

Provision of early childhood development and intervention services including teacher empowerment for the protection, inclusion, and well-being of refugee children and families arriving in Hungary from Ukraine, and the most vulnerable children in Hungary

Acknowledgments

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Overview of the Humanitarian Situation at the Beginning of the Project

Type of Emergency: L2 Ukraine Refugee Response / International Displacement of People

Location: Hungary – Budapest (6 locations), Other Municipalities outside Budapest (2 locations to be agreed on)

Population Affected: The ongoing war in Ukraine has given rise to an unprecedented and extensive humanitarian crisis, causing the displacement of over six million people to neighboring countries since February 24, 2022. The majority of those affected are women and children, as well as older individuals and those with disabilities. Hungary, which served as both a transit and destination country, has witnessed the arrival of approximately 3,807,957¹ refugees from Ukraine between 24 February 2022 and 18 November 2023 when the project concluded.

Project Description

The project aimed to enhance early childhood development through three key outputs. The project successfully identified ideal locations for early learning services, enhanced the capacities of ECE educators in play-based methodologies, and provided children with valuable developmental opportunities through caregiver-child play sessions and parental support programs. The multifaceted approach aimed to create a supportive community for both educators and parents, fostering an environment conducive to the well-rounded development of young learners.

¹ <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine/location/10783>

Output 1 focused on identifying optimal locations for early learning and development services, considering factors such as accessibility, community needs, and available resources.

Output 2 aimed at increasing the capacities of Early Childhood Educators (ECE) in play-based learning and development. This involved various activities, including conducting Psychological First Aid training for 150 ECE teachers, facilitating extensive play-based learning training sessions, and organizing group support sessions to foster a collaborative community.

Output 3 aimed to provide children with access to early childhood development opportunities through play and appropriate care. This included providing age/stage-specific knowledge on child development through training for social workers, setting up a "Parent Academy" with thematic parenting workshops, and organizing regular, guided caregiver-child play sessions. These initiatives also sought to create inclusive social events to advocate for integration and promote community cohesion and support for all children, including those with specific needs.

Executive summary

During the project, NestingPlay provided:

- Psychological First Aid training for ECE teachers: 10 workshop sessions with 139 participants
- Early Childhood Education Training: 12 training sessions for 177 teachers
- Teacher Support sessions: 17 sessions for 37 participants
- Early Childhood Education Training for Teachers in Debrecen: 5 training sessions for 12 teachers
- Parent Academy sessions: 8 module sessions in 8 locations (64)
- Play sessions for children: 8 occasions in 8 locations (64)

