

# Odesa FSL Sub-Cluster Coordination Meeting

Minutes | October 11, 2023



**Chaired by:** Alla Khodak, Odesa FSL Sub-Cluster Focal Point  
Tetyana Vetskur, FSLC Southern Hub Lead

<b>Agenda:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Meeting with FSLC Coordinator Alistair Short.</li><li>2. News from the partners, winterization projects.</li><li>3. Reporting via ActivityInfo platform – feedback from the new partners.</li><li>4. Questionnaire for the Cluster partners, channels of communication.</li></ol>
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**Participants:** Caritas Odesa, Charity Fund Blue Crescent Ukraine, Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), CF Manifest Mira, NGO Revival Spirit, NGO Automaidan, World Food Programme (WFP), 100% Life, CF Support Kherson.

The meeting was attended by 17 representatives of 10 organizations active in Odeska oblast. We thank all our partners for their presence, contributions and active participation in the meeting. FSLC National Coordinator Alistair Short presented the main objectives of the Cluster, results achieved in 2023 and vision for 2024. The need to focus on livelihoods was highlighted. In 2023, food assistance sector was well-funded, while livelihoods received only a fraction of the required funding. The best way forward is to start with pilot projects and then scale them up. Unemployment is currently the biggest challenge for Odeska oblast, which will only be exacerbated from 1 February 2024 when the working-age and able IDPs will lose state benefits for the whole family. This means additional 100,000 people to be employed in Odeska oblast. At the same time, last year state employment agencies found jobs for 2,000 jobseekers.

## Partner updates.

NGO Manifest Mira reported the need for 2,500 food kits (monthly) for the families in difficult life circumstances who will have their children put in foster care unless the situation in their homes improves. It was decided to get a clear needs assessment document from NGO Manifest Mira first. URC expressed their reservations, saying that many of those families are unable to take a proper care of the children and food kits provision may not improve the situation.

Important inputs and updates provided by the partners:

- The assistance does not reach people in the remote small villages. People with disabilities do not always access assistance as well (NGO Manifest Mira).
- People from villages tend to come to Odesa city to receive assistance (NGO Support Kherson).
- The quality of food assistance is sometimes substandard – near expiration date or already expired (NGO Support Kherson).
- Challenges in need assessment – the data received from hromadas differ greatly from the situation on the ground.
- NGO Automaidan raised the issue of corruption by local authorities when requesting and distributing humanitarian aid.
- Lots of assistance is provided to IDPs, leaving the vulnerable local population behind and creating social tension (URC, NGO Manifest Mira, NGO Automaidan).
- Sometimes people abuse the system and demand assistance they are not entitled to, e.g. after shellings in Odeska oblast some people came to receive emergency repair kits even though their houses were not affected (URC).
- For iNGOs it is important to conduct their own needs assessment and have field teams with experts otherwise there is risk that assistance would be used for political campaigning (Blue Crescent Ukraine).

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- Knowledge of local context and proper assessment methodology are crucial for humanitarian work.
- NGO Revival Spirit are planning livelihoods project Odesa Spring, providing seeds, potatoes for planting, incubators and livestock inputs for beneficiaries in rural communities.
- NGO Manifest Mira offered information support to the cluster partners by sharing the contact at hromada level (60 hromadas) in 3 southern oblasts.
- Charity Fund Blue Crescent are considering a livelihoods project on medicinal and aromatic plants growing in Odeska oblast.

Regarding the ActivityInfo feedback, 100% Life Odesa successfully submitted their first report. They will have internal discussions to determine whether future reports will be submitted centrally or by local branches. Caritas Odesa informed that all reporting to ActivityInfo will be done centrally by Caritas Ukraine.

Cluster focal point for Odeska oblast Alla Khodak informed the participants that a small questionnaire will be sent out to them to ensure better coordination and referral system. The questionnaire will include geography, target groups, kinds of assistance provided and contact information.

Caritas Odesa informed about the establishment of IDP council – the regional body consisting of LA representatives, civil society and humanitarian actors to provide more efficient and timely solutions to IDP problems in Odeska oblast. It was agreed that FSLC coordinators and partners will be invited to the IDP council meetings.

Next sub-cluster coordination meeting is planned in late November. The exact date is to be confirmed.



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