

Cash Based Interventions

Rental Assistance Recommendations and Guidelines for Ukraine



Version 2.1 October 2023



Shelter Cluster Ukraine
ShelterCluster.org
Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter

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1. Background

This document serves as a comprehensive guide, offering recommendations and direction to Shelter and Cash humanitarian partners seeking to offer cash assistance for rental accommodation in Ukraine. Addressing the shelter needs of conflict-affected populations is a fundamental objective of the Shelter Cluster. The utilization of rental initiatives empowers affected individuals with the freedom to choose from available accommodation options in operational markets.

As the 24th of February 2022 conflict in Ukraine increasingly protracted, there is a growing need to support Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and other affected populations with cash assistance for rental accommodation to provide them with more sustainable living conditions and assist in their self-recovery. The Rental Market Initiative (RMI) aims to enable access to adequate accommodation for an agreed period, with protection safeguards such as Security of tenure, compliance with minimum housing standards, access to essential services and support for the sustainability of the accommodation through case management and livelihoods assistance, helping families find temporary housing on their journey to durable solutions. The Rental Market Initiative modality aims to:

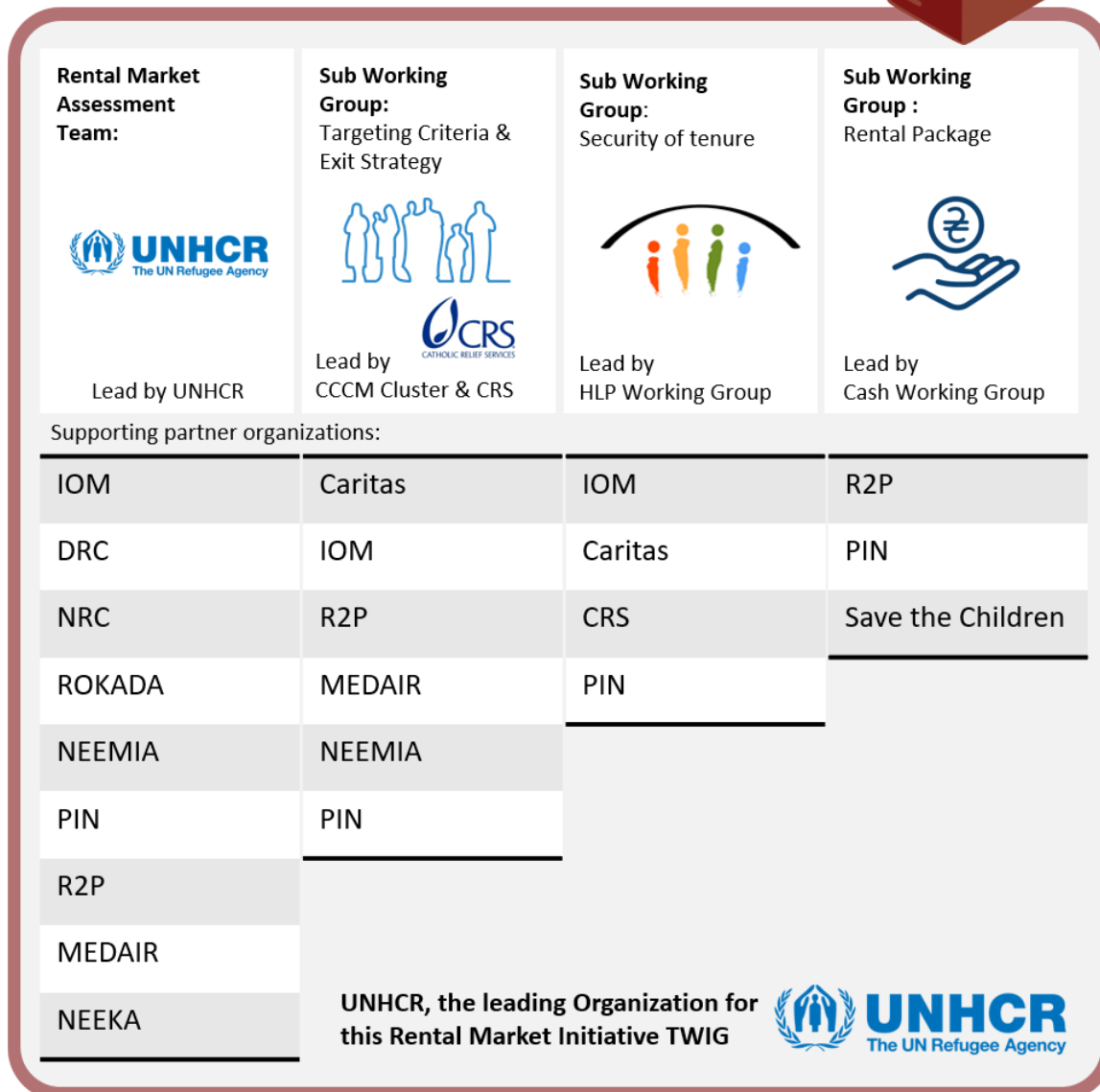
- a. Support households accommodated in temporary housing options which can integrate them into the hosting communities.
- b. Mitigate the risks associated with eviction linked to the exhaustion of the household's financial resources and absence of secure tenure.
- c. Address individual protection concerns through case management.

This document represents an update to the "Cash for Rent Assistance in Ukraine v-1.01" recommendations, developed through a collaborative within Shelter Cluster Ukraine spanning three sessions of the Technical Working Group (TWiG) for Rental Market Initiative held in August – September 2023 and chaired by **UNHCR**. It bears the contributions of three technical sub-working groups assigned to revise guidance on the Security of tenure, the rental assistance package, targeting criteria and exit strategy.

The document also incorporates insights from the Housing, Land, and Property Technical Working Group (HLP TWG), Cash Working Group (Cash WG), and the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) cluster. It received endorsement from the Shelter Cluster Strategic Advisory Group (SAG). Please refer to the structure and distribution of tasks and the list of partners involved on the next page.

Shelter Cluster Ukraine

Structure for this Technical Working Group (TWIG) :



2. Response Objective

General objective (linked with 3rd Objective of the Shelter/NFI Cluster Strategy for 2024): **Provision of adequate housing solutions for IDPs, Returnees, and non-displaced people while fostering linkages to longer-term response.**

It is recognised that the term Rental Market Initiative or "Cash for Rent" or Rental Assistance is often interpreted to mean that the entire rent is covered by the assistance, sometimes through direct payments to lessors (landlords or landladies). However, for the purposes of this SOP (Standard Operating Procedure), the rental assistance provided in Ukraine will continue to use the term "Rental assistance" and **does not** constitute a requirement to cover all rental and utility costs at 100%.

3. Targeting Criteria

The Cash for Rent is primarily targeted at households (registered and non-registered) in areas not experiencing frequent active conflict in Ukraine's government-controlled territory. However, it can also be provided to other Conflict-Affected Populations (CAPs).

3.1 Targeting prioritisation for Cash for Rent

All vulnerable IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) households, verified to vulnerability criteria ([Annex 1](#)), currently unable to secure adequate accommodation, are eligible for Rental Market Initiative support. The list below details the prioritisation criteria of these households:

- **Non-displaced** conflict-affected populations are in need of temporary accommodation while repairs are being carried out on their home.
- **IDPs** who are unable or unwilling to return to their areas of origin and find themselves in one of the following situations:
 - a. Living in Collective Sites (CSs) who will have the capacity to sustain private rental payments at the end of the rental support period.¹
 - b. Living in CSs are at risk of eviction, especially those living in schools and kindergartens, due to return to educational activities.
 - c. Have specific socioeconomic vulnerabilities and are already living in private accommodation, at risk of eviction and with no alternative but to return to CSs.
 - d. New arrivals (including returnees) with specific socioeconomic vulnerabilities who are unwilling to live in CSs.
- **All profiles** (Returnees, IDPs, Non-displaced) in need of accommodation support identified and referrals through other protection programmes.

Prioritization should also be informed by a do-no-harm approach by anticipating, defining, and planning what will happen when the rental assistance period ends. The exit strategy should be prepared from the beginning to ensure the selected households will be able to maintain their rental accommodation at the end of the assistance period by developing one or multiple options such as:

1. Linking rental assistance to complementary programmes (e.g., livelihoods components, income generation & job creation interventions)
2. Referral mechanisms should be established for continued shelter assistance from local/national authorities or social protection schemes based on each household's situation.

¹ As collective sites primarily host populations with heightened vulnerabilities, including factors such as age, disability, and socio-economic circumstances, some households heavily rely on state-sponsored social assistance and face difficulties in securing employment or establishing a sustainable source of income. NGOs are advised to refer them to social protection and assistance provided by local or national authorities, as they might face challenges in securing accommodation after the six-month assistance period.

3. Recipients should be informed of the expected end date of rental assistance. Gradual phasing out of rental assistance beyond the 6 months of full rental assistance for HHs with protection concerns and/or specific vulnerabilities (e.g., HHs who had a new-born, lost the primary source of income, or lost a family member during the renting period).

3.2 Recommended housing conditions for Cash for Rent recipients.

The dwelling that will house RMI beneficiaries must meet minimum standards that guarantee a dignified and safe life. When possible, these conditions should be communicated to the recipients and validated through direct visits, remote contact, or self-reporting ([Annex 2](#)). However, the failure of IDPs to select housing that meets these recommended conditions does **not** constitute disqualification from Rental Market Initiative assistance.

1. Rental accommodation is neither an informal settlement nor a substandard building.
2. Rental accommodation is structurally sound and not in danger of collapse.
3. Rental accommodation meets minimum Ukrainian standards of 13.65 per person (per the Housing Code article 47).
4. Rental accommodation meets minimum WASH standards (running water, flushing toilets, etc.)
5. Suitability for the Ukrainian climate and Insulation, Heating, Cooling, and Ventilation standards. Preferred having an alternative source of heating during electricity cut-offs.
6. Accessibility to health, educational and social protection facilities, shops, and public transportation. Preference should be given to locations that may enable access to livelihoods.
7. Rental accommodation should be furnished with minimum appliances to provide the family with basic services such as a fridge, gas/electric stove, water heater, washing machine, bed, wardrobe, table, and chairs.
8. Specific needs: houses which will host people with mobility limitations and other conditions must consider the need to ensure that everyone can access the house and move internally independently, as well as use the most relevant items such as toilets, showers, sinks, etc. It is preferable to choose apartments on the lower floors in case of multi-story buildings or an additional check of elevator availability and its functioning.

4. Rental Market Assistance Package

The calculation of a suitable Cash for Rent assistance package requires considering several factors:

1. A monthly fee that is in line with average market prices and varies depending on unit size and location (number of bedrooms/units, furniture, urban vs rural, Oblast, etc.).
2. A rental amount includes a contribution to utility bills, which differs between summer and winter.
3. The need for additional financial assistance for the IDP household when moving in (rental deposit, agency fee, purchase of furniture, appliances, or transport needs) included in Start-up grant.

The rental package includes guidelines on length of assistance, rental amount with winter or summer utility bills and security deposit. The rental package is divided into smaller tranches with conditional cash transfers.

4.1 Rental Market Assessment (RMA)

The Cash for Rent assistance package is determined by updated information on the rental market in the targeted areas (Oblast level). For this purpose, a Rapid Rental Market Assessment (RMA) is carried out as the preliminary step of the rental package design.

- To understand the typical rent prices, associated costs (deposit, utilities), conditions of rental properties (accessibility, basic needs, closure to essential services) and how these differ by location.
- To identify the standard practices of Security of tenure in formal and informal rental agreements, the associated challenges, and dispute and eviction risks.

In parallel to the development of these guidelines, UNHCR and Shelter Cluster Ukraine and its partners have produced an RMA, which can be found here and can be used as a reference. Prices should be updated to capture market realities, and shelter cluster partners are encouraged to share the results of their RMAs using equivalent methodology to improve the database. The Rental Market Assessment methodology applies a mix of quantitative and secondary data collected and analysed in August 2023:

- Secondary data review from different online sources such as the primary national rental property websites (e.g., OLX.ua, dom.ria.ua).
- Survey of real estate agents in each Oblast with a [structured questionnaire](#) to assess rent prices, associated costs (deposit, utilities), technical conditions of rental properties (accessibility, basic needs, proximity to essential services) and how these differ by location, as well as to identify

the standard practices of Security of tenure in formal and informal rental agreements.

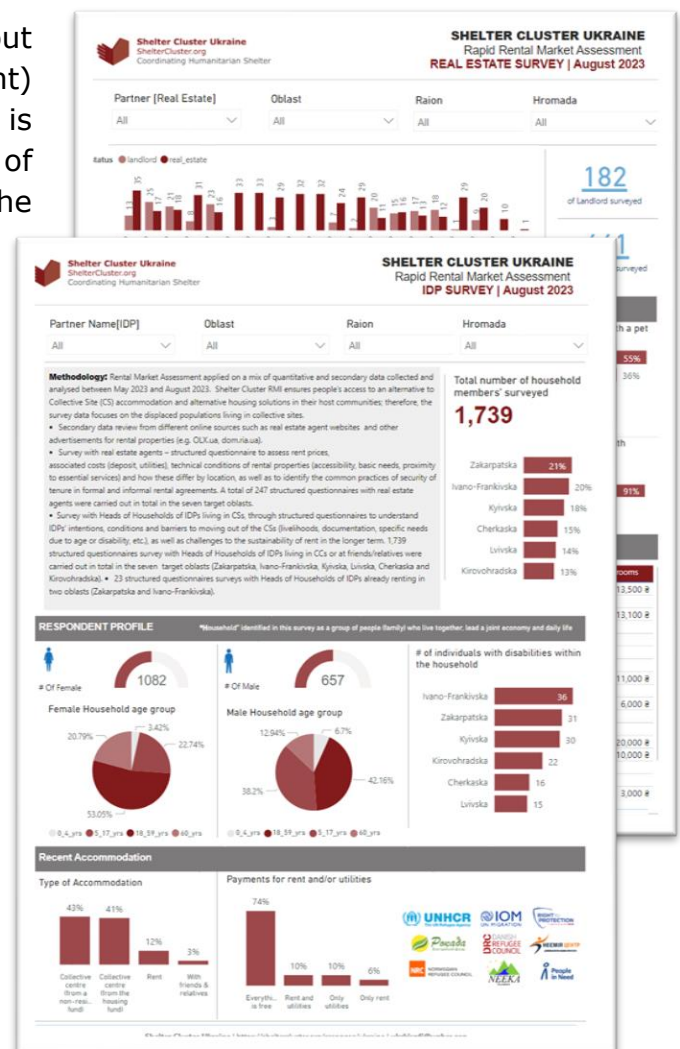
The RMA complements the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) led by the Cash Working Group (CWG) and REACH.

4.2 Data analysis & Dashboard

Data presentation and analysis carried out by UNHCR IM (Information Management) and available on the Dashboard. Data is aggregated monthly rent per number of rooms. The agency calculates the apartment size per individual family size and protection needs. Utility bills for winter and summer are presented separately.

Limitations:

- Rental market assessment can be expanded to qualitative data from focus group discussions and key informant interviews to cross-check quantitative findings. SC partners are also advised to follow up on results from the CCCM focus group discussion in all oblasts in Ukraine.
- Due to the lack of real estate agencies, property management services and websites providing information on the rural rental market, the RMA website data collection currently focuses on urban areas.



Please visit the Dashboard via this [LINK](#)

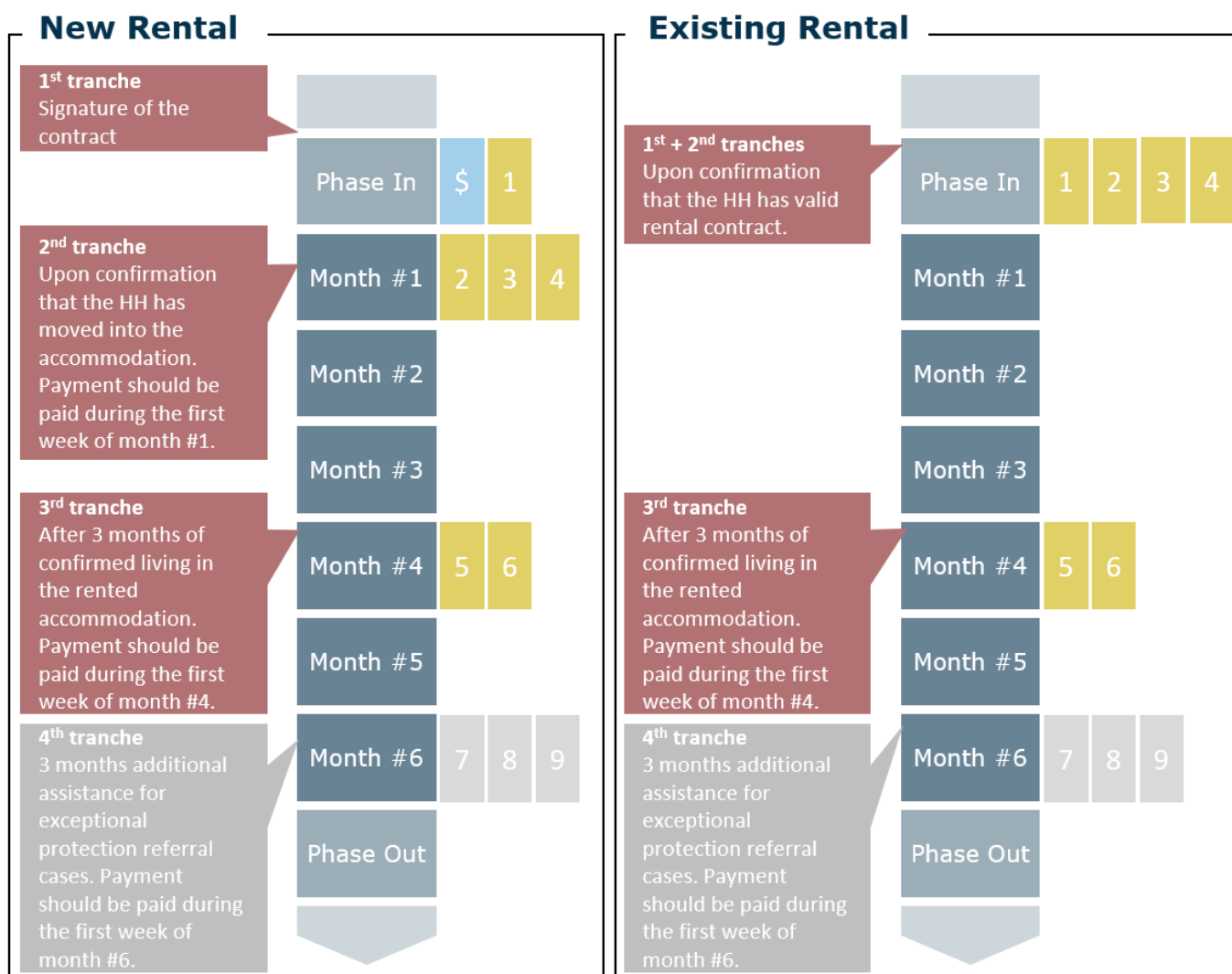
4.3 Response duration

The minimum period for cash-for-rent assistance is **6 calendar months**. Partners are recommended to distribute the cash instalments to the recipients in allocations of start-up grants + 1 month, 3 months, and 2 months tranches. However, partners are not limited to assisting for 6 months if there is a justification for extending the assistance.

*Partners assisting recipients of shelter repair programmes who require temporary shelter during the repair works do not need to consider the **minimum** Cash for Rent duration period.*

4.4 Monthly response package²

Financial support is determined by the size of the family and adapted to the rental market prices identified in the location. The standard assistance package will last 6 (six) months, consisting of a **Start-up Grant** and **monthly rental** payments, including a contribution for **utility fees**, and it is transferred directly to the HHs. The amount of financial assistance included in the package should be determined by up-to-date evidence collected through Rental Market Assessments.



\$

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 # :

Utility bills should be calculated as per winter (Oct-March) or summer months (April-September)

² As per articles 165.1.56 and 170.7.2. of the Tax Code ([LINK](#)) of Ukraine, any humanitarian assistance provided by organisations registered in the State Registry of Non-Profitable Organizations to the war-affected population is exempt from income and military taxes.

Start-Up grant: Rental Market Assessment results indicate that 52% highlighted that it is necessary for a guaranteed deposit payment, and 78% are required to pay the monthly rent in advance. The Shelter Cluster recommends providing an initial flat-rate Start-Up grant of up to a 1-month rent amount as a deposit upon signature of the contract to secure a rental accommodation, including moving costs, agent fees, and security deposits. This is only applicable to RMI recipients who are not currently renting.

Monthly Rent: Refers to the amount distributed in tranches to cover all or part of the cost of rent. It is recommended to calculate the value using an RMA or reference prices provided by the RMA Dashboard ([LINK](#)).

Utility costs: The contribution to service costs is intended to ensure the minimum conditions for a dignified life. It is not intended to cover the total utility charges in all cases. The stand-alone average utility costs in winter (Oct-March) and summer (April-September) months as per RMA data (August 2023) are provided in the RMA dashboard ([LINK](#)).

Phase Out Tranche: Based on a needs assessment by protection actors, the Partner may propose extending the rental assistance for 3 (three) additional months as a Phase Out Tranche. The Protection needs assessment must consider vulnerability criteria for extension and include a clear plan to address the family's vulnerabilities, including referrals to social protection systems.

Families with low income are eligible for utility subsidies provided by the GoU. Subsidies are also provided to people living in rental housing. Partners must support eligible IDPs to enrol on government assistance as part of the steps for the exit strategy and phase out of rental assistance. Online subsidy applications may be submitted [here](#).

4.5 Conditionalities for cash transfer

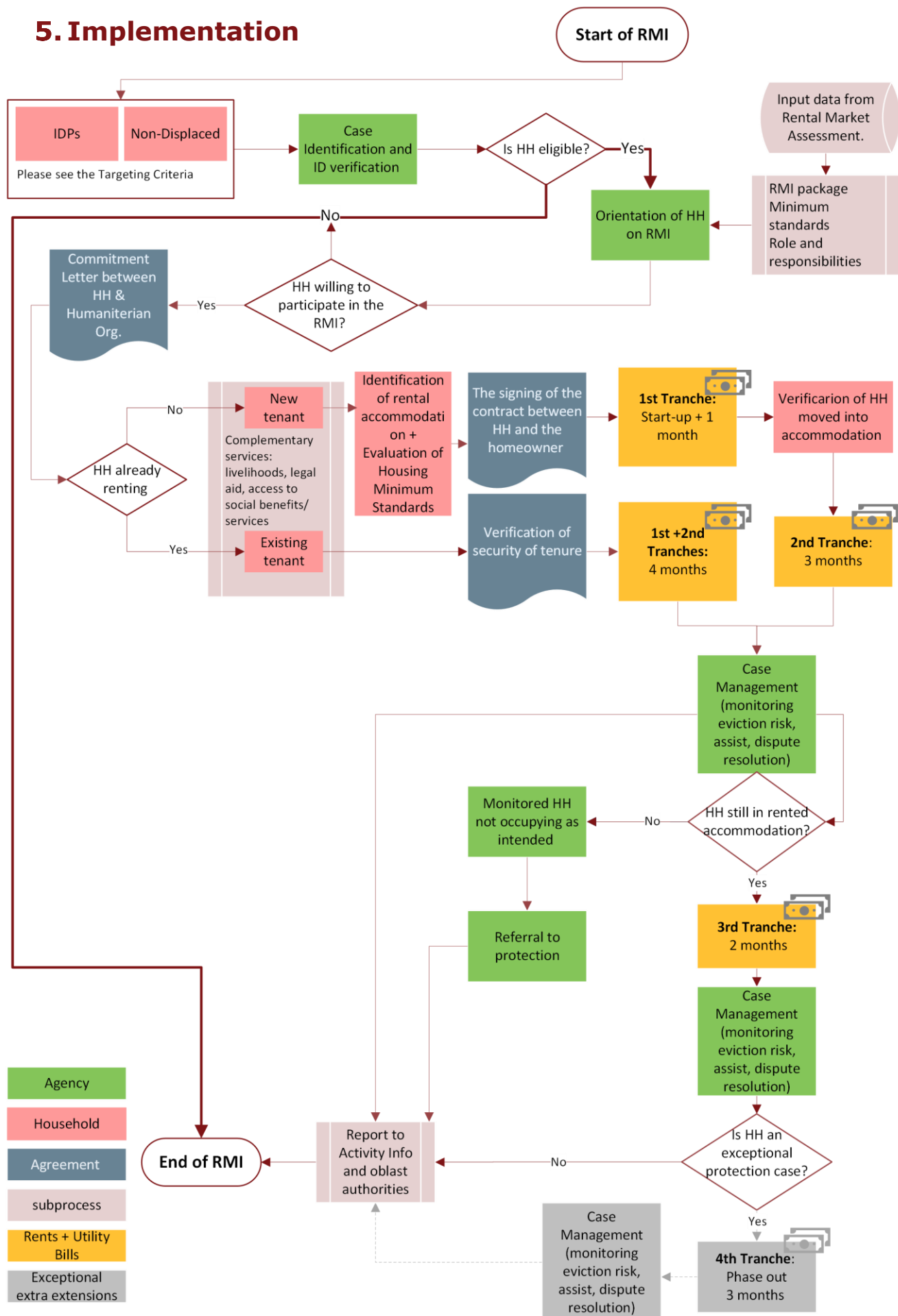
Households must find a property owner who is prepared to accept a written rental agreement. The partners to verify security of tenure ([Annex 3](#)) before the transfer of the start-up grant. Making subsequent tranches of payments is conditional on the household occupying rented accommodation, paying rent to the landlord, appropriately using, and maintaining the accommodation.

4.6 Cash for Rent Assistance package as per family size.

Assistance should be adapted to the size of the household. The rental price increases significantly as the number of rooms increases (see RMA results). Expenditure on utilities is also affected by the size of the dwelling. The Ukrainian population's average household sizes can be taken as:

Size of the Households	Percentage of the population
1 to 3	85%
4	10%
5 +	5%

5. Implementation



5.1 Registration mechanism

Identification of possible Cash for Rent recipients can be obtained using the following methods:

1. IDP registration lists from Oblast Regional Military Authority (RMA) or Hromada authorities.
2. IDP registration lists from local partners, community, and/or volunteer groups.
3. IDP registration lists from Collective Site authorities or Camp Management Partners
4. Referrals from Other Cluster partners (e.g., Protection etc).
5. Partner non-shelter activities
6. Partner digital registration mechanisms
7. WhatsApp group for returnees

5.2 Security of Tenure – Rental Agreement

In Ukraine, lease arrangements are not always formalized through a written rental agreement signed by the owner and the tenant. Whilst these informal arrangements can be executed more quickly, a formal contract – a written rental agreement – offers Protection to the owner and the tenant and details explicitly the obligations and the rights of both the owner and the tenant. Participants in a Rental Market Assistance programme – both the owner and the tenant – should be encouraged to sign a rental agreement that includes, at a minimum, the following:

- Description of the Premises (address, total area of the apartment, condition of the apartment)
- Purpose of the Rental Arrangement (for residential habitation only)
- Procedure for transferring the Premises.
- Terms of Rental Agreement (duration, monthly payment, timing of payment, whether utilities and communal services are included in the rental payment)
- Rights and Obligations of Owner
- Rights and Obligations of Tenant
- Process for amending, extending, and/or terminating the agreement (which includes a 30-day notice period for terminating the agreement)
- Process for resolving disputes.
- Modality for communication between parties (e.g., Telegram, WhatsApp, email)
- Signature of Owner and Tenant

Participants in a Rental Market Assistance programme should be allowed to provide their own rental agreement. In the alternative, a simple, 2.5-page rental agreement in Ukrainian and English languages is presented as [Annex 3](#) and covers all of the provisions that are listed above.

5.3 Due Diligence

Verifying the ownership of the premises that are used in the Rental Market Assistance programme is a crucial step to ensure the Protection of the assistance participants (the tenant and the owner) and the organization implementing the programme. This verification process – called Due Diligence – is the process of confirming property ownership or usage rights. The process helps protect owners and tenants and the Rental Market Assistance implementing organization by ensuring that project participants are in lawful possession of the property. This assurance helps avoid later disputes or issues of liability for owners, tenants, third parties and the implementing organization.

Due diligence is carried out through:

- A. Interviewing the landlord / owner of the property / legal representative (in case of absence of the owner or documents to prove ownership, you should question the person who is considered to be the owner or permanently living within the premises)
- B. Interviewing the tenant / resident / user of the apartment or house
- C. Obtaining information to confirm the right of ownership or possession of the property, including through corroboration with other parties or officials
- D. Ensuring there are no disputes or conflicts over the property which could raise issues of liability

Where possible, implementing organizations should seek written confirmation of ownership or tenancy rights. This confirmation can be through appropriate entitling documentation or alternative evidence when obtaining written documents is impossible.

A checklist for due diligence and a list of such documents is outlined in [Annex 3](#).

5.4 Verification of documents

Priority	Target Criteria	Suggested Verification Documents
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 7.5m2 per person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-declared through registration mechanism. - Visual check of property
5	Referrals from Protection actors <i>including Camp Management, Protection, GBV (Gender Based Violence), MHPSS (Mental Health and Psychosocial support) Clusters</i>	<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

5.5 Disbursement procedure

- Once the case has been verified, the household representative selected to receive Rental Market Assistance is eligible to receive the Start-Up Grant if they are not already renting. Once the recipient has identified their preferred accommodation, both the tenant and the landlord are required to sign a rental contract and agree to abide by the terms.
- The signed rental agreement should be shared with the agency to provide the Tranche-1 (Start-Up Grant) to the household representative.
- Suppose partners can independently verify that the recipient Rental Market Assistance household has secured rental accommodation. In that case, this can be conducted between the first and subsequent instalments.
- If a recipient household is not using the cash as intended, this would constitute grounds for disqualifying the Rental Market Initiative assistance at the distributing agency's discretion and the next or final instalment withheld.

5.6 Disbursement mechanism

The payment should be transferred before the commencement of the rental period once the signed agreement has been provided to the distributing agency. Cash assistance should be disbursed in Ukrainian Hryvnia (UAH). It is recommended to use the following mechanism:

1	Direct Bank transfer	
2.	Money Agent (e.g., MoneyGram)	(Be advised - transfer fees up to 2%)
3.	Ukrposhta	(Be advised - transfer fees 1% + 19 UAH)
4.	Mobil App transfer	(be advised of exchange rates if international transfer)

As well as transfer fees, partners are advised that banking exchange rates in Ukraine do not always mirror the rates that can be found at the exchange bureaus. If physical cash is the chosen modality, partners are reminded to consider the resulting protection concerns surrounding the provision of significant sums of cash.

5.7 Extension criteria

Rental Market Initiative assistance can be extended to the same household when it is verified that the household was unable to improve its socioeconomic standing. The minimum extension is 3 months. Partners should be aware of the risks of continual extensions potentially leading to aid dependency. Partners should also extend the rental agreement to reflect the extended period. Gradual phasing out of rental assistance beyond the 6 months of full rental assistance for HHs with protection concerns and/or specific vulnerabilities (e.g., HHs who had a newborn, lost the primary source of income, or lost a family member during the renting period).

5.8 Termination criteria

Rental Market Initiative assistance should not be extended to the same family when:

- It has been verified that the household has improved its socioeconomic standing and can afford to rent accommodation without requiring assistance.
- It has been verified that the household has not used the cash intended for rental accommodation.
- The family misused the premises for any other usage than the one intended for or carried out any activity against enforceable Ukrainian laws.

5.9 Protection case-management

Cluster partners are required to ensure close monitoring during the rental period through house visits or phone calls, especially considering that the rental support lasts several months and changes in the family's socioeconomic situation and/or contractual disputes may pose risks ([Annex 5](#)) to the achievement of the programme's objectives. Continuous case management and monitoring are required to confirm the target household's continued occupation of the property (as a condition for the release of tranche payments) and to anticipate potential challenges and risks and mitigate them before they become significant issues. For this purpose, partners should implement/monitor the following:

- Carry out monitoring visits and/or phone calls, meeting the HH.
- Monitor occupancy rates of rented accommodation. Case managers must conduct occupancy monitor visits/and confirm payment of rent before transferring the next Tranche to the IDP household.
- Propose collaborative dispute resolution where there is a threat of eviction.
- The case manager provides technical support to mitigate risks to the IDP (discrimination, contract dispute risk, wear and tear).
- Ensure that protection and livelihood referral mechanisms (whether within the Partner or outside) are well known to staff involved in monitoring.
- The case manager supports IDP to reduce barriers to employment. Information dissemination regarding skill development programs, networking, start-up business funding, government, and referral to livelihood partners.
- Identify how the cash transfer has been used and whether it was sufficient for its intended purpose. Was disbursement timely? Did the target population face problems with the withdrawal of the money?
- Provide technical advice on increasing house efficiency and reducing utility bills.
- Ensure staff in monitoring and feedback systems know how to appropriately refer people to other departments/agencies/services and senior programme team members. This is particularly important for protection-related (including eviction monitoring) concerns.
- The case manager provides close support for the case closure.

6. Monitoring & Reporting

6.1 Minimum data collection criteria

1. First Name and Surname of family representative
2. Identification document type
3. Identification document number or reference
4. Family size disaggregated by gender and age range.
5. Location of origin
6. Location of displacement
7. Contact phone number.
8. Vulnerability criteria status
9. Date of Tranche 1 (Start-Up grant) disbursed.
10. Date of Tranche 2 (3 months' rents) instalment disbursed.
11. Date of Tranche 3 (last 2 months rents) instalment disbursed.
12. PDM after completion of 6 months rental period.

6.2 Standard indicators

1. **# HH secured their accommodation for rent**
2. **# HH supported by cash for rent (RMI)**

6.3 Monitoring Plan

It is recommended that Partners undertake monitoring activities to:

1. Ensure that Cash for Rent recipients are using the rental contribution as intended.
2. Collect data and feedback on the Rental Market Initiative modality to highlight areas for review and improvement.
3. Ensure the rental assistance package continues to provide adequate contributions for rental assistance.
4. Monitor unintended consequences and potential Protection concerns, including threats of eviction that may arise and refer those cases to HLP and legal actors.

While it is recognised that it will not be possible to monitor every caseload, the following approaches can be considered:

1. Validation monitoring
 - a. In-person household visits to Cash for Rent assistance recipient households.
 - b. Receipt of rent payment as proof of rent payment to property owner.
 - c. Using digital verification mechanisms with a geotagging function.
 - d. Using the Ukrainian Government DIYA app (*to be confirmed*).
 - e. Post a letter or postcard with a unique reference code to the recipient household's registered rental address to then report back to the Partner.

2. Outcome monitoring

- a. Partners' own Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) activities and tools.

3. Price monitoring

- a. Include questions related to rental prices in PDMs (Post Distribution Monitoring).
- b. Periodic data gathering of rental price data through the rental Market Assessment methodology described above in the [RMA](#) and data collection through the [KOBO form](#).

4. Protection monitoring/case management

- a. In-person household visits to recipient households
- b. Phone calls to recipient households
- c. Digital mechanisms through, for example, regular (e.g., monthly) surveys being sent to recipients to identify any protection concerns or tenant/lessor mediation services required. This can take the form of a web form (e.g., Enketo) link being sent to recipients via Telegram/Signal/Viber.

6.4 Complaints Response Mechanism

Partners should ensure that Rental Market Initiative recipients have access to a Complaints Response Mechanism through multiple mediums to report issues, provide feedback and access conflict resolution support. Suggested channels of communication include:

- Telephone
- Email
- Social media
- Telegram app
- Physical help desks

6.5 Reporting

In addition to Cluster Activity Info (5W) reporting, partners should submit their list of Rental Market Initiative assistance recipient households to the Oblast Regional Military Authority once they are confirmed to receive assistance. The Regional Military Authority will be a centralised point for recipients in their Oblasts to strengthen coordination and avoid duplication.

What to report?	When to report?
Ongoing activity: # HH secured their accommodation for rent	Reported upon payment of the start-up grant (Tranche #1)
Completed activity: # HH supported by cash for rent (RMI).	Upon confirmation that the HH has moved into the accommodation and confirmed living 6 months in the rented accommodation.

If Rental Market Initiative recipient households are extended for additional months of assistance, this should also be reported, detailing the extension duration.

Protection partners reserve the right to withhold information regarding provided Rental Market Initiative assistance through Protection case-management assistance from being reported to the Oblast, where they determine it poses a risk to the household.

Deduplication coordination³ should be carried out with different partners at the sub-national shelter cluster hub level.

³ Households who receive Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) are also eligible to participate in RMI programs. MPCA is not intended to cover rental expenses however, HH should do not receive any other Cash for Rent assistance (RMI) from other agencies.

7. Exit Strategy

Partners should consider how Rental Market Initiative recipient households will maintain their access to adequate housing after the rental assistance period, as they may be able to take steps at the start of the programme that can influence this. Partners should consider how recipient households of Cash for Rent assistance will maintain access to adequate housing after the rental assistance period ends. Through the project and case management, organizations implementing cash for rent are encouraged.

Considerations may include:

- Displaced families may be able to return to their location of origin (especially in the northern central Oblasts).
- Households can be supported to access host family arrangements (for example, with extended family).
- Adult household members may be able to develop their employability, access economic opportunities, or be referred to Livelihood programming in the local area of their rental accommodation, such that by the end of the rental assistance, recipients have increased their income to enable them to afford to pay their rent without the need for rental assistance. This can be facilitated through referrals to local job training programs or livelihood support services.
- Partners can communicate when the end of the rental assistance period is expected to prepare recipient households to consider how they will support themselves once the rental assistance period is over.
- Partners can budget to support recipient households by a further 3 or more months for those likely to face eviction at the end of the rental assistance period.
- Partners can set up referral mechanisms in areas where the local/national authorities can continue providing shelter assistance (longer-term rental assistance or reconstruction support).
- Households with one working-age person and members needing additional care may require support to access state services for vulnerable members during working hours.
- Establish robust referral mechanisms that connect recipient households to local/national authorities or social protection schemes for continued support beyond the rental assistance period. This could involve longer-term rental assistance, reconstruction support, or other forms of housing assistance. - ([Ukraine SP Matrix June 2023 - toggable.xlsx | Powered by Box](#))
- Implement a system for monitoring recipient households' progress towards self-sufficiency in housing. Regular follow-up can help identify any emerging challenges and provide timely support.

Annex 1. Vulnerability & Prioritization criteria

The Rental Assistance program primarily aims at IDPs (registered and non-registered) in Ukraine Government-controlled territories not experiencing frequent active conflict. However, it can also be provided to Conflict-Affected Populations (CAPs).

All vulnerable IDPs and local households affected by the conflict, verified to Eligibility criteria (below), currently unable to secure adequate accommodation due to financial barriers, are eligible for Cash for Rent support. Shelter Cluster partners are focusing on the Collective Sites. The CCCM [dashboard on IDP collective site monitoring \(CSM\)](#) can provide a valuable resource for targeting.

Vulnerability Criteria (Eligibility):

- Individuals must be currently unable to secure accommodation due to financial barriers.
- Households with three or more children under the age of 18.
- Single-headed households, including single fathers, mothers, or grandparents, with one or more dependents who cannot care for themselves (children under 18 or older people above 55).
- Single elderly households with one elderly member above 55 years old.
- Households with pregnant or lactating women with children under three years old.
- Households hosting documented unaccompanied and separated children (UASC).
- Members of other minorities, including LGBTQ+ minorities, are at risk.

Case managers working with households should consider the following:

- Adult household members may develop employability or access economic opportunities.
- Recipients should be informed of the expected end date of rental assistance.
- Referral mechanisms should be established for continued shelter assistance from local/national authorities or social protection schemes based on each household's situation.

Partners may track new arrivals to collective sites from areas of hostilities to identify households with working-age adults willing to seek employment. Rental assistance programmes should assist families who do not receive any other Cash for Rent assistance. It may also be provided as part of a shelter repair response. Households receiving Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) are also eligible for rental assistance where the MPCA cannot cover the shelter's cost.

Annex 2. Recommended housing conditions checklist.





Adapted from shelter cluster, 2022, NRC (Norwegian Refugee Council) Jordan 2017, UNHCR RMI SoP (Standard Operating Procedure, 2023).

Accommodation should be selected for the appropriate Ukrainian building standard (no farm building), including electrical, plumbing, ventilation, heating, etc.

1. Location:
 - IDPs preferred location with social and physical infrastructure available.
 - Bomb shelter within walking distance is preferred
 - Houses should not be located near critical infrastructures (power plants, military bases, etc) at high risk of attack.
 - Area with high criminal activities is not preferred.
2. Accommodation conditions
 - Access to adequate bedrooms (lockable in case of sharing)
 - Occupancy ratio - area of covered living space (exclude bathrooms, kitchens, corridors) divided by number of occupants (number of rooms (1,2,3 sleeping room) adequate for family size).
 - Waterproofing
 - The activity of war has not damaged the house.
 - The house should be structurally adequate without major cracks, broken structural elements, damaged slabs, walls, columns and/or evident problems with structural design.
3. WASH conditions
 - Access to running water
 - Access to hot water
 - Access to adequate washing facilities (lockable with privacy measures)
 - Access to adequate sanitary facilities (lockable)
4. Kitchen
 - Operational appliances (fridge, cooking stove, ventilation fan)
 - Utensils are functional and in good hygienic condition
 - Drains are functioning
5. Thermal comfort conditions
 - Access to the heating system
 - Presence of draft proofing
 - Presence of double-glazed windows
6. Infrastructure
 - Inspect the electrical connection and circuit breaker; no cables are unprotected / uncovered.
 - Inspect gas fixtures and accessories.
 - Inspect sewage or drainage; no smell or leakage
7. Protection conditions
 - Access to external lockable doors and windows
 - Access to internal lockable doors
 - Access to privacy
 - Infrastructure and/or access to service required for the specific vulnerability
8. Specific Needs

- The house should be able to allow people with specific needs, including IDP, with mobility limitations and other characteristics. The house should ensure universal access for doors, steps, ramps, lifts, etc.
9. Ventilation and natural light
- There should not be essential traces of moisture or humidity in any of the rooms, particularly in the bedrooms.
 - Adequate fresh air quality and flow
 - Ventilation for winter and summer months
 - Living spaces should have a source of natural light and ventilation (passive/natural way). Windows are preferred

Annex 3. Security of Tenure

Template for	Language	Files
Proposed Lease Agreement for Consideration	English	 Proposed Lease Agreement for Consic
	Ukrainian	 Proposed Lease Agreement for Consic
Proposed Due Diligence Checklist	English	 Proposed Due Diligence Checklist_EN
	Ukrainian	 Proposed Due Diligence Checklist_UK

In Ukraine, many lease arrangements in the private rental sector take place without formal lease agreements. According to UNHCR's Rental Market Assessment (August 2023), only 67% of the survey preferred or have (legal) lease agreements, while 23% of respondents signalled their preference for non-legally based (informal) lease agreements, usually verbal or 10% no contract preferred.

Annex 4. RMI budgeting examples

Examples can be seen below to assist partners with the calculations for Cash for Rent assistance. ⁴ Example: Rental budget for 17 households located in Collective Sites in Cherkaska

1 room apartments				
Rent per month		5900		
Summer utility bills (April-Sep)		1000		
Winter Utility bills (Oct-March)		2000		
6 months period		Jan-Jun		
Target HH		10		
Start-up grant (Up to one month)		5900		
1 st Tranche	Start-up grant	5900	13800	
	Jan	5900+2000		
2 nd Tranche	Feb	5900+2000	22700	
	Mar	5900+2000		
	Apr	5900+1000		
3 rd Tranche	May	5900+1000	13800	
	Jun	5900+1000		
Total per HH		50300	X10	503000
2 rooms apartments				
Rent per month		8100		
Summer utility bills (April-Sep)		1100		
Winter Utility bills (Oct-March)		2300		
6 months period		Apr-Sep		
Target HH		5		
Start-up grant (Up to one month)		8100		
1 st Tranche	Start-up grant	8100	17300	
	Apr	8100+1100		
2 nd Tranche	May	8100+1100	27600	
	Jun	8100+1100		
	Jul	8100+1100		
3 rd Tranche	Aug	8100+1100	18400	
	Sep	8100+1100		
Total per HH		63300	x5	316500
3 rooms apartments				
Rent per month		10000		
Summer utility bills (April-Sep)		1200		
Winter Utility bills (Oct-March)		3100		
6 months period		Jan-Jun		
Target HH		2		
Start-up grant (Up to one month)		10000		
1 st Tranche	Start-up grant	10000	20310	
	Jan	10000+3100		
2 nd Tranche	Feb	10000+3100	35500	
	Mar	10000+3100		
	Apr	10000+1200		
3 rd Tranche	May	10000+1200	26200	
	Jun	10000+3100		
Total per HH		82010	x2	164020
Total (UAH)		983520		

⁴ Kindly note that all prices are calculated in Ukrainian Hryvnia (UAH), and all rental and utility bill figures are sourced from the RMA dashboard with information updated as of the date of publishing this document. [LINK](#)

Annex 5. Risk Assessment

Cash-based interventions are no riskier than the in-kind equivalents. However, it is necessary to be aware that there are risks associated with this type of assistance and that these risks must be assessed and appropriate mitigation measures developed. Sphere Protection Principles should be integrated into the program.

Avoid exposing people to further harm due to your Rental Market Assistance.

- Ensure people's access to impartial assistance – in proportion to need and without discrimination.
- Protect people from physical and psychological harm arising from violence and coercion.
- Assist people in claiming their rights, accessing available remedies, and recovering from the effects of abuse.

The **Risk Assessment** should consider at least the following aspects:

Risks	Mitigation Measures
The risk of beneficiaries not being able to continue with RMI and dropping out of the program between receiving the start-up grant + first rent and the step where they have to move in.	Offer guidance and resources to help beneficiaries navigate the rental market successfully. Referral to partners or social services. Continuously assess cases and adapt the program based on beneficiary feedback and challenges faced. The agency cannot combine Startup-grant and 1st Tranche.
Safety of delivery: Bribes, theft, looting, and extortion. It is not unique to Rental Assistance, but handing over substantial amounts of money can expose the recipient.	Appropriate delivery mechanism. Good Program design.
Risk of eviction from the selected rental unit.	Following the recommendations for due diligence and Security of tenure annexed.
Access: FSP (Financial Service Provider) or technology	Rental market assessment Appropriate delivery mechanism.
Data Protection	Contracts with service providers include provisions in line with data protection policy.
Community Dynamics	Eligibility criteria and targeting based on needs and vulnerabilities and harmonized approach by all partners
Inflation, exchange rate fluctuation	Prediction based on the historical inflation rates and exchange rates. Estimate a range of inflation that will trigger the revision of the grant. Rental market monitoring

Cases of fraud	Staff and Financial Service Provider Capacity Building. Whistleblowing, monitoring, feedback, and complaints mechanisms.
The project objective is not achieved. Grant is used for other purposes.	Good Program design. Determine if the capacity exists to implement the rental program. Adequate frequency of payment design Adequate payment modality selection Design flexibility to accommodate people with specific needs (additional costs, etc.)
The assistance modality is inadequate for people with specific needs and protection risks.	Engage a sample of all community members, with an AGD (Age, Gender, and Diversity) lens, in ensuring that mitigation strategies are incorporated into the program design based on risks and benefits identified in assessments.
Disturbance of physical infrastructure services.	Choose a property with an alternative source of heating in the wintertime. Select a property away from the possible target. A checklist for preparedness and coping mechanism.
Funding deadline at the end of the year. Humanitarian organisation funding is often required to be disbursed before the end of the year (Dec).	Appropriate delivery mechanism. Good Program design with the agency will plan the six-month rental period accordingly. Agency CAN combine 1st-2nd tranches to allow households to continue renting after Dec.