

Multi-sectoral response to reception of evacuees in collective sites in Western and Central Ukraine

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Centralized evacuations to Western and Central Ukraine have been ongoing since 2023, however they have increased in frequency and scale due to the security and humanitarian situation in frontline Oblasts. While most evacuees continue to seek safety within or nearby their oblasts of origin – such as Donetska, Sumska, and Kharkivska – since mid-2024 there has been an increase in the pace of small-scale evacuations toward Western and Central oblasts through centralized ‘evacuation trains’ organized between oblasts, as well as ad hoc self-evacuation. These westward evacuations have accounted for about 20 per cent of evacuees recorded arriving to collective sites country wide. Organized evacuations have also been initiated in support of people with disabilities and older people living near border and frontline areas.

In a context of decreased multi-sector presence and a scale down in humanitarian programming in the West and Centre of Ukraine, it is challenging to meet the urgent needs of highly vulnerable evacuees in an effective and timely manner. Evacuees arriving to collective sites in Western and Central Ukraine are often characterized by high instances of vulnerabilities – most notably older people, people with disabilities, people with chronic illnesses, and children in single-parent households (generally headed by women). Prior to their journey on the ‘evacuation trains’, evacuees receive initial assistance to sustain them in transit and are enrolled for Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA). However, MPCA takes a minimum of five days to be received, with reported wait time up to two weeks or more. An even longer period is foreseen before evacuees can access formal social assistance through government mechanisms.

This document outlines the multi-sectoral approach agreed across Clusters and Areas of Responsibility (AoRs) to ensure a predictable response to the critical needs of highly vulnerable evacuees newly arrived in collective sites in Western and Central parts of Ukraine. It is linked to the wider inter-cluster emergency preparedness and response planning and addresses the request from government to maintain humanitarian support for affected people evacuated to West and Centre. While the primary focus of humanitarian assistance remains in frontline and conflict-affected oblasts, this approach aligns with the 2025 HNRP strategy of ensuring an adaptable and flexible humanitarian response to meet the needs of the most vulnerable affected people in a needs-driven, prioritized, and protection-oriented way. It also promotes predictability in the humanitarian response and upholds do-no-harm and leave-no-one-behind approaches, facilitating coordination with authorities and managing expectations of affected people.

Multi-Sectoral Response Procedure and Package

Coordination: Humanitarian partners work in support of the Government of Ukraine, including Oblast and hromada authorities, who hold primary responsibility for supporting displaced populations and who take the lead when preparing for and responding to emergencies. More detailed guidance on the evacuations phase of the response can be found in the [Guidance on Humanitarian Evacuations of Civilians in Ukraine](#) prepared by the Protection Cluster and Child Protection AoR, as well as [Recommendations for GBV and non-GBV actors during evacuations](#), prepared by GBV AoR. In the West and Centre of Ukraine, humanitarian response for evacuations falls within two scenarios: 1) advance notice from authorities on the number of evacuees and allocated sites, allowing for planning and standby resources released on arrival of evacuees; and 2) short notice from authorities when evacuees are enroute or already arrived in collective sites, requiring a more rapid response. In both scenarios, in line with the [CCCM Cluster Preparedness and Response Guidance and SOP for Western and Central regions of Ukraine](#), the CCCM Cluster leads humanitarian partners on engaging with authorities to monitor and plan for evacuations to collective sites.

Site assessment: The CCCM Cluster Sub-national Coordinator or a designated CCCM partner focal point at the Oblast level contacts government focal points in the receiving oblasts to confirm details on the expected evacuees' arrival, including 1) timing, 2) anticipated number of people affected (demographic data on age, sex, vulnerabilities as best available), 3) collective sites expected to host new arrivals. Acknowledging limited multi-cluster presence in the West and Centre of Ukraine, a CCCM partner conducts a needs assessment on reception conditions in designated sites and confirms the number of actual arrivals to initiate the multi-sectoral response. When a site is not actively covered by a CCCM partner, a CCCM partner operating nearby conducts a roving assessment through mobile teams, in line with area-based CCCM principles. Based on the site assessment, the CCCM partner determines if additional humanitarian assistance is needed to meet the immediate needs of evacuees. If the site is unsuitable to receive evacuees, the partner, with support from the CCCM Cluster initiates advocacy to find a more suitable alternative. Considering high instances of people with disabilities among evacuees, engagement with local [Organizations of Persons with Disabilities](#) will be essential for specialist advice and local expertise.

Response Stage 1 – Referral for Multi-Sectoral “Response Package”: If additional humanitarian assistance is needed, the CCCM partner, with support from the Cluster, initiates Stage 1 of multi-sectoral response, to ensure immediate support for new arrivals, providing basic critical assistance and accommodation in collective sites. To ensure a structured and accountable response, the CCCM Cluster multi-sectoral site-level Referral and Escalation Tool is utilized to alert relevant Cluster and AoR Coordinators and their pre-identified partner focal points of the need to initiate the standardized multi-sectoral response package, with the aim to deliver within 24-48 hours (note that this procedure does not apply to individual referrals, which shall continue to take place under the separate mechanism as per the Protection Cluster Minimum Referral Standards). A special procedure and alert “Evacuee Package – West and Centre” is created in the Referral and Escalation Tool for this purpose, alerting a pre-identified contact list for follow-up action. **Importantly, it is agreed among Clusters that cluster-specific assessments are not required for Stage 1, and the assessment and confirmation from the CCCM Cluster on the location, number of people and demographics is sufficient to initiate this stage of the response.**

Response Stage 2 – “Case-by-case” needs referral: Needs identified beyond the scope of the Stage 1 response package are referred to relevant Clusters on a case-by-case basis through the standard collective site-level Referral and Escalation Tool procedure. This includes additional critical needs identified by CCCM partners that cannot be covered within the capacity of that partner, that require technical or specialized sectoral assessment and more time before implementation, and that are subject to budget availability or other prioritization criteria. **The relevant Cluster and AoR conducts its own assessment of needs and responds in coordination with the CCCM partner on-site, to ensure flexible and prioritized response.**

With regards to MPCA, self-evacuees who arrive in collective sites may not have been registered for this cash assistance. While it is critical that these individuals are registered without delay, given the individualized nature of the circumstances, MPCA registration is considered under Stage 2, rather than as a standard action under the Stage 1 response package.

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Request initiated: Oblast authorities or humanitarian partner via CCCM Cluster.

Actual numbers and preliminary needs verified on-site by CCCM partner covering the site.

Stage 1: "Response package" – within 24-48 hours after IDPs arrive in collective sites.

CCCM Cluster uses "Evacuee Package – West and Centre" request in Referral and Escalation Tool with alert sent to designated Cluster Coordinators and pre-identified partner focal points.

Standardized multi-sectoral package released based on # of arrivals and demographics:

CCCM Cluster: *site management support, needs assessment and multi-sectoral referral, essential items and equipment for sleeping arrangement and common spaces.*

WASH Cluster: *Hygiene and institutional kits to cover a period of 2 weeks.*

FSL Cluster: *Hot meals on arrival and food kits to cover a period of 2 weeks.*

Protection Cluster: *Transportation and social accompaniment, psychological first aid (PFA), awareness raising and protection counseling (including on social services and allowances), intake for protection case management.*

Child Protection AoR: *Designated space for play and PSS, case management, support for caregivers, care for UASC, provision of PSS kits*

GBV AoR: *Life-saving information, safe referrals including accommodation to GBV shelter, PSS, and distribution of dignity kits (if available in partners' stocks).*

Stage 2: "Case-by-case" needs referral

Additional critical needs raised by Oblast or humanitarian partners. CCCM Cluster uses standard Referral and Escalation Tool process with referral sent to standard Cluster focal point.

Relevant Cluster conducts own assessment of needs and responds in coordination with CCCM partner on-site, to ensure flexible response meeting most important needs.

CCCM Cluster: *Essential items for living spaces and kitchen, care and maintenance incl. small repairs and minor upgrades* (focus on accessibility and GBV risk reduction), IDP profiling.*

Protection Cluster: *Protection case management and individual referrals, home-based care, community-based protection, psycho-social support, legal assistance, Individual Protection Assistance (Cash)*

Child Protection AoR: *Child Protection Case management, Family tracing and reunification, connection with local services, MHPSS for children and caregivers.*

GBV AoR: *Case Management, safe referrals, MHPSS, mobile WGSS.*

Cash Working Group: *MPCA for those who were not registered at departure points.*

Shelter Cluster: *Alternatives to collective sites (e.g. cash for rent). Refurbishments and humanitarian non-structural repairs of collective sites based on assessed need and prioritization criteria.*

WASH Cluster: *Larger WASH repairs/upgrades in specific cases based on assessed need and prioritization criteria.*

Education Cluster: *Individual learning kits, information provision on enrollment / remote learning (catch-up class, MHPSS)*

Health Cluster: *Specialized assessment/referral*

** Larger interventions such as humanitarian non-structural repairs or refurbishments fall under the Shelter Cluster.*