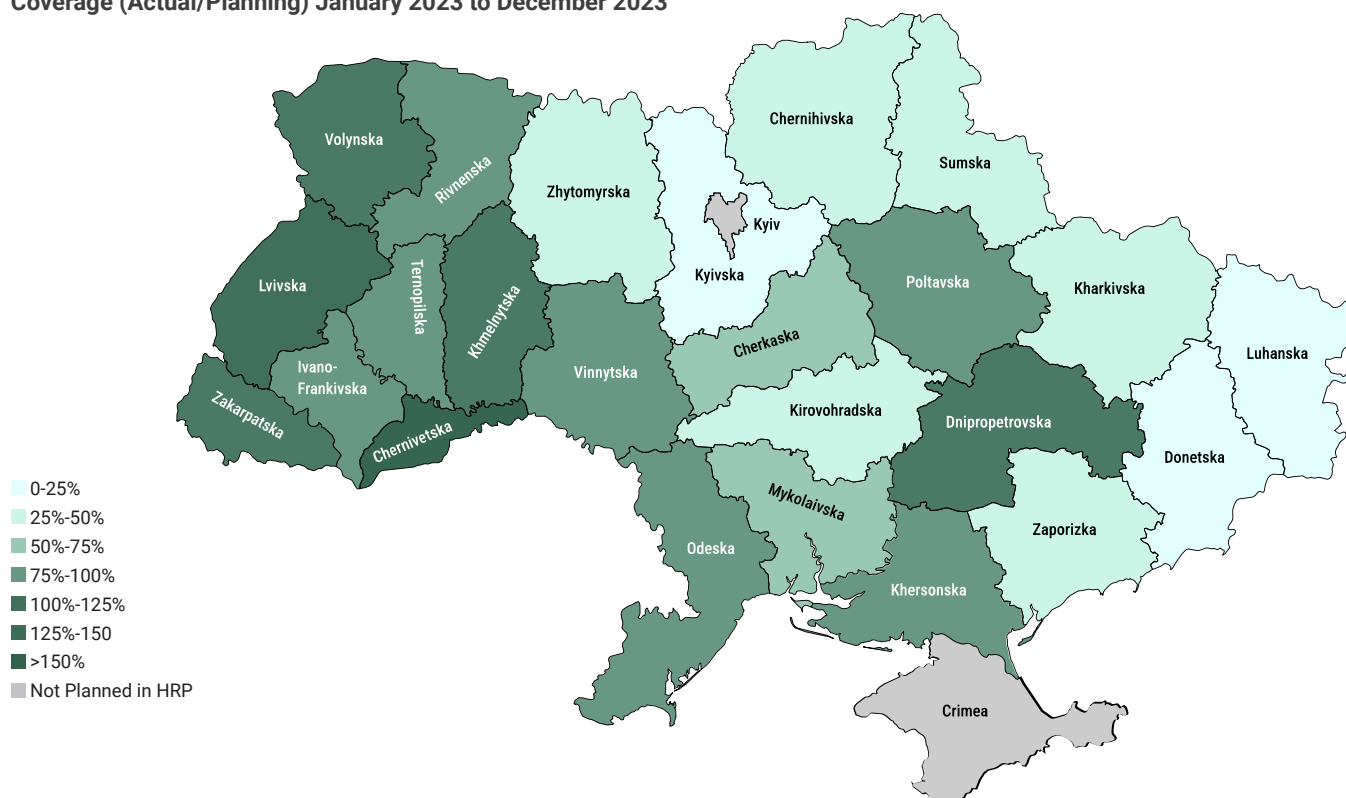
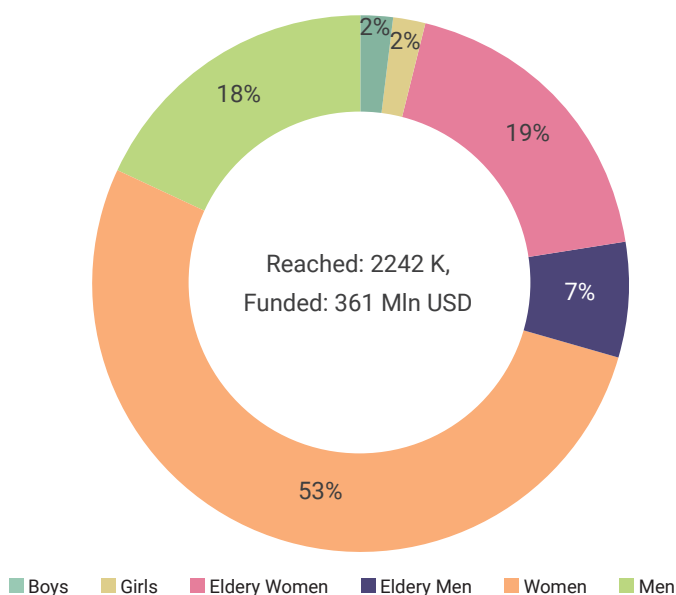
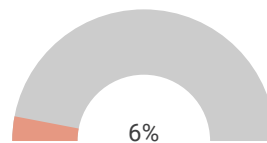


Figure 34. Protection – planning vs actual caseloads in 2023 (Source: OCHA)

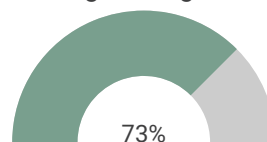
People Reached by Age-Gender As of December 2023 (ICCG)



% of Disabled As of December 2023 (ICCG)



Funding Coverage As of December 2023 (FTS)



People Reached Against HRP Targets As of December 2023 (ICCG)

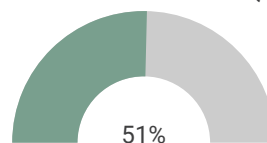


Figure 35. Protection – people reached disaggregated by age and gender, as of December 2023

5.4.1 Response Analysis

For 2023, the Protection Cluster focused on two primary objectives to bolster the safety and rights of affected populations, specifically targeting conflict-affected people found to be in vulnerable situations as a result of the escalating humanitarian crisis, especially women and girls, people with disabilities, and elderly people. The goals are:

- To offer targeted protection assistance that is ethical, tailored, and responsive to the varying needs of gender and age, ensuring these vulnerable groups are shielded from physical harm and their well-being is safeguarded.
- To provide a comprehensive suite of protection services, encompassing general protection measures, gender-based violence prevention and response, child protection, and mine action initiatives. This multi-faceted approach aims to secure access to basic services and uphold the legal and human rights of the affected communities.

In executing its response, the Protection Cluster was set to align 49 partner organizations towards assisting 1.7 million IDPs, 1.6 million non-displaced people, and 1.1 million returnees throughout 2023.

The strategy is articulated around several key actions:

- Delivery of specialized protection assistance to address distinct needs.
- Expansion of outreach and protection services, leveraging networks of civil society organizations and volunteers.
- Empowering communities and local authorities to enforce protection systems and engage in inclusive protection activities.
- Enhancing protection analysis to shape a response that is accountable to those affected, prioritizing individuals most at risk.

Standalone Cash for Protection (C4P) is a key component of the strategy, serving as an instrument to address protection risks with CVA when suitable.

5.4.2 Sector Needs Included in MPCA

The Protection Cluster engaged closely with the CWG to develop the MEB, with the result that it incorporates communication and transportation to enable protection needs like maintaining social connections. The value of the transfer is UAH 321. Costs are drawn from actual observed expenditures. However, specific needs of more narrowly defined target groups such as children or people with disabilities were not considered when designing the Protection section of the MEB. Additionally, due to the specific case management nature of protection programmes, complementary CVA supporting standard protection programme activities cannot be included within MPCA.

5.4.3 Sector-Specific Top-Up CVA Programmes

There are no sector-specific top-up CVA programmes active in Ukraine within the Protection sector. This is a logical consequence of the case management nature of Protection programming which requires technical assessment, by default not needed for top-up programmes which are usually added to MPCA delivery.

5.4.4 Sector-Specific Standalone CVA Programmes

All Protection CVA programmes require the involvement of dedicated Protection case managers.

Sector-specific standalone CVA programmes can address protection risks and needs. Protection CVA requires technical design by Protection experts to analyse how cash mitigates specific protection concerns like exploitation, abuse, eviction, or lack of civil documentation. Protection cash eligibility derives from rights violations, not just socio-economic status, and thus requires solid Protection case management as a basis. It involves tailored value calculations, sensitive delivery, and referrals. For example, the Assess and Assist Model provides flexible cash grants to fill urgent individual protection gaps based on caseworker assessment.

C4P in Ukraine utilizes CVA to address individual or household-level protection needs identified through a case-by-case assessment, as per recommendations published in September 2023 for Protection actors.¹⁴⁵ While C4P may cover basic needs in some cases, the tailored approach based on individual assessment should minimise duplication with MPCA. Even when C4P fills a basic needs gap, eligibility derives from protecting wellbeing and a rights-based approach, not socio-economic status.

While Protection Cluster recommendations¹⁴⁶ strive to maintain a close protection focus for C4P, according to a C4P learning paper authored by the CCD and the Regional C4P Task Force (C4PTF) that included 14 key informant interviews with international NGOs, local NGOs, donors, the CWG and the Protection Cluster, a wide range of programming responding to a huge variety of needs is being carried out in Ukraine under a C4P umbrella. However, not all operational actors agree on a definition of C4P within this context, and even those who agree with the global definition in principle struggle to operationalise C4P in line with this definition in Ukraine. The lines between MPCA and C4P are often blurry, and despite support and assistance from the C4PTF providing valuable information on C4P in Ukraine response countries, humanitarian organisations have largely been operating in silos, without coordination. There has been a glaring absence of harmonisation and technical guidance to effectively operationalise programmes.¹⁴⁷ In addition, a great deal of C4P programming is being used to address urgent health needs while the Health Cluster worked on developing the Cash for Health guidance. While some see this lack of harmonisation as much needed freedom to address needs on the ground, others are concerned about confusion among humanitarian actors regarding what constitutes C4P programming and inflation of C4P to serve as additional MPCA top-up.

While multiple actors are engaged in delivering C4P in Ukraine, C4P assistance packages are not harmonized across the response. One of the better documented assistance packages is Christian Aid's approach called Assess and Assist (A&A), as summarised below. While harmonization might be warranted in some cases, positioning C4P within a wider inter-sector complementarity strategy is key to understand how it should complement other assistance packages.

¹⁴⁵ Protection Cluster, UNHCR, Recommendations on Cash for Protection for General Protection Actors, September 2023, September 2023. Link: https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/recommendations-cash-protection-general-protection-actors-sept-2023-enuk?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQjw6auyBhDzARIsALlo6v915kG-TiFZzjOclxbJPn_JZlo3fwbMQSnnOUCvCPdPOqVJMU7LOo_waAkfmEALw_wcB

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Note that at the time of conducting this research, the latest guidance on C4P from the Protection Cluster in Ukraine had not been published.

5.4.4.1 Cash for Protection: Assess and Assist (A&A)

Objective	Meet urgent individual protection needs through flexible cash grants based on case-by-case assessment and referral.
Target Groups	Individuals and households with urgent protection needs not met through standard aid packages
Triggers for Assistance	Identification of urgent individual protection risk or need through caseworker assessment
Transfer Value	USD 200–300 on average, but can be higher based on specific needs
Frequency	One-time or as needed
Duration	Not fixed; depends on need
Modalities	Cash, voucher
Coordination Mechanism	Protection Cluster
Monitoring	Follow up assessment on whether needs were addressed; monitoring of protection outcomes

A&A is a form of C4P that takes a flexible, tailored approach to meeting urgent individual protection needs. Developed by Christian Aid and partners, A&A follows a ‘listen and link’ model using caseworkers trained in psychological first aid.¹⁴⁸ Caseworkers rapidly assess priority needs of displaced or vulnerable people seeking additional help beyond standard aid packages like MPCA. After discussing their situation and providing psychosocial support, the caseworker can either refer them to specialized services or provide cash if an urgent financial need is identified that cash could help address.

A&A cash grants are responsive in size and purpose. Most grants are in the range of USD 200–300, but some can amount to thousands of USD based on need. Cash has been used for needs like:

- Topping up MPCA amounts, where the transfer value did not fully cover basic needs, especially for people with disabilities.
- Providing basic needs support to vulnerable people not eligible for blanket MPCA.
- Paying urgent medical, rehabilitation or prescription costs.
- Transportation to access essential services.
- Legal fees to obtain lost documentation or housing.
- Temporary accommodation or relocation costs for safety.
- Small home repairs and winterisation.

A key advantage of A&A is flexibility. It adapts as contexts and needs shift over the course of response phases. More MPCA top-ups occurred earlier when transfer values were inadequate, while later the focus became more specialized towards addressing protection risks as IDPs integrated. The approach is intuitive, with some local partners even creating their own A&A-style models. Extensive referral and follow-up are central to A&A. Caseworkers maintain databases to link people to longer-term services across all sectors. The listen and link approach provides psychosocial support while identifying sustainable solutions through referral. Overall, A&A enables timely, targeted support for individuals falling through gaps, based on in-depth assessment of their specific situation.

Balancing the shock-responsive nature of Protection programming responding to the above needs with MPCA and sectoral CVA standalone programming is necessary going forward. Overreliance on C4P to cover gaps in basic needs programming may cause inflation of C4P, as it would deviate from its Protection focus and become a stop-gap instrument. While this may be necessary on a temporary basis, it prompts a review of MPCA and sectoral CVA approaches to ensure that the basic needs of specific vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities are sufficiently considered.

¹⁴⁸ Christian Aid, Assess and Assist; learning from Ukraine. A C4P approach for people-centered humanitarian response, June 2023. Link: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-07/assess-and-assist-learning-report.pdf>

5.5 Other Cash and Voucher Assistance Interventions

The Ukraine response has highlighted the importance of localisation and the associated need to shift power to local responders. While the topic of localisation of CVA in Ukraine is covered below (see section 8.3), two promising CVA approaches that do not fit the cluster set-up were identified in collaboration with CCD.

5.5.1 Survivor and Community-Led Response

In the first weeks of the full-scale war ordinary people, host communities and spontaneous community groups sprang into action as first responders together with other local actors (including Ukrainian NGOs, church groups, and volunteers). They formed a humanitarian response based on their own resources and networks and connected with like-minded helpers and local governments to expand and scale up. In 2023, these local actors and groups continue to make a significant contribution to the aid response, despite receiving only a small fraction of direct funding. There is a lack of support to enable community groups to respond and the traditional humanitarian system does not generally engage with these efforts on a wide scale. The Survivor and Community-Led Response (SCLR) approach seeks to support the existing capacities of first responders in crisis situations and provide financial and operational ownership. Programming approaches such as SCLR ensure power is not taken away from communities and community groups who are already responding. Micro-grants often form part of this overall support and ideas on how to spend these micro-grants come from communities and individuals, rather than being dictated or influenced by externally led actors such as international or even national NGOs. Agencies can scale up these approaches to complement the traditional humanitarian response, and follow local agencies' lead in identifying the areas and individuals in greatest need.¹⁴⁹

5.5.2 Group Cash Transfers

Group Cash Transfers (GCT) is a modality that seeks to shift and transfer power to crisis-affected populations by providing essentially unrestricted, unconditional cash transfers to groups to implement community-led initiatives. Within this approach, as a part of SCLR, GCTs are provided to self-mobilizing community groups who will utilize existing markets to leverage community capacities to respond to or prepare for crisis. Unlike conventional CVA, the primary purpose of GCTs is not to respond to household or individual needs; instead, the goal is to resource and empower community members to identify and implement their own initiatives, complementary to broader humanitarian response activities.¹⁵⁰ Grants are between USD 200 and USD 10,000, distributed based on simple project proposals, allowing communities to respond to crises based on their capacities and priorities. GCTs are gaining interest from many agencies in Ukraine.

5.6 Findings and Recommendations on Sectoral Deployment of Cash and Voucher Assistance

Key Findings

- Sectoral CVA has enabled targeted interventions aligned with cluster priorities and requiring dedicated technical oversight.
- The Shelter and NFI, Food Security and Livelihoods, WASH, and Protection clusters implement CVA as modalities.
- De-duplication mechanisms are in place for sectoral CVA through the Shelter Information Damage Assessment and Response Database (SIDAR) for SNFI and through Building Blocks (BB) for SNFI Winterization. The 5Ws framework (Who did What, When, Where, Why) is used for collective sites, ensuring humanitarian efforts are relevant, coordinated, and timely to address needs of displaced populations.

¹⁴⁹ Christian Aid, Letting go of control: Empowering locally led action in Ukraine, March 2023. Link: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/our-work/policy/letting-go-control-sclr>

¹⁵⁰ Danish Church Aid, Group Cash Transfers in Ukraine. Link: Ukraine CVA induction document.docx - Google Docs

- While extensively used by some organizations, Cash for Protection lacks harmonization and could be better focused on response to protection concerns as opposed to a stop-gap approach to other sectoral needs.¹⁵¹
- A CVA framework for Cash for Health was under development at the time of finalising and consultation processes of this report. The Ukraine CVA for Health Framework 1.0¹⁵² from the Health Cluster was released in May 2024, and is not integrated in the current review.
- Sectoral CVA filled critical gaps between MPCA's coverage of basic needs and pressing sectoral requirements, i.e. cash support for winter energy needs. Standalone CVA programmes also provided specialized assistance linked to specific cluster expertise and sectoral needs.¹⁵³

Key Recommendations

- There should be a business case for the provision of sectoral cash vis-à-vis MPCA, as fragmented sectoral CVA results in high coordination costs and reduced cost efficiency. Sectoral cash assistance packages that are part of the MEB risk disrupting the cohesion of the CVA response and contribute to overall duplication of assistance and overall loss of efficiency when humanitarian resources are reducing and overall loss of efficiency, which could be prevented by design on ICCG level.
- Ensure that sectoral CVA design is streamlined, while reducing duplication of overlapping modalities and retaining the ability to be agile and flexible, fostering complementarity and aligned design across sectors and in connection with MPCA. This might be particularly relevant for Cash for Protection and Cash for Health, but also for emerging cash benefits within the Food Security and Livelihoods and WASH clusters.
- Ensure that any new sectoral CVA packages are appropriately assessed for complementarity before scaling. This is particularly relevant for sectoral cash packages that target specific parts of the MEB. Overlaps may occur, and de-duplication and coordination mechanisms must be put in place at cluster level before scaling. Alternatively, as noted above, such CVA packages can be prevented by design.
- The ICCG should continue to foster and encourage a coordinated analysis of needs, gaps, evidence-based modalities selection, and complementarity across sectors to overcome cluster silos.
- Progressively expand further de-duplication to sectoral CVA and in-kind modalities.

6. Complementary Programming: Integrating Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance and Sector-Specific Cash and Voucher Assistance

Humanitarian assistance in Ukraine has increasingly utilized a complementary programming approach that layers different modalities to adequately address multiple needs. Complementary aid can be examined through the four-layer framework used to also structure Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) landscape mapping in the previous two sections:

- Layer 1 represents **coverage of basic needs through Multi-purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA)**. Basic needs are defined by the intersectoral Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) which determines the costs to meet basic, regularly recurring needs.

¹⁵¹ See findings at Protection Cluster: Recommendations on Cash for Protection for General Protection Actors, September 2023, September 2023. Link: https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/recommendations-cash-protection-general-protection-actors-sept-2023-enuk?gad_source

¹⁵² Ukraine Health Cluster: Ukraine Cash and Voucher Assistance for Health Framework 1.0 4 – May 2024, June 2024. Link: https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-health-cluster-ukraine-cash-and-voucher-assistance-health-framework-10-may-2024?_gl=1*24y5oc*_ga*MTI4NDM0MzQwMy4xNzIwNDQyNjI3*_ga_E60ZNX2F68*MTcyMTU2MjY2Ny4xMi4xLjE3MjE1NjMzODguNjAuMC4w

¹⁵³ Shelter Cluster Ukraine, Ukraine Winterization Recommendations 2023/2024. Link: https://sheltercluster.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/public/docs/Winterization%20Recommendations%2023-24%20v1.1_0.pdf?VersionId=TjCAZtt3zwqnKkDhJz50rwQhd4bdzDZjUk

- Layer 2 comprises **sector-specific CVA top-up assistance**. These are recurring transfers that fill critical sectoral gaps not fully covered within the MPCA's general scope. Top-ups meet pressing needs aligned with cluster specific priorities and while they may require additional targeting considerations, they can be programmed as part of MPCA.
- Layer 3 constitutes **sector-specific standalone CVA or in-kind programmes**. These achieve precise sectoral objectives through market-based CVA or in-kind assistance. However, they require extensive technical inputs for design, targeting, monitoring, and implementation from specialized sector teams to ensure appropriateness and quality.
- Layer 4 represents vital **specialized services that cannot be adequately provided through any form of material assistance** such as CVA or in-kind aid. This layer addresses key non-material needs requiring direct provision of services by technical specialists. Examples include psychosocial support, legal aid, and other person-to-person services requiring qualified personnel, e.g. services that are usually considered as complementary to CVA in Cash Plus programming.

This four-layer framework provides a structure for examining how CVA, in-kind aid, and specialized services are deployed in a complementary manner in Ukraine. Analysing the sequencing and integration of these layers can reveal potential gaps or duplications.

While analysis of layering of in-kind and CVA assistance is beyond the scope of this study, it is recognized that in-kind assistance continues to be essential for covering needs in situations where markets are not functioning or quick delivery of CVA might be challenged quickly delivered, especially in case of sudden shocks such as missile strikes and major displacement. However, there might be conflicting approaches between MPCA and in-kind assistance within 30km of the frontline, as presented in the HNRP 2024.

The following stacking table showcases potential conflicts in targeting between documented CVA packages:

Complementary Analysis of CVA Packages

<div> <div>■ Not stackable</div> <div>■ Stackable</div> <div>■ Potentially conflicting</div> </div>		MPCA		Sectorial Top-Ups		Standalone Sectoral CVA				
		ECA	R-MPCA	Cash for Winter NFIs	Cash for WinterFuel/Utilities	Cash for Shelter Repairs	Cash for Shelter Winter Repairs	Cash for Rent	Cash for Food	Cash for Protection
MPCA	ECA									
	R-MPCA									
Sectorial Top-Ups	Cash for Winter NFIs									
	Cash for WinterFuel/Utilities									
Standalone Sectoral CVA	Cash for Shelter Repairs									
	Cash for Shelter Winter Repairs									
	Cash for Rent									
	Cash for Food									
	Cash for Protection									

Table 17. Preliminary complementarity analysis of CVA packages

As already alluded to in the Cash for Protection (C4P) section above, C4P has so far often served as a gap-filling purpose in the response. Considering there is no de-duplication mechanism available to look at cross-sectoral CVA transfers, it is key to clarify the role of C4P in the response and harmonize its delivery. Documentation and standardisation of Cash for Health CVA packages will be key as C4P was to a large degree used to address health-related needs.

While they are clearly flagged in the corresponding guidelines as stackable benefits, Cash for Shelter repairs and Cash for Shelter winter-proofing show a margin of overlap. Operational guidance that could facilitate technical assessment and decision-making on assistance package allocation could resolve this overlap and facilitate implementation. Potential future updates of the related guidelines also need to consider this issue.

Finally, the newly introduced Cash for Food needs to be reconciled with MPCA to ensure a cohesive CVA response in Ukraine. The question of complementarity and cohesiveness of the CVA response in Ukraine needs to be resolved at the ICCG level to ensure sound coordination and complementarity between MPCA and sectoral assistance packages that are built on their respective parts of the MEB.

6.1 Findings and Recommendations on Complementary Cash and Voucher Assistance Programming

Key Findings

- Inter-cluster coordination on CVA package design resulted in relative complementarity between standardised CVA packages. However, some sectoral CVA packages need to be harmonised and streamlined to ensure better complementarity.
- There is no inter-cluster coordination mechanism on market functionality and cash delivery feasibility that would enable harmonised modality selection. The CWG, through Task Team 2 and the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI), might consider fostering the level of ownership at inter-cluster level based on recommendations from the Humanitarian Coordinator/Resident Coordinator-commissioned Cash Review dated December 2023 and briefing paper published in February 2024.¹⁵⁴
- Currently, there is no inter-sector vulnerability assessment framework underpinning the socio-economic part of targeting of sectoral cash.
- At present, there is no clear exit strategy for transitioning from humanitarian aid to durable solutions, which should relate to pertinent livelihood programming and effective referrals to social protection programmes. Linkages between humanitarian CVA and a robust and comprehensive strategy integrating a shock-responsive approach of the national social protection system are lacking.

Key Recommendations

- Improve inter-cluster coordination on CVA package design; foresee and address potential conflicts in complementarity of benefits. This is most pronounced when introducing CVA packages that are based on their respective sectoral parts of the MEB. The question of complementarity and cohesiveness of the CVA response in Ukraine needs to be resolved on ICCG level to ensure sound coordination and complementarity between MPCA and sectoral assistance packages.
- As part of preparedness and contingency planning exercises, consider analysis of appropriate modality, expanding complementarity analysis of in-kind versus CVA, especially for scenarios where speed is key in addressing urgent needs, such as sudden displacement. This could be reflected in de-duplication instruments that could become modality-neutral, considering CVA and in-kind assistance packages equally across sectors. Interoperability across sectors is needed to ensure inter-sector complementary analysis and intra-sector de-duplication of beneficiaries. In summary, no matter the sector or modality of assistance, any resource transfers should be de-duplicated and analysed for complementarity.

¹⁵⁴ Key Aid Consulting for the Disasters Emergency Committee, Rapid Reflection on Cash Coordination in the Ukraine Response, Ukraine Briefing Paper, February 2024. Link: https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Rapid-Reflection-on-Cash-Coordination-for-the-Ukraine-Response_Ukraine-briefing-paper.pdf

- Improve inter-cluster coordination on determining market functionality and cash feasibility. Currently, no joint mechanism exists for agreeing when markets/systems are suitable for MPCA or requiring in-kind aid. JMML informs on market functionality but there should be more conclusive CVA feasibility guidance. It might be enough to make JMML more practical and closer to real time for modality decision-making. Mechanisms such as the CWG Task Team 2 could be brought to inter-cluster level to address these challenges across cluster silos.
- Streamline registration, vulnerability targeting systems and use of relevant referral pathways between programmes to minimize duplications and gaps. Interoperability and enhanced data sharing would optimize equitable coverage.
- Develop a long-term strategic plan to shift from emergency humanitarian aid to durable solutions for ongoing socio-economic vulnerabilities. This would involve establishing a systematic approach to support basic needs, reinforcing livelihoods and self-reliance, and integrating with national social protection strategies to ensure sustainability. Such planning should prioritize resilience-building and the gradual reduction of dependency on humanitarian assistance.

7. Delivering Cash Assistance by Leveraging Government Systems

Cash Assistance for War Veterans with Disabilities by the Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS) and the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), Prykhystok Complementary Assistance by the URCS, and Cash Top-ups for Pensioners and People with Disability by the World Food Programme (WFP) showcase innovative cash initiatives directly complementing the Government's social protection programmes the Government and addressing identified gaps. Operating in parallel to primary cluster-coordinated assistance, they provide vital coverage of vulnerable groups through collaboration with government institutions. The programmes tap into national social protection infrastructure to effectively target recipients and utilize established financial channels for rapid and accountable aid delivery. By complementing the wider humanitarian architecture in a coordinated manner, they expand critical cash support nimbly and sustainably, positioning as relevant transitional cash assistance programmes while transfers within the national social protection system remain inadequate. This section analyses their strategies, processes, and impacts.

7.1 Cash Assistance for War Veterans with Disabilities

Objective	Provide rapid financial support to veterans with disability to support their basic needs with a disability top-up.
Target Groups	Adult Ukrainian citizens granted group I or II disability status group I or II due to war, registered in the Unified State Register of War Veterans
Triggers for Assistance	Disability status approval and registration in government database
Transfer Value	UAH 16,000 total, provided in four monthly instalments of UAH 4,000 each
Frequency	Monthly
Duration	Four months
Modalities	Cash (bank transfer)
Coordination Mechanism	Ministry of Veterans Affairs (MVA) and Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS)
Monitoring	Online application tracks recipient details. Payments processed through Red Cross data management platform. Independent random sampling verification and monitoring (PDMs) exercises from the MVA e-veteran database at the ministry premises

The Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine (MVA) and the URCS launched a joint project to provide financial assistance to war veterans with disabilities resulting from the war. The programme provides a total cash payment of UAH 16,000¹⁵⁵ (approximately USD 500) to 25,000 veterans with disabilities categorized as group I or II,¹⁵⁶ paid out over four months in instalments of UAH 4,000 per month. The MoU signed included accountability and monitoring measures.

To receive the assistance, veterans had to apply through the eveteran.gov.ua website and provide personal identification details including full name, tax ID number, bank account details, phone number and email address. Applicants must have an electronic signature to submit the application. Once approved, MVA verifies the disability status through the Unified State Register of War Veterans and other government databases and afterwards sends anonymized encrypted applicant data to the IFRC/URCS to distribute payments. URCS ran verification and monitoring exercises using the e-veteran's database on a regular basis, applying a statistically representative sampling and a random selection.

By coordinating with the Government's existing social protection programmes and registries, the programme is able to effectively target and deliver aid to disabled war veterans in need. The online application system also facilitates access, and the (API) integration with the Red Cross Cash Platform enabled distribution of funds. Funded by IFRC.

7.2 Prykhystok Complementary Assistance

Objective	Incentivize hosting of IDPs and indirectly support IDPs assisted via existing government social protection systems.
Target Groups	Vulnerable host families accommodating IDPs. Expanded to people with disabilities
Triggers for Assistance	Free hosting of IDPs from ongoing conflict-affected or occupied areas. Monthly application and presentation of supporting documentation (host and IDPs) to demonstrate compliance with criteria
Transfer Value	<p>The transfer value depends on the number of people being hosted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the period from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023, the amount of compensation was determined at UAH 30 per person per day • Outside that period, the amount of compensation is 14.77 UAH per person per day <p>This translates into approximately 900 UAH per IDP hosted per month in the winter season and 450 UAH per IDP hosted per month in the rest of the year.</p>
Frequency	Monthly
Duration	April 2022 to December 2023
Modalities	Cash
Coordination Mechanism	Ministry of Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories and Ukrainian Red Cross Society, Shelter Cluster
Monitoring	Payment via URCS Cash Platform. Robust verification, feedback and complaint mechanisms, monitoring (PDMs and focus group discussions, house visits), joint communication campaigns, hotline, social media

The Prykhystok programme, coordinated by the Ministry of Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories (MTOT) and implemented by the URCS,¹⁵⁷ is regulated by government decrees and provides regular monthly cash assistance to around 100,000 host families providing free accommodation for up to 300,000 displaced people from occupied or frontline areas. The cash is meant to offset the additional costs of accommodating IDPs. By incentivizing hosting arrangements, the programme provides a cost-effective transitional shelter solution for IDPs unable to return to their homes as needs escalate. Applicants are verified against government databases to avoid duplication.

¹⁵⁵ Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine, 'Veterans can receive UAH 16,000: project of the Ministry of Veterans Affairs and the Red Cross of Ukraine has been launched', Government portal, February 2023. Link: <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/news/veterany-mozhut-otrymaty-16-tysiach-hryven-startuvav-proekt-minvet-eraniv-i-chervonoho-khresta-ukrainy>

¹⁵⁶ According to the social protection system of Ukraine, group I includes persons with the most severe health conditions who are incapable of self-care and require constant supervision, care or assistance. Group II includes persons with persistent, severe functional disorders but with ability to take care of themselves.

¹⁵⁷ Regulated by Cabinet of Ministers decree No.333 dated 19 March 2022 On Approval of the Procedure for Compensation. No. 333 Link: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/333-2022-%D0%BF#Text>

The programme launched in April 2022, originally giving UAH 450 monthly from April to September, doubling to UAH 900 during winter from October to March (to acknowledge increased utility and heating costs in freezing temperatures). From September 2022, the Ukrainian Red Cross was the partner of choice of the Ministry of Communities and Territorial Development via decree and MoU between the ministry, URCS and IFRC. A new decree and MoU were required in 2023 when this ministry merged with the Ministry of Infrastructure, and again in June 2023 when the programme was moved to MToT and an MoU was signed until December 2023 introducing enhanced transparency and accountability measures. Until December 2023 introducing enhanced transparency and accountability measures.

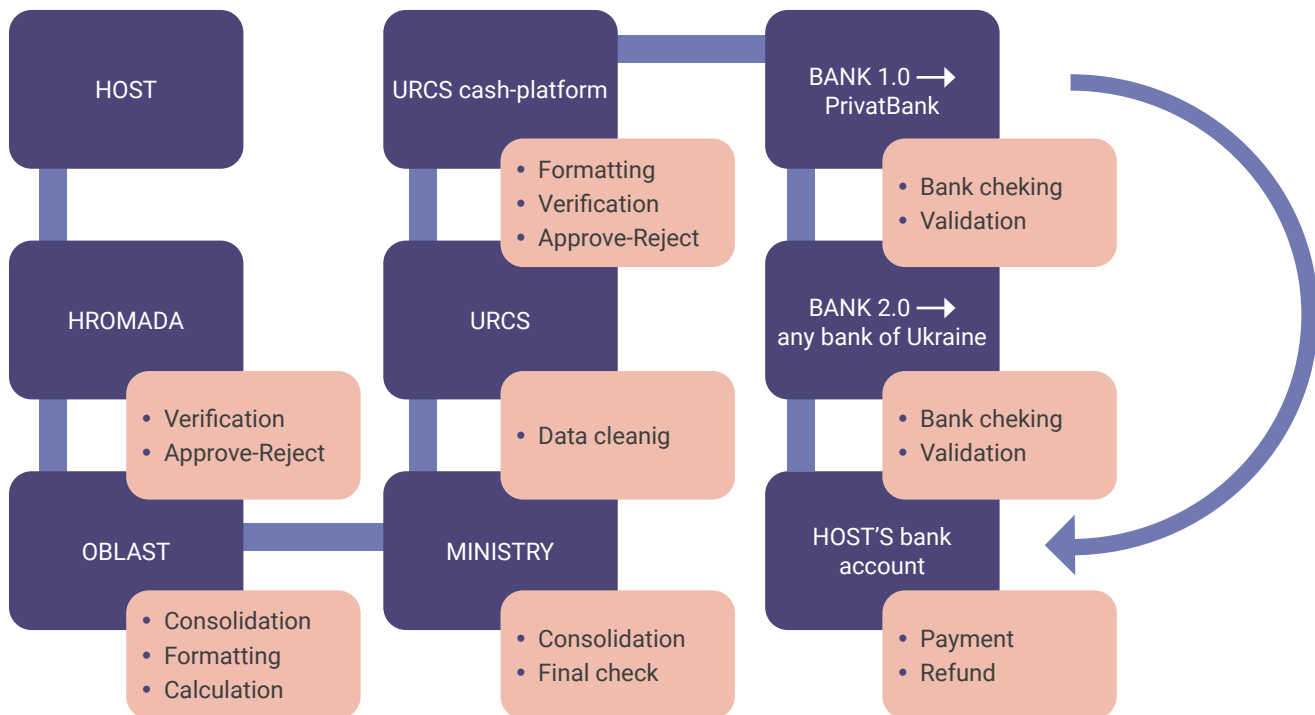


Figure 36. Prykhystok delivery process (adapted by the PeReHID Initiative)

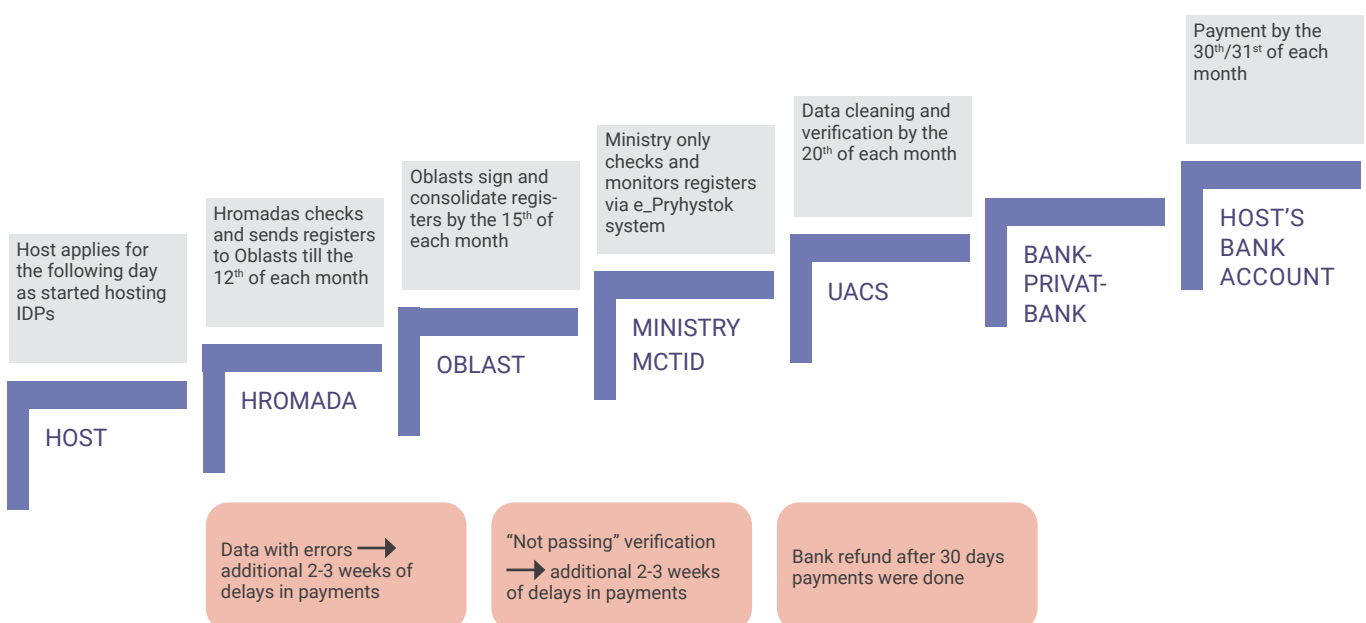


Figure 37. Data processing and payments for the Prykhystok host programme (adapted by the PeReHID Initiative)

Challenges and lessons learned include:

- a) Securing multi-year predictable funding to continue supporting hosting as a cost-effective transitional shelter solution remains a challenge due to the protracted nature of this crisis. Evidence from IDP focus group discussions and PDMs show that most IDPs consider living in collective centres or moving abroad as the two feasible alternatives if free hosting arrangements were to end (as they are unable to afford rental costs). Hosting is also perceived to increase their social inclusion and wellbeing.
- b) Operating under a very regulated legal framework can be challenging and making the necessary changes (to programme design or implementation) slower than planned. but it offers great opportunities for influencing government policies/regulations and strengthening the transparency and accountability of government programmes, especially when capitalizing on the partnership with a national humanitarian actor that has a strong countrywide network presence.
- c) Investing in digital systems integration – including government systems and financial service providers – is key to supporting efficient and quality delivery, increasing timeliness, data integrity and accountability closing the feedback loop.
- d) Ensuring robust verification and joint/independent monitoring, de-duplication and protection mainstreaming are critical aspects to consider when expanding transitional cash assistance.
- e) Clear exit strategies are also essential to avoid aid dependency but challenging to design, considering the ongoing evolution of the conflict and the increased demand for transitional and permanent shelter solutions to accommodate IDPs and returnees across Ukraine.

Since January 2024, this programme is funded by UNHCR in collaboration with the Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine. However, the new design and learnings were not included in this review.

7.3 Cash Top-Ups for Pensioners

Objective	Top up low pension amounts for vulnerable elderly and people with disabilities in high conflict zones to guarantee a minimum monthly income.
Target Groups	Old-age pensioners and pensioners due to disability residing on the territories of active and possible hostilities as defined by the Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories, and who have been receiving a monthly pension of less than UAH 3,000 (taking into account allowances, increases, additional pensions, targeted monetary assistance, indexation amounts, monthly compensation payments, monthly compensation in case of loss of a breadwinner as a result of the Chernobyl disaster, other supplements to pensions established by law) and without other international cash aid since March 1, 2023 and/or housing assistance to internally displaced persons ¹⁵⁸
Triggers for Assistance	Receiving a pension less than UAH 3,000 in the eligible territory (In November 2023, the threshold was revised to UAH 3,250)
Transfer Value	Payment of the difference between the pension amount and UAH 3,000, minimum UAH 100
Frequency	Monthly
Duration	Minimum of four consecutive months (extended to March 2024, when the indexation of pensions was planned by the Government)
Modalities	Cash (bank transfer to existing pension account); those without a bank account receive complementary cash via home delivery through Ukrainian postal service Ukrposhta
Coordination Mechanism	World Food Programme (WFP), Ministry of Social Policy (MoSP), Pension Fund
Monitoring	Robust ecosystem between WFP and the Pension Fund to receive masked beneficiary data and payment reports from banks for reconciliation at individual beneficiary level. Extensive communication campaign, Common SOPs for the WFP and Pension Fund hotlines, leaflets to individual beneficiaries receiving top-ups via postal delivery. Baseline and PDM

¹⁵⁸ Ukraine Rada, Law No.781, July 2023. Про реалізацію спільного з Всесвітньою продовольчою програмою Організації Об'єднаних Націй проекту стосовно додаткових заходів із соціальної підтримки окремих... [Link: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/781-2023-%D0%BF#Text](https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/781-2023-%D0%BF#Text)

The WFP, in collaboration with the MoSP and Pension Fund, has started providing complementary cash payments to pensioners in regions most impacted by the war. Since August 2023, over 405,000 pensioners received complementary cash assistance funded by WFP, totalling over UAH 1 billion (around USD 28 million)¹⁵⁹ by January 2024. It is estimated that by March 2024 around UAH 1.5 billion (USD 41 million) will be distributed to these groups of pensioners.¹⁶⁰

The programme is part of the transitional framework under the United Nations Country Team. This initiative targets pensioners in territories with active or possible hostilities, as designated by the Government. Eligible pensioners are those old-aged and with disabilities receiving less than UAH 3,000 (USD 81) in monthly pension payments and who have not received other cash assistance since 1 March 2023. Qualifying pensioners will receive a monthly WFP payment equal to the difference between their pension amount and UAH 3,000, with a UAH 100 minimum. The funds are directly transferred to pensioners' existing bank accounts used for pension payments, without needing additional registration. Those without bank accounts receive top-ups through postal services at their place of residence.

Payments will be provided for at least four consecutive months. Pensioners do not need to apply to receive the payments, which are processed automatically using information in governmental databases. This programme complements government social assistance that has become increasingly less adequate due to inflation and decreasing purchasing power.¹⁶¹ The initiative is initially co-funded by the EU/ECHO (as part of a multi-donor action), with additional support from Germany, Norway, Sweden and private donors.

7.4 Planned Transitional Top-Up Interventions

Starting in December 2023, in collaboration with the MoSP is topping up recipients of the Government's Guaranteed Minimum Income programme who are also large families (three or more children) and families with a child with disabilities living in certain areas of Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kharkiv oblasts (determined based on cold spots), with a combination of MPCA and Cash for Winter Clothes for children in line with Shelter Cluster recommendations. The cash transfers consist of the MPCA transfer of UAH 3,600 per month for three months for every household member with a maximum of two adults and an additional UAH 6,660 for each child. In terms of de-duplication, UNICEF runs recipients of the MPCA amount through Building Blocks to de-duplicate with other humanitarian organisations. The programme has reached 6,312 households (27,305 individuals including 19,506) with a total budget of approximately USD 11.5 million. UNICEF was able to receive full lists of recipient data (household composition, phone numbers, full names, etc.) by requesting a decree to be passed by the Ukrainian Parliament and Cabinet of Ministers.¹⁶²

Starting in December 2023, UNHCR starting in December 2023, in collaboration with the MoSP and the Pension Fund is covering part of the Government's expanding caseload of the Housing and Utilities Subsidy. This subsidy programme is meant to enable families heating their homes with solid fuel to cope with increased costs during the heating period. The subsidy increases the amount of maximum support for heating from UAH 6,973 to UAH 16,234 per year. UNHCR's additional transfer amount of UAH 6,660 was determined by averaging the cost of different heating sources analysed by the Shelter Cluster to arrive at a transfer value of UAH 2,220 per person per month. The winterization top-up was provided for a duration of three months. UNHCR provides this assistance up to a maximum of UAH 19,980 per household with the Government covering any additional entitlement through its own funds. UNHCR received access to relevant recipient data (full names, family size, banking information, etc.) through a passed decree with the additional safeguard of the Government calling each recipient of the UNHCR programme for specific consent. Beneficiary data were de-duplicated through UNHCR's own database, to avoid beneficiaries receiving double winterization assistance. A total of UAH 2.2 billion will be allocated for this project, of which UAH 945 million was covered by UNHCR Ukraine. UNHCR is also working with NGO Right to Protection to raise awareness about the government programme and encourage registration.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁹ Based on July 2023 exchange rate.

¹⁶⁰ Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine, 'More than 260,000 pensioners received financial assistance from the UN World Food Programme', September 2023. Link: <https://minre.gov.ua/2023/09/01/ponad-260-tysyach-pensioneriv-otrymaly-finansovu-dopomogu-vid-vsesvitnoyi-pro-dovolchoyi-programy-oon/>

¹⁶¹ World Food Programme (WFP), National Social Protection System Support in Ukraine, Programme Brief – Social Benefits top up, January 2024. Link: <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000157781/download/>

¹⁶² Last update 5 April 2024

¹⁶³ Last update 8 April 2024

7.5 Findings and Recommendations on Delivering Cash Assistance by Leveraging Government Systems

All three analysed¹⁶⁴ programmes utilized existing government databases and social protection systems for enrolment, avoiding new registration processes. The veterans programme verifies disability status through the Unified State Register of War Veterans. Eligible pensioners for WFP's pension top-ups are identified using national pension records. The Prykhystok programme utilises regional administrations and the MToT to register beneficiaries. This facilitates rapid targeting and enrolment aligned to humanitarian vulnerability criteria. Reliance on government systems also promotes national buy-in and sustainability.

The initiatives represent innovative steps towards integrating transitional efforts with the state social protection system. While these programmes have successfully addressed immediate needs as defined by government social protection thresholds, they also present specific challenges that need to be addressed to optimize their efficacy and ensure value for money.

Key Findings

- A primary challenge is accessing government data due to data protection constraints related to the scope of informed consent. Different organisations have received beneficiary lists through government decrees which are limited to specific lists for specific programmes and can only be used once or as stated in the MoU with the relevant ministries.
- Some of these programmes operate partially outside the purview of established humanitarian cash coordination frameworks. There is a pressing need to explore how they might be better coordinated and harmonized across different actors. Such alignment is crucial for avoiding duplication, ensuring complementarity, and achieving the best value for the resources invested.

Key Recommendations

- Recognition by the humanitarian leadership (HCT, ICCG) that delivering humanitarian aid through or in close alignment with the social protection system is essential, alongside setting standards for such aid delivery.
- The current challenges provide an opportunity for policy development, particularly in enhancing data-sharing frameworks that respect the principle of informed consent while allowing for effective programme delivery and monitoring.
- A harmonization strategy for these transitional cash assistance programmes needs to be formulated to foster more effective coordination with broader humanitarian and development efforts. By finding their place within the larger ecosystem of aid, these programmes can maximize their impact.
- The challenges highlight the potential for strengthened collaboration with government agencies to ensure that the initiatives are supportive of, and aligned with, state-run social protection schemes. This collaboration could serve as a model for partnerships in humanitarian contexts.

¹⁶⁴ UNHCR and UNICEF programmed their own top-up programmes while the study was under review; these will be analysed in possible future iterations of PeReHID's work.

8. Cross-Cutting Multi-Sectoral Challenges

8.1 Inter-Sectoral Coordination Challenges Related to Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance, Sectoral Cash and Voucher Assistance, and In-Kind Assistance

8.1.1 Coordination Challenges for Complementary Inter-Sectoral Programming

Building on the analysis carried out in section 6 Complementary Programming: Integrating Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance and Sector-Specific Cash and Voucher Assistance, a challenge arises with the coordination of a) MPCA which covers basic needs for a limited time, and b) sectoral CVA and c) in-kind assistance, which address specific one-off or reoccurring needs. All three modalities are coordinated by the Cash Working Group (CWG), which is a sub-group of the cluster system, and the clusters themselves, where each coordination forum covers several sectoral needs using different modalities. However, actual tracking of complementarity of assistance packages and modalities is notably absent.

This is because the CWG's mandate is limited to coordinating MPCA, while clusters oversee sectoral assistance. The Dignified Identities in Cash Assistance project found that in Ukraine in 2023 this siloed approach led to varying eligibility criteria for assistance such as MPCA and in-kind food assistance, which created operational challenges.¹⁶⁵ With siloed systems, verifying duplication is difficult, despite area-based coordination, which also remains challenging. With MPCA designed and reported to the CWG and sectoral aid to clusters, ensuring standardisation in design, targeting and response analysis is a challenge that cannot be currently overcome. However, as the clusters are de facto members of the CWG, an entry-point is available. It can be reasonably assessed that improved coordination systems are vital to match assistance to needs across sectors and avoid overlap at household level. The Rapid Reflection on Cash Coordination for the Ukraine Response released in February 2024¹⁶⁶ calls for a larger role of the CWG in looking at the coherence of the cash response, i.e. providing both technical and strategic steering of the CVA response.

A 2022 CALP Network report on registration, targeting, and de-duplication for CVA in the Ukraine response underlines the necessity for a heightened level of programming harmonization.¹⁶⁷ It suggests that agencies should establish a consensus on data definitions, a core dataset, and the objectives of identifying and preventing duplication. These could become components of the CWG's responsibilities or form part of bilateral data-sharing agreements. However, when different sectors provide complementary assistance, governance challenges intensify.

A single individual, family, or household may qualify for different support types provided by distinct CVA implementers across various sectors. To effectively eliminate duplicate assistance, a novel level of coordination is required to define what eligibility entails for each sector and how these definitions evolve as the humanitarian situation changes. Ultimately, despite the role of the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) in defining the scope of MPCA, coordination and reporting gaps pose a risk of potential duplication between MPCA and sectoral assistance at household level. There is a pressing need for enhanced coordination mechanisms that adopt a cross-sectoral perspective to ensure that aid resources are optimized, and needs are addressed without redundancy.

¹⁶⁵ Pon, Bryan, Alphoncina Lyamuya, Emrys Schoemaker, and Horacio Nunez, 'Investigating Safe Data Sharing and Systems Interoperability in Humanitarian Cash Assistance', Dignified Identities in Cash Assistance (DIGID) Project, May 2023

¹⁶⁶ Key Aid Consulting for the Disasters Emergency Committee, Rapid Reflection on Cash Coordination in the Ukraine Response, Ukraine Briefing Paper, Disasters Emergency Committee, February 2024. Link: https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Rapid-Reflection-on-Cash-Coordination-for-the-Ukraine-Response_Ukraine-briefing-paper.pdf

¹⁶⁷ Toney, Diana and Vicente Palacios, Registration, Targeting and Deduplication: Emergency Response inside Ukraine, Thematic paper, CALP Network, August 28, 2022. Link: <https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Registration-Targeting-and-Deduplication-Emergency-Response-inside-Ukraine-Thematic-paper-1.pdf>

8.1.2 Coordination Challenges for Inter-Sectoral Market and CVA Feasibility Assessments

Coordination of modalities is hindered by the absence of a centralized mechanism at Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) level to evaluate both market functionality and the financial infrastructure necessary for delivering CVA. This coordination gap affects humanitarian actors' understanding of what local markets can provide and subsequently their ability to adapt their programming to more market-based approaches. The CWG foresees opening this workstream as part of the Rapid Reflection on Cash Coordination for the Ukraine Response's recommendations.

Even though initiatives like the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) provide an overview of market conditions, they fall short of offering specific insights into the suitability of cash versus in-kind assistance on a more local basis. Without a clear indication of where financial services are robust enough to support cash transfers, there is a risk of misallocated aid – CVA assistance may be inappropriate in areas without the necessary financial services and functioning markets, and in-kind assistance may be inappropriate in areas where cash is feasible.

To mitigate these issues, inter-sector forums could be instrumental in performing a nuanced analysis of market data, which would include assessing the robustness of financial services necessary for cash transfers at hromada level. These forums could facilitate a regular, perhaps monthly, response analysis that would guide the decision on the most suitable aid modality for each hromada.

In summary, to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of aid, a more integrated approach is needed that considers both market conditions and financial service availability. This comprehensive approach would enable agencies to make informed decisions on modalities, ensuring that aid reaches recipients in the most functional and beneficial form, whether it be MPCA, vouchers, or in-kind assistance.

8.2 Potential of Interoperability to Enhance Inter-Sectoral Coordination

This section provides an analytical perspective on the operational efficacy of the Building Blocks (BB) system, which has been instrumental in optimizing delivery of humanitarian MPCA assistance, via the de-duplication process. With integrated enhancements, BB has the potential to evolve from a tool managing solely financial assistance to a comprehensive platform supporting coordination across multiple forms of sectoral aid. The focus of this section is on the system's capability to provide a holistic overview of aid received at household level and to enable the identification and remediation of service gaps.

8.2.1 Challenges of Interoperable Systems in Area-Based Coordination

The BB system, while beneficial in de-duplicating MPCA at the household level in Ukraine, presents notable challenges for effective area-based coordination. The system's design only flags duplicate registrations post-factum. Significant time and resources are expended, and, at times, teams take risks by travelling to volatile areas to register households, only to find their efforts redundant due to post-registration duplication alerts. However, such occurrences would be much higher in the absence of the de-duplication system.

To mitigate these issues, the CWG introduced a protocol (SOP) requiring a minimum 48-hour pre-notification from partners intending to respond to rapid needs. This practice is now well-accepted among partners. It does not leverage BB data for pre-emptive coordination, thus not yet fully addressing the core issue of proactive deployment but could enhance coordination. A fundamental limitation of BB's approach is its retrospective nature. This bottleneck is exacerbated when considering expansion across sector-specific CVA efforts. It is imperative to evolve the BB protocols. Enhancing the system with a live query feature could enable a 4W-style dashboard, providing real-time insights into the coverage, types, and numbers of households assisted, and the duration of aid in each area of operation. This development would mark a significant leap forward in coordinating partners and optimizing resource allocation for aid delivery.

8.2.2 The Unique Opportunity in Ukraine of an Enabling Environment for a De-duplication System

The BB system harnesses the environment in Ukraine to facilitate several types of interoperability required for an effective de-duplication system:

Legal Interoperability: BB adheres to legal interoperability by navigating through regulatory frameworks, particularly those related to privacy and data protection, and by strategic use of foundational identifiers – Ukrainian Tax IDs – and standardized encryption to facilitate a form of zero-knowledge proof for centralized use without exposing Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

- **Foundational Identifier (Tax ID):** The Tax ID is a unique identifier that allows for precise identification of individuals within legal and financial systems. By using Tax IDs as the common element for de-duplication, BB ensures that all participating organizations are referencing the same person without ambiguity. This foundational identifier is crucial for legal interoperability because it aligns with regulatory requirements restricting the sharing of PII across different jurisdictions.
- **Encryption as a Common Approach:** By encrypting Tax IDs with the common method GNU Privacy Guard (GPG encryption), BB ensures that sensitive data is protected in transit and at rest. This encryption serves as a uniform approach to data security across different organizations, maintaining a high standard of data protection and legal compliance.
- **Zero-Knowledge Proof for Centralized Use:** The concept of zero-knowledge proofs allows one party to prove to another that they know a value (in this case, the Tax ID), without conveying any information apart from the fact that they know the value. In the context of BB, while the actual Tax IDs are encrypted and hidden, the system can still perform operations such as de-duplication checks and coordination of aid. This is achieved without revealing the underlying PII, because the BB system can confirm 'proofs' of assistance without needing to decrypt the Tax IDs.
- **Preserving Privacy while Enabling Data Sharing:** The use of encrypted Tax IDs allows BB to act as a centralized coordinator for aid distribution while preserving the privacy of individuals. Participating organizations can verify whether aid has already been given to a specific Tax ID, without needing to know or reveal the actual PII. This enables the sharing of information necessary for the coordination of aid (i.e. whether someone has already received assistance) while still complying with privacy laws and regulations that protect sensitive data.

Organizational Interoperability: BB aligns with organizational interoperability by harmonizing the objectives and processes of various humanitarian organizations. It provides a common platform for these organizations to de-duplicate aid efforts, thereby coordinating their objectives (efficient aid distribution) and streamlining processes (uploading and de-duplicating assistance lists).

Semantic Interoperability: For semantic interoperability, BB uses common identifiers (Ukrainian Tax IDs) and a standardized template for data submission that includes fields like Tax ID, Organization, Category, Currency, Amount, Start and End dates. This common data model ensures that the meaning of the data is preserved and understood consistently across different organizations.

Technical Interoperability: BB achieves technical interoperability by linking different applications and infrastructures through its web portal. Organizations can upload data, receive de-duplicated lists, and access historical data through a standardized interface. The BB platform likely uses common data formats and communication protocols to ensure that the various IT systems of participating organizations can work together seamlessly.

Interoperability in CVA requires establishing practical data-sharing principles and mechanisms, robust data infrastructure, and protections for responsible data use, according to the Dignified Identities in Cash Assistance (DIGID) report *Investigating Safe Data Sharing and Systems Interoperability in Humanitarian Cash Assistance*.¹⁶⁸ Data infrastructure integrates fragmentarily collected data within a secured network, essential for system interoperability. Safe data exchange involves managing personal and non-personal data ethically, underscoring the need for data responsibility and accountability.

¹⁶⁸ Pon, Bryan, Alphoncina Lyamuya, Emrys Schoemaker, and Horacio Nunez, *Investigating Safe Data Sharing and Systems Interoperability in Humanitarian Cash Assistance*, May 2023

Uniquely in Ukraine, humanitarian actors have created such an interoperability framework using the BB system.

The Collaborative Cash Delivery Network (CCD) developed a freely available data sharing agreement template for use by CCD agencies and any other interested actors freely available.¹⁶⁹ This is also shared as an example in the CWG induction document¹⁷⁰ for interested agencies.

8.2.3 Expanding the Horizons of Assistance Management through Building Blocks

As it stands, the BB system has shown efficacy within its purview of managing MPCA under the guidance of the CWG. Yet there is growing consensus on the need for its expansion to encompass a broader spectrum of sectoral aid. This includes critical services such as food, NFIs, WASH, and winterization support, delivered through CVA or in-kind, especially when markets are dysfunctional or as a complement to MPCA for targeted sectoral outcomes.

Incorporating these various aid types into the BB framework promises a complete, integrated snapshot of aid received at household level. This unified view is critical for identifying and rectifying instances of duplicated aid across different sectors. By harnessing this consolidated data, agencies can refine their strategies to better meet the distinct needs of affected populations, ensuring that aid is neither redundant nor insufficient.

In Donetsk oblast, for instance, the expanded BB system could pinpoint households that receive overlapping forms of aid, like MPCA for sustenance and additional food vouchers or in-kind food assistance. This intelligence would catalyse collaborative efforts between CWG and food security initiatives to eliminate unnecessary overlaps. Such efficiency gains could redirect resources to under-served communities, exemplifying the system's potential for impact. However, as already mentioned in the section on complementary programming above (see 6.1), this specific case needs to be addressed primarily at design level, not just in terms of removing and preventing operational duplication of assistance.

Reflecting the broader need for a concerted effort, the Food Security Cluster initiated a dialogue on 17 May 2022 to explore avenues for de-duplication of MPCA with food assistance, and UNICEF at the same time highlighted the imperative to broaden this discourse, suggesting that de-duplication strategies must transcend MPCA to embrace an inter-sectoral framework.¹⁷¹ Presently, pivotal discussions are underway between the WFP, the Food Security Cluster, and the CWG on adapting the BB system to actualize these enhancements.

The interoperability framework established for BB could be scaled to coordinate more specialized assistance programmes, such as agricultural support, economic recovery initiatives, housing repairs, and educational assistance. BB could thus serve as a comprehensive aid tracking platform, allowing for strategic distribution of resources and avoiding the pitfall of over-assistance in some areas while under-assisting others. For example, integrating BB could reveal that households in Zaporizhzhia have received both MPCA and additional aid for shelter and legal services (which would not constitute a duplication). Such insights would enable formulation of nuanced assistance strategies and improve coordination on a regional basis. It would also facilitate inter-cluster complementary programming as already alluded to in section 6.

8.2.4 Steps Toward Realizing Building Blocks' Full Potential

The realization of BB's full potential as a cross-sectoral tool will depend on widespread consensus, collaborative efforts across humanitarian sectors, and the enhancement of local partners' operational capabilities. Initiatives might commence with integrating fundamental needs into BB, demonstrating the system's value before venturing into more complex programmatic areas. However, such an undertaking demands a commitment from clusters to engage with BB, potentially guided by directives from the ICCG and the HCT. To operationalize this integrated approach, initial efforts could focus on gradually merging essential services such as food, hygiene, and emergency sheltering into BB while strengthening capacity and developing guidelines. Alongside, it will be critical to bolster trust in the system through improved monitoring, data analytics, and transparent data handling.

¹⁶⁹ CCD, CCD Data Sharing Agreement template and guidance notes. Link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Q1VeB9UjSz8e3f9xHrs32cmLN4x1CCuA>

¹⁷⁰ CCD, CVA Induction Document, 2023. Link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1HifUfLWEHGQvp39HJZFb5CQovoH3TX0>

¹⁷¹ OCHA, Ukraine Cash Working Group Meeting: Discussion & Action Points, 17 May 2022 [Meeting Minutes], May 2022. Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-cash-working-group-meeting-discussion-action-points-17-may-2022-meeting-minutes>

While strengthening capacity and developing guidelines, BB integration has immense potential to enable optimized, cross-sectoral assistance packages at household level in Ukraine, but would require clusters to relinquish some autonomy for greater efficiency. With proper coordination and capacity investment, improved de-duplication could significantly extend the collective reach and impact of limited humanitarian resources.

BB's prospective integration heralds the possibility of optimizing aid delivery at household level across Ukraine, maximizing the utility of limited resources. It calls for a balance between collective efficiency and individual cluster autonomy. In conclusion, it is key to explore possibilities for enhancing interlinkages between humanitarian and government data systems, building on platforms such as Diia and BB.

8.3 Localization and Engagement of National Actors in Cash Coordination and Cash and Voucher Assistance Programming

Localization, the principle of empowering local and national actors by shifting resources and decision-making power to them, has faced challenges in the humanitarian response in Ukraine. Despite verbal commitments, progress on practical localization efforts has been modest.

On the cash coordination side, progress has been made in recent years towards localisation on a policy level. In March 2022, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Principals endorsed the new Cash Coordination Model which was the outcome of the Grand Bargain cash coordination caucus and was proposed to the Emergency Relief Coordinator and Inter-Agency Standing Committee for adoption. According to the model, national actors – humanitarian actors and national governments – should have a stronger role in cash coordination to ensure that decisions regarding cash interventions are made closer and with greater accountability to the affected populations. To this end, the government or national actors are encouraged to take a co-chair role if appropriate – for instance, when it does not compromise humanitarian principles. The HCT (or equivalent leadership body) should take an overall decision on the nature and scope of engagement with the government based on the context. Moreover, national CWGs should strive to enable at least 50 per cent attendance by local actors. This should be facilitated by appropriate resourcing and provision of translation at every meeting. Finally, cash coordination should consider linkages with social protection systems where relevant and appropriate.

Against this backdrop, local Ukrainian civil society organizations (CSOs) highlighted shortcomings in an open letter in August 2022 titled 'If Not Now, When?', pressing the international community to re-evaluate engagement and enable partnerships beyond transactional relationships.¹⁷²

Considering this plea, Assessment Capacities Project (ACAPS) Assessment Capacities Project and the CCD examined the dynamics of partnerships between international and local actors in delivering CVA programmes. Their different strands of research both found local CSOs were often limited to implementation roles like beneficiary outreach and registration. While there were some collaborative partnerships where local CSOs led design and international organizations provided support on donor requirements, sub-contracting was more common. Overall, local CSO and national NGO involvement in cash coordination bodies remains disproportionately low. According to the ACAPS report, local groups face obstacles in "securing leadership positions", "accessing funding", obtaining "capacity building", and establishing "equitable partnerships". Their limited representation in national forums further restricts the input of local insights into strategic decision-making, while "international responders dominate existing coordination mechanisms."¹⁷³

¹⁷² Благодійна організація «Фонд громади міста Херсон "Захист"» et al., If not now, when?, 2022, Link: <https://philanthropy.com.ua/en/program/view/akso-ne-zaraz-koli>

¹⁷³ ACAPS, Ukraine – Perceptions of Localisation in the Humanitarian Response Thematic report, June 2023. Link: <https://www.acaps.org/en/countries/archives/detail/ukraine-perceptions-of-localisation-in-the-humanitarian-response>

Humanitarian funds

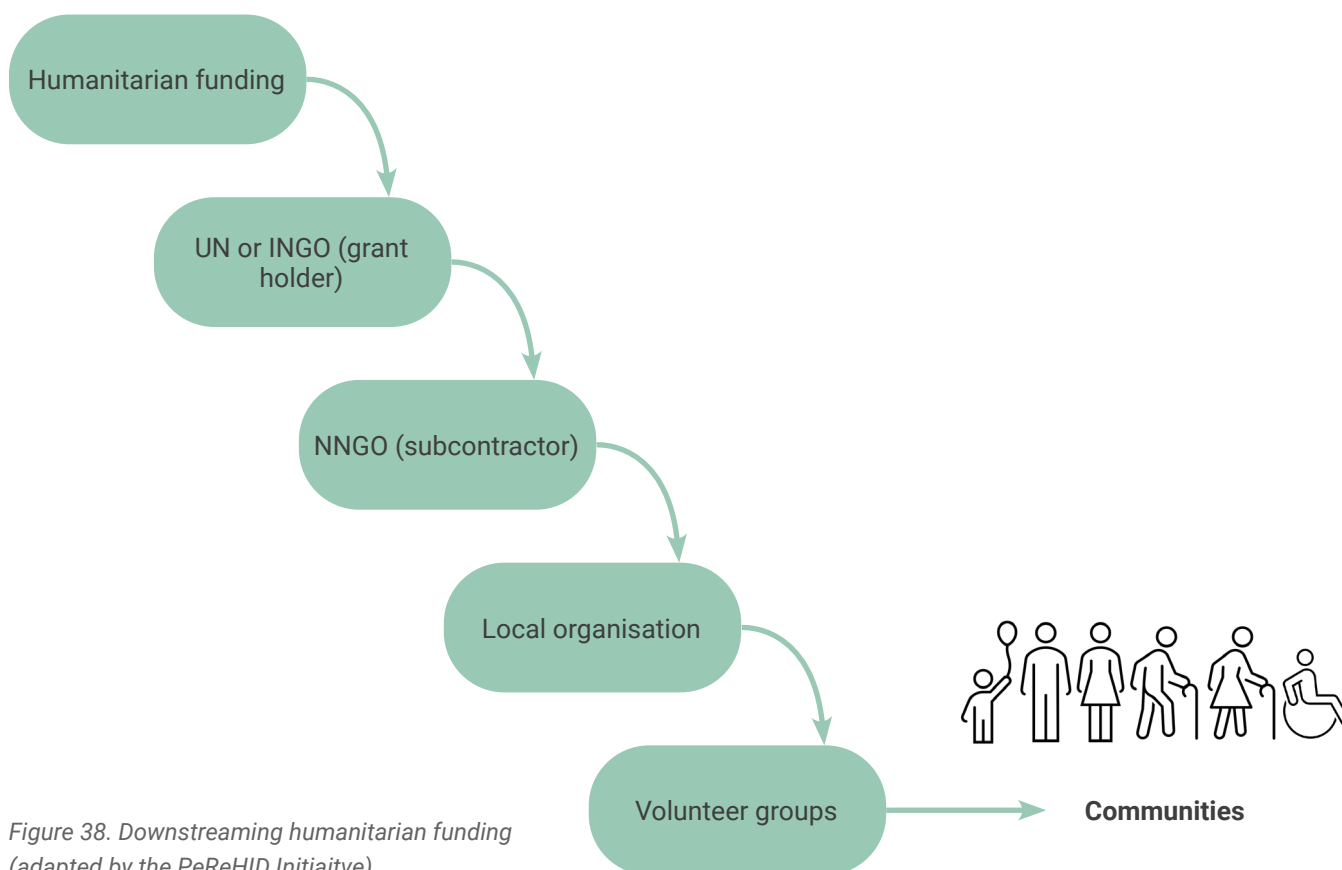


Figure 38. Downstreaming humanitarian funding
(adapted by the PeReHID Initiative)

The heavy reliance on sub-contracting also contributes to “unequal partnerships” where local CSOs and national NGOs lack decision-making power or participation in assessing needs, as the ACAPS report highlights. Despite rhetoric on localization, relationships often remain “transactional” rather than “mutually empowering”. The ACAPS report observes how “rhetorical commitments have not necessarily resulted in practical action” regarding shifting power and resources to local actors. To address these gaps, stakeholders have explored engagement models spanning basic subcontracting to “empowered leadership by local CSOs with INGO backup” on donor requirements. But progress remains slow. Key obstacles include limited direct funding for local CSOs and national NGOs, complex donor requirements, lack of core and indirect cost support, and delays in funds disbursement.

While progress has been made on localisation of cash coordination in Ukraine with the Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS) taking the co-chair role within the CWG and gradually empowering CSOs, the engagement of the Government remains limited. More engagement is needed within the humanitarian architecture to involve the Government by design, in full consideration of humanitarian principles. Mutual understanding between the humanitarian system and the Government, specifically alongside the social protection-humanitarian nexus, remains challenging.

8.4 Findings and Recommendations on Cross-Cutting Multi-Sectoral Challenges

Key Findings

- While humanitarian monitoring is ongoing in Ukraine, substantial outcome data remains lacking for this analysis, impeding robust assessment for 2022. Obtaining disaggregated figures on reach, appropriateness and impact is pivotal yet proving difficult – a systemic gap that has been progressively addressed in 2023.
- Insufficient monitoring of complementarity of assistance and modalities has been highlighted, while coordination mechanisms lack cross-sectoral perspectives that could optimize allocation of resources addressing needs with limited redundancy.

- De-duplication systems, such as Building Blocks, RAIS+ and SIDAR, are not yet used at their full potential. Inter-linkages are still not harmonized to a level that can benefit people served by the humanitarian community and leverage the effectiveness and coordination of humanitarian assistance. The scope for broader inter-sectoral coordination is limited and coverage should not only encompass CVA but should be expanded to in-kind assistance such as food, non-food items, hygiene kits, winterization support and, ideally, to the whole response. Lacking harmonised data standards poses a structural limitation to de-duplication and sharing data across sectors. The ICCG Task Force on de-duplication started operating in June 2023 and its outcomes are very progressive. The roadmap should be presented in 2024.
- There is still a disproportionately low level of participation of local CSOs and NGOs in cash coordination bodies and forums. Power imbalance is a reality, and tensions exist between programming at scale and localization. Local organizations currently face difficulties in securing direct funding due to complex donor requirements and limited visibility. Additionally, many lack the necessary infrastructure, expertise, or capacity to meet stringent international compliance standards, and their deep community insights are often under-utilized, as they are confined to implementation roles with minimal input in programme design.

Key Recommendations

- Even within constraints, augmenting evidence-building offers traction towards accountability and learning. Expanding indicators capturing efficiency, targeting validation and beneficiary feedback would enhance performance management and inform decision-making. Mainstreaming responsible data usage protocols and participatory analysis can make systems ethical yet productive. Periodic perception surveys measuring satisfaction levels would ensure people's experiences inform adaptations. Supporting initiatives such as the Cash Barometer is key to creating platforms for enhancing accountability to affected populations.
- As the full-scale invasion in Ukraine extends into 2024 and humanitarian funding is decreasing, a stronger evidence base is needed to allocate available funding, ensuring high value for money across the response, advocated and led at the ICCG/HCT level
- To enable a more comprehensive understanding of the aid landscape, helping to identify and fill service gaps efficiently, integrated sectoral coordination should be enhanced wherever possible, and de-duplication systems developed further to provide a holistic overview of all forms of assistance (CVA and in-kind) at the household level. This needs to be implemented pragmatically, likely excluding sensitive protection assistance which, by focusing on protection risks, would find its place within an assistance complementarity framework.
- Implementing real-time data sharing capabilities within de-duplication systems could include a live query feature or a dashboard that provides immediate insights into aid distribution (the 'Who, What, Where, When' of assistance), enhancing proactive and agile response coordination. This is not possible with multiple de-duplication platforms running in parallel without fostering interoperability within the humanitarian response and, eventually, with the government social protection system.
- Legal and technical interlinkages should be ensured with strict adherence to privacy laws and data protection standards. Encryption and other security measures to protect personally identifiable information should be utilized while enabling efficient data sharing and a coordinated approach.
- Investing in capacity-building for relevant humanitarian actors to effectively use de-duplication systems is fundamental, including developing clear guidelines and protocols for data entry, access, and analysis to maintain consistency and reliability across different organizations.
- Encourage active engagement from relevant clusters and humanitarian actors and establish trust in de-duplication systems through transparent data handling, capacity-building and demonstrating tangible efficiency gains and enhanced resource allocation. Through these steps, de-duplication systems can evolve into a comprehensive platform for real-time coordination across different forms of humanitarian assistance.

- Enhancing CVA effectiveness (and assistance in general) in Ukraine requires empowering local CSOs and NGOs, by leveraging their strengths and addressing their operational challenges. Local CSOs bring cost-effectiveness to operations with a lower cost base and enhanced community engagement through access to local volunteers. Their in-depth knowledge of the context allows for accurate beneficiary registration and targeting, and their flexibility enables quick responses to changing situations on the ground. Value for money analysis is encouraged to provide further evidence of the benefits and limitations of localisation and required actions to further unlock it.
- To empower local entities, strategic actions are required. Accessible funding channels need to be created for local organizations, simplifying application processes and reducing the compliance burden. Budgets should also be allocated for organizational development to strengthen their operational capabilities. Comprehensive training in management, governance, and strategic planning should be offered, beyond technical skills, accompanied by mentorship and knowledge exchange programmes between international and local entities.
- Donors and international NGOs should leverage due diligence harmonization and passporting to streamline administrative processes, enhance funding channelling to local partners and ensure efficient and timely allocation of resources to them, ultimately maximizing the impact of their initiatives on affected people and communities while minimizing regulatory burdens.
- Involvement of local CSOs in all stages of programme implementation, from conception to evaluation, is crucial. This could include establishing forums for local input ensuring that programmes are aligned with community needs, and setting up communities of practice that would be inclusive of local actors and serve as a safe and inclusive forum for discussing CVA programming, demystifying the intricacies of humanitarian coordination systems, promoting the active involvement and leadership of local CSOs in the response, and establishing connections to training and funding opportunities for its members.
- Transitioning from a subcontractor model to a partnership model treats local groups as equal stakeholders and supports local leadership in certain programme segments, supplemented by international organization mentorship. By adopting these measures, CVA programmes can become more effective, context-sensitive, and sustainable, thus building a foundation for resilient community development in Ukraine.

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