

Armenia, Europe Region| Population Movement

Emergency Appeal №: MDRAM012 Emergency Appeal launched: 30/09/2023 Operational Strategy published: 26/10/2023	Glide №: OT-2023-000180-ARM
Operation Update #1 Date of issue: 17/11/2023	Timeframe covered by this update: From 28/09/2023 to 09/11/2023
Operation timeframe: 16 months (30/09/2023 - 31/12/2024)	Number of people being assisted: 90,000
Funding requirements (CHF): CHF 15 million through the IFRC Emergency Appeal CHF 20 million Federation-wide	DREF amount initially allocated: CHF 1 million

To date, this Federation-wide Emergency Appeal, which seeks CHF 20 million is 23 per cent funded. Further funding contributions are needed to enable the Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS), with the support of the IFRC, to continue with the provision of humanitarian assistance and protection of people on the move.



Armenian Red Cross Society volunteers are registering new arrivals. Photo credit: ARCS.

A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Description of the crisis



*ARCS staff and volunteers assisting a displaced child.
Photo credit: ARCS.*

The number of people who have arrived in Armenia after the escalation of hostilities (from 19 September) in Karabakh remains stable at [101,848 individuals](#), with most persons (~70 per cent) staying in the capital region (Yerevan and surrounding marzes [districts] of Kotayk and Ararat). According to the World Health Organization, 52 per cent of the arriving persons are female, 48 per cent male, 18 per cent over 65, 31 per cent under 18, and 2 per cent live with disabilities (30 October). More than 2,000 women arriving are pregnant. According to the Prime Minister of Armenia, a few thousand people have reportedly left Armenia towards other countries, primarily the Russian Federation.

The Government of Armenia (GoA) recognises the displaced persons as refugees and who are eligible to apply for temporary protection. Some 55,000 refugees are still residing in accommodation provided through the government in vacant houses, apartments, hotels, and non-residential buildings (including collective centres). However, there are no collective centres in Yerevan. As evidenced, finding permanent shelter remains one of the priority needs of vulnerable people.

People residing in different regions started looking for more appropriate places to live, moving from one region to another, or from one accommodation to another, seeking permanent housing solutions and income. Tracking of movements creates some difficulties for authorities to have an accurate distribution of people per region.

78 per cent of school-aged children have been enrolled in schools, with a total of more than 30,000 children entering Armenia following the escalation of hostilities.

Summary of response

The Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS) is the largest voluntary organisation in Armenia, operating through a network comprising 12 regional branches, one territorial branch, 52 community branches, with over 300 experienced staff and 6,850 dedicated volunteers. Due to its positive reputation and a high level of trust from both government authorities and local communities, ARCS can securely access all areas where displaced individuals have been located.

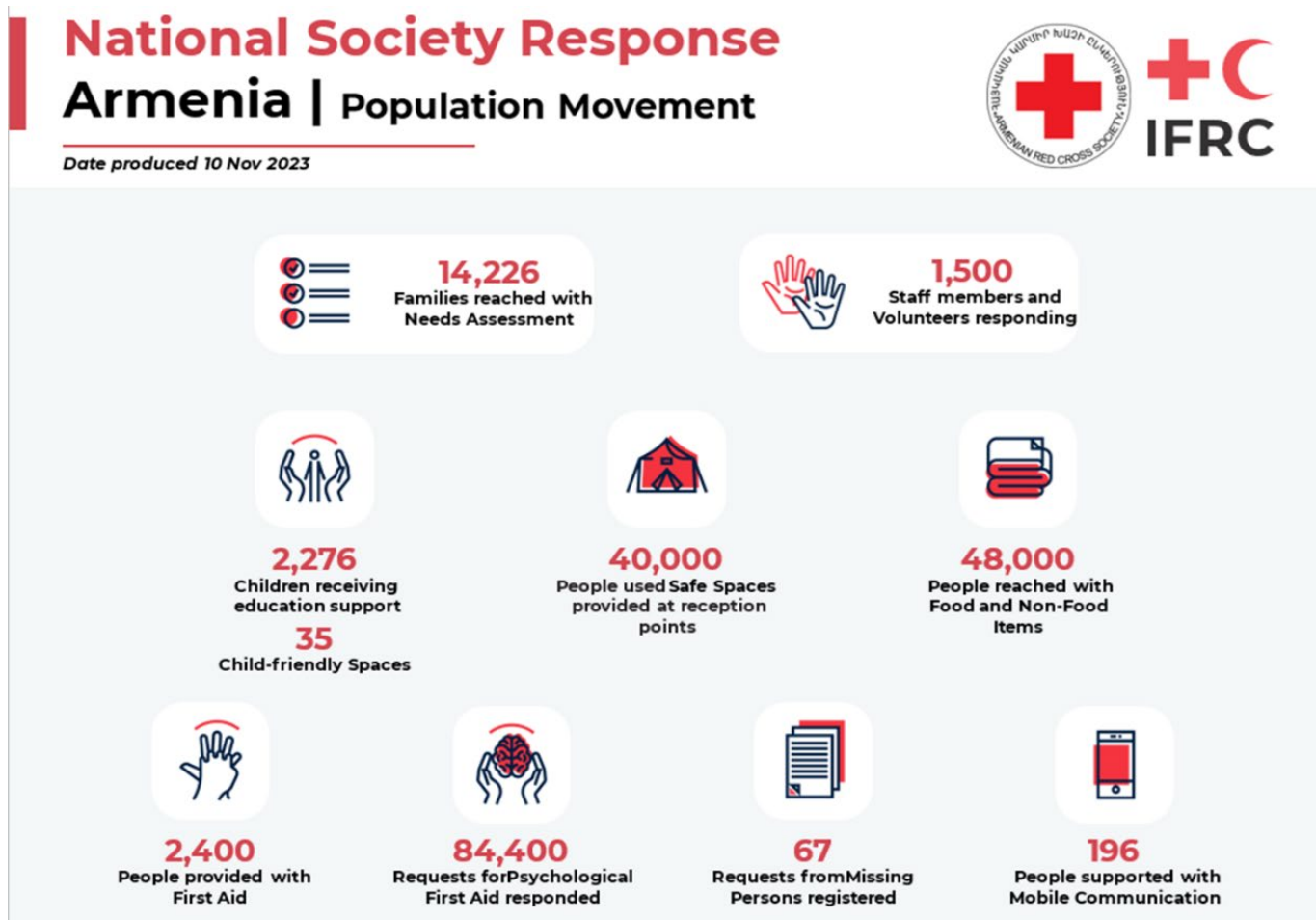
From the onset of the population movement to Armenia, starting on 24 September, the Armenian Red Cross Society, upon the request of GoA, worked at reception points in Kornidzor, Goris, and Vayk, providing support to people arriving to the country in registration, distributing aid, delivering Psychological First Aid (PFA) and Restoring of Family Links (RFL) services. ARCS volunteers and staff members have worked 24/7 to address primary needs of people arriving in the past weeks, so far deploying 1,500 volunteers and staff for the response operation.



Pre-positioned stocks in ARCS warehouse. Photo credit: ARCS.

The current operational focus of the ARCS response is on the provision of food, essential household items, and hygiene kits, along with the provision of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), educational activities through child-friendly spaces and RFL services. So far, ARCS has reached more than 84,500 vulnerable people affected by the recent developments. Preparations for the provision of Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) are ongoing, with the aim to shift to cash-based modalities at an early stage of the response operation.

The below chart summarises and highlights the main achievements of ARCS's response as of 10 November 2023, which are further detailed in section C. Detailed Operational Report:



ARCS Response overview (as of 10 November 2023).

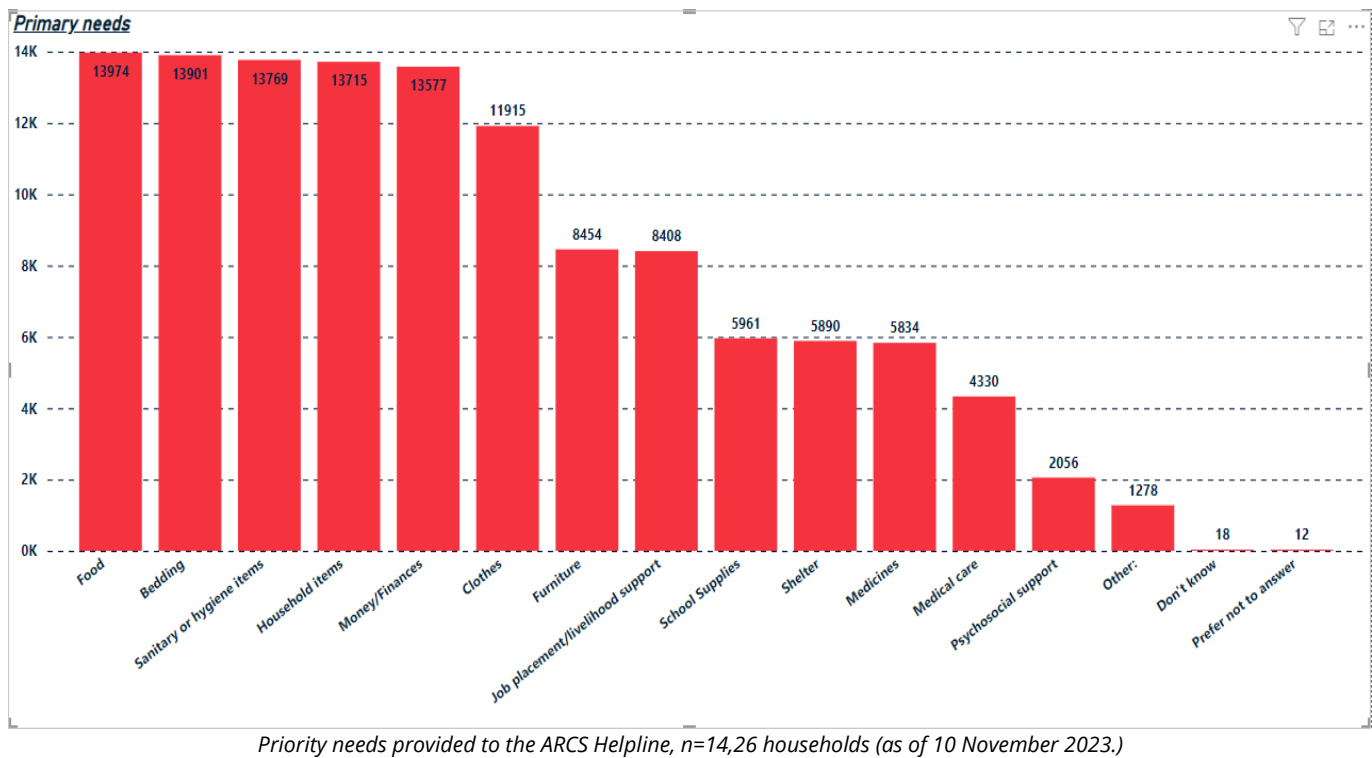
The IFRC team is supporting ARCS in planning and implementation of activities. The [Operational Strategy](#) has been published, accompanied by a [Mobilisation Table](#) (MobTable), the latter primarily seeking funds for in-country procurement of goods. Budget scenario planning reflecting the current funding situation has been conducted. Currently, the operation is focusing on finetuning sectoral implementation plans, in line with defined operational priorities, such as basic needs, CVA for shelter, MHPSS, National Society (NS) operational capacity strengthening.

Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) Movement Coordination is also ongoing in line with the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) procedures. Inter-agency coordination is led by the Deputy Prime Minister's Office and co-led by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Needs analysis

Needs assessments are coordinated centrally by authorities, with the outcomes of a rapid needs assessment yet to be published, as well as a GoA-led in-depth multi-sectoral needs assessment which is currently under preparation.

As of 8 November 2023, ARCS has registered the needs of 14,226 individuals requesting assistance, representing a total of 65,166 family members through its helpline, as well as in-person, at its branches and headquarters. During these encounters, participants have provided information on their priority needs, which include food and essential household items (including bedding, sanitary and hygiene items, clothes, and furniture), as well as financial support. The primary needs are further detailed in the below diagram.



Operational risk assessment

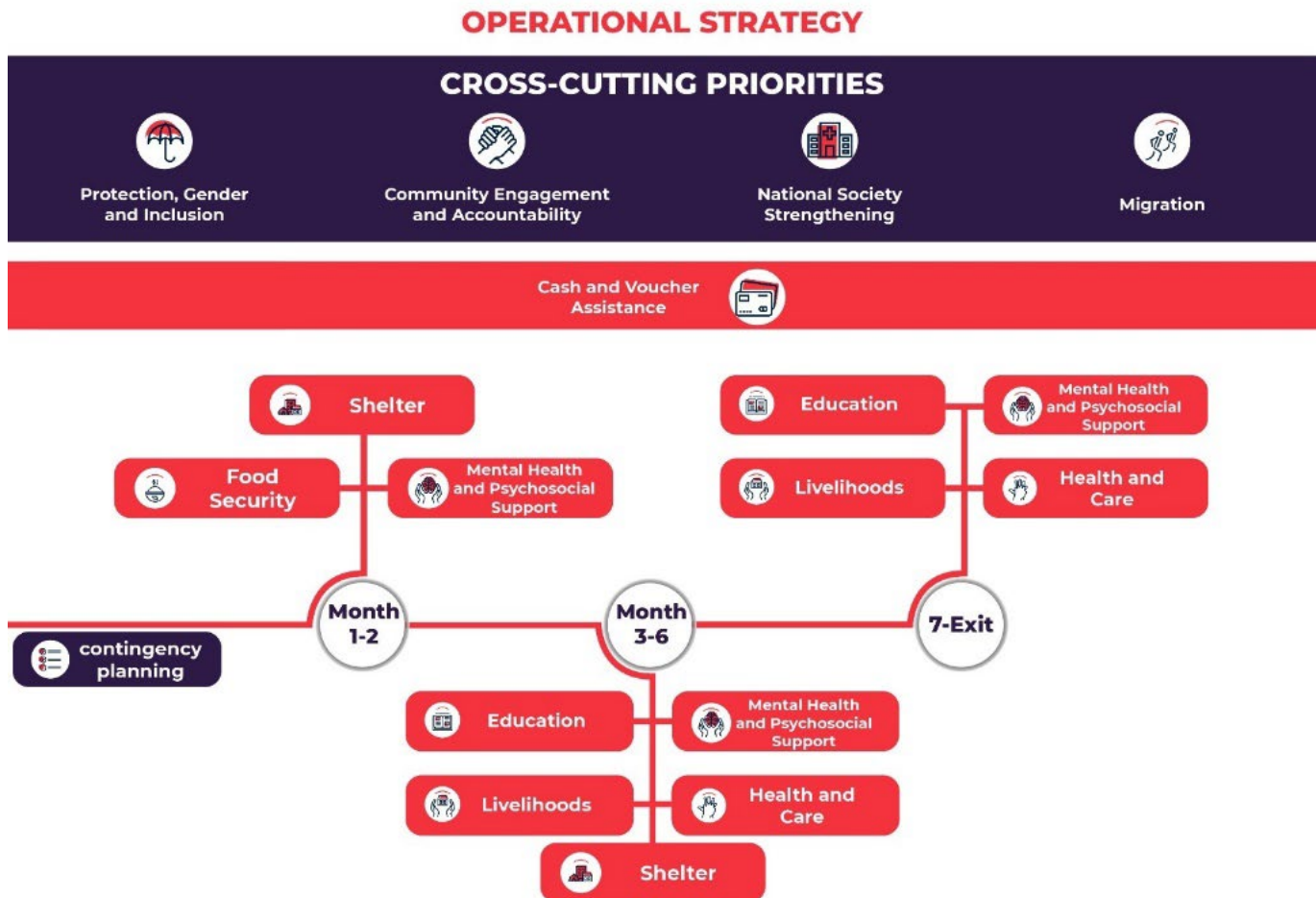
The GoA applies a highly centralized approach, aiming for close coordination and control of response activities.

The situation of the affected population is exacerbated by the upcoming winter, during which extremely cold temperatures are expected and will have a negative impact on the vulnerabilities of the affected population.

B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY


Update on the strategy

Based on pre-defined contingency plans, ARCS developed a response plan to address the immediate and longer-term humanitarian needs of people arriving in Armenia, as well as host communities. The [Operational Strategy](#) focuses on Shelter, Food security, Health and MHPSS, Livelihoods, Education, with a strong emphasis on CVA. Protection, Gender and inclusion (PGI), Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA), National Society Strengthening, and Migration are cross-cutting priorities. The operational strategy is further outlined in the below visual:



C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL REPORT

STRATEGIC SECTORS OF INTERVENTION

		Shelter, Housing and Settlements		People reached: 13,200	
Objective:		Population arriving to Armenia and host communities restore and strengthen their safety, well-being and longer-term recovery through shelter and settlement solutions			
Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual		Target	
	# of people who received rental assistance during the response period	0		9,500	
	# of people (and households) provided with household items that support the restoration and maintenance of health, dignity and safety and the undertaking of daily domestic activities in and around the home	13,200 people (3,300 HH)		6,600 people (1,650 HHs)	
	# of children supported to access to essential winterization items	0		4,500	

Essential household items:

In the reporting period, ARCS has distributed essential household (HH) items, reaching a total of 3,300 households. This included pre-stocked HH items from an ongoing IFRC-USAID BHA project for 700 HH. The below table details the household items as well as quantities distributed:

Item name	Quantity
Blanket (individual)	13,350
Bedlinen (individual)	2,800
Pillows (individual)	1,500
Heater (HH)	700
Water bowler (HH)	700
Mattresses (individual)	1,225
Kitchen set (HH)	11
School bag (child)	2,500
Foldable bed (child)	20

Rental and utility costs:

ARCS has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA). The MoU enables participation in the government-coordinated CVA scheme, which encompasses assistance for rental and utility fees for individuals. The support amounts to AMD 50,000 or CHF 106 per person per month, with

a breakdown of AMD 40,000 allocated for rental support and AMD 10,000 for utility costs. This is the main CVA programme in terms of budget and coverage.

The subsequent phase involves the signing of a tripartite agreement among ARCS, Unified Social Service (USS), and the designated Financial Service Provider (FSP) (Converse Bank). This agreement encompasses a letter of commitment specifically addressing data protection.

The selection criteria have been established collaboratively by ARCS and IFRC, with considerations taken from discussions within the Cash Working Group (CWG). The targeted households will include those who have experienced recent displacement and have three or more children. Additionally, displaced families with one or more individuals living with disabilities will also be eligible to receive shelter and utility cash support.

Winter clothing turned into Multi-Purpose Cash (MPC) assistance:

On 8 November, the MoLSA advised partners to reconsider providing direct cash assistance outside the government's established programmes by stating that cash can only be given within these government's programmes and following the GoA's regulations. The government encourages participation in these programmes or shifting intended cash assistance to voucher programming. However, it is acknowledged that this may pose challenges for individuals in remote areas, particularly in accessing regional centres or Yerevan for voucher redemption. Given these considerations and the potential delay associated with the tendering process for voucher assistance, ARCS will instead be exploring participation in the government's multi-purpose cash assistance programme (of AMD 50,000 per person), with a one-time distribution for November, supporting approximately 4,000 people based on government-provided lists. Eligibility criteria applied are families with three or more children, and/or families having persons living with disabilities. This decision is contingent upon a re-evaluation of the GoA's restrictions.

Furthermore, pre-existing funds from an IFRC-USAID BHA project will also be allocated to the aforementioned multi-purpose cash assistance programme, reaching an additional 1,648 people with one-off distribution for the month of November.

ARCS was planning to cover utility fees of affected persons living in collective shelters for winter months (December 2023 - February 2024), directly paying to service providers, within the initial operational strategy. However, due to the given lack of funding, this activity had to be de-prioritized.

Next immediate steps:

The implementation process for the shelter and utilities CVA programme follows a structured sequence: Initially, ARCS collaborates with the MoLSA to establish and share the eligibility criteria. Subsequently, the USS operating under MoLSA compiles and forwards the list of impacted persons (payment list) to ARCS, filtered in accordance with the pre-determined criteria. ARCS then conducts a sample verification to ensure the criteria are accurately met. If necessary, the list of impacted persons is cleansed, and both the funds and the finalized list are transmitted to Converse Bank. In return, Converse Bank disburses the cash grant to the bank accounts of impacted persons, extending this provision even to those without an account in this particular bank. Following the distribution, a comprehensive financial reconciliation is executed to validate the precision of the transactions. Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) is instituted to assess the overall effectiveness of the distribution process. Furthermore, continuous monitoring is sustained throughout the encashment phase to promptly address any arising issues and ensure the smooth progress of the programme.

With the support of IFRC Emergency Appeal funding:

Initial DREF means have been used to procure essential household items.
An IFRC CVA Delegate has been supporting CVA planning and preparations.

Challenges:

Governmental limitations for CVA implementation.

With the support of other funding sources:

Distributions of pre-stocked items from other funding sources, including USAID BHA and UNICEF.



Livelihoods

People reached: 27,800

Objective:

Immediate response: People arriving to Armenia meet their food and other basic needs and protect their livelihood assets.
Recovery: People's capacities arriving to Armenia are enhanced for restoring their livelihoods and increasing their prospects for local integration

Key indicators:

Indicator

Actual

Target

of targeted households (and people) reached with essential services/information for employment opportunities, including self-employment

-

1,000 HHs
(4,000 people)

of targeted households (and people) reached with essential services/information for income-generation

-

500

per cent of households receiving food rations from RCRC are satisfied with the amount/volume received

-

70per cent

Food assistance:

ARCS has distributed food parcels to 6,950 households in the reporting period.

Livelihoods:

The population movement is tied to two significant periods: one occurring in 2020, during and after the escalation of hostilities, and the other following the opening of the Lachin corridor in September 2023. Both population movements were substantial, with over 90,000 individuals affected in 2020 and 101,848 in 2023. Although a majority of those seeking refuge in Armenia in 2020 returned, approximately 20,000 individuals, as per government estimates, chose to remain in Armenia. The individuals who opted to stay received support through integration activities spanning 2021, 2022, and 2023. Notably, in 2023, the income generation component was sustained with the support of UNHCR.

In 2023, ARCS extended support by providing income generation tools to 105 households who have fled to Armenia in 2020. Over 180 individuals actively engaged in informational sessions covering a spectrum of topics,

including employment opportunities, job placement, career development, and other relevant subjects. For those recipients approved to get assistance with income generation tools, specialized business training sessions were organized and conducted during the months of May and June in 2023.

Next immediate steps:

Families that are considered vulnerable among the recently arrived (vulnerability criteria yet to be developed) will receive comprehensive support through the IFRC Emergency Appeal funding, including assistance in income generation, provision of food for livelihoods, facilitation of job placement, and participation in requalification/vocational training programmes. Activities will build on experience from previous and ongoing (see UNHCR above) activities.

Challenges:

The biggest challenges in providing livelihoods support stem from the constrained availability of state services. Thus, all comprehensive economic integration activities require proper planning and coordination amongst involved agencies and stakeholders to design and implement cost-effective interventions.

With the support of other funding sources:

ARCS continues implementation of economic integration activity with support of UNHCR which includes provision of income generation tools, financial literacy, and business trainings.

 Health & Care (Mental Health and psychosocial support / Community Health / Medical Services)		People reached: 86,920	
Objective:	Access of affected populations to essential health services (emergency, primary, secondary, community/public health) is facilitated, including mental health and psychosocial support		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	# of people who receive mental health and psychosocial services in emergency situations from RCRC	84,400	61,850
	# of people trained in Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (including Psychological First Aid and other MHPSS related trainings)	109	350
	# of people reached with health promotion activities related to NCD management in emergencies	-	20,000
	# of First Aid community volunteer teams	-	50

Community health:

Meetings were held with regional coordinators to identify arriving individuals requiring integration into ongoing projects, including Integrated Home Care and Active Ageing (Phase 3), Gyumri Care Centre, Healthy Ageing, and

Tuberculosis (TB) initiatives. As a result, five older individuals from new arrivals were successfully admitted to the ARCS Gyumri Care Centre. Additionally, six TB cases were identified (three in Yerevan and three in other regions) and promptly received essential medical care in polyclinics.

Ongoing collaboration remains active with the Ministry of Health (MoH), MoLSA, USS, and healthcare facilities.

In the initial reception phase at registration points, both staff and volunteers offered First Aid (FA) assistance to approximately 2,400 individuals. In the ongoing response efforts, plans include providing training on FA and distributing FA kits to settlements in areas where majorities of the affected populations reside.

A total of 30 FA instructors from Ararat, Lori, Shirak, Syunik, Tavush, Vayots Dzor, and Yerevan regions were mobilized and underwent a refresher training. The FA training curriculum was revised, carefully considering the contextual nuances. Additionally, the content list for the procurement and distribution of FA kits has been updated.

With the support of IFRC Emergency Appeal funding:

Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS)

From the initial days of the population movement, ARCS's dedicated staff and volunteers had been actively mobilised, offering assistance and support to the arriving individuals at the reception points of Goris, Kornidzor, and Vayk.

The MHPSS team, together with other ARCS teams and volunteers, provided Psychological First Aid¹ to approximately 70,000 individuals arriving in Armenia.

At the reception points where displaced people are being registered, trained staff and volunteers have been offering PFA support.² This included comforting people in distress and helping them feel safe and calm, assessing needs and concerns, providing emotional support, and helping to address immediate needs (e.g., through provision of food and water, blankets, or a temporary place to stay) with active listening, comfort and providing information to help individuals regain a sense of support and safety.

In response to the increased demand, four additional operations have been trained and joined the ARCS helpline offering online PFA. During the reporting period, a total of 14,226 individuals received PFA through the helpline and in face-to-face meetings.

Arriving individuals who have settled in the border regions of Armenia already have access to MHPSS support group sessions provided by ARCS counsellors as part of the ARCS/ICRC joint project. The number of individuals who have participated in these group sessions is 174.

To further expand and enhance MHPSS services, 79 staff and volunteers have received training in MHPSS to provide psychological and psychosocial support within various programmes.

Well-being guidelines were distributed to staff and volunteers who provide information and strategies for managing stress and addressing self-care needs.

¹ PFA is defined as a set of skills and knowledge used to help people in distress, aiming to address their emotional and psychological needs, promoting coping and resilience, helping people to feel calm and able to cope in a difficult situation.

² Important to note that PFA is not exclusively provided by professionals.

In all regions of Armenia, case managers and psychologists are actively engaged in working with arriving children.

ARCS and IFRC MHPSS Focal Points are actively participating in interagency working group meetings. In addition, ARCS, IFRC, and ICRC have jointly established an MHPSS Movement Technical Working Group to ensure harmonized operational response across the layers of the MHPSS framework.

Next immediate steps:

Introduce community-based MHPSS activities throughout the country.

Recruit additional MHPSS staff.

Challenges:

The frequent relocation of people arriving to Armenia poses a challenge, interrupting some MHPSS sessions. To address this issue and enhance coverage through referrals, ARCS is working to expand MHPSS activities across Armenia. To fully meet people's needs and effectively manage the dynamic nature of the situation, additional staff is to be hired.

With the support of other funding sources:

As previously mentioned, a total of 79 staff and volunteers have undergone training in MHPSS to deliver psychological and psychosocial assistance across various programmes funded by UNICEF.

18 staff members, particularly counsellors, have received specialised training as part of the ongoing ICRC programme.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

People reached: 31,600

Objective:

Improve access of affected population to WASH services to reduce their immediate and medium-term risk of waterborne, water-related, and vector-borne diseases

Key indicators:

Indicator

Actual

Target

of people reached by WASH assistance

31,600

23,200

A total of 7,400 households and 2,000 children have received hygiene items. This included pre-stocked HH items from an ongoing IFRC-USAID BHA project for 700 HH.

With the support of IFRC Emergency Appeal funding:

Initial DREF means have been used to procure hygiene kits.

With the support of other funding sources:

Distributions of pre-stocked items from other funding sources, including USAID BHA and UNICEF.



Protection, Gender and Inclusion

People reached: 400

Objective:

Dignity, Access, Participation and Safety are mainstreamed throughout the operation to ensure the unique needs of people from all groups, including marginalized groups, are met. An emphasis on keeping the people we serve safe from harm in the form of violence, discrimination, and/or exclusion is ensured.

Key indicators:

Indicator

Actual

Target

of sectoral or PGI assessments conducted using the PGI Minimum Standards

0

4

of people trained on implementing the PGI Minimum Standards

0

200

of people reached by protection, gender, and inclusion services

400

15,000

ARCS representatives participate in sectoral coordination working groups led by the Government of Armenia and co-led by UN agencies. The Protection Working group is led by UNHCR and MoLSA deputy ministers with participation of the Deputy-Prime Minister's Office representatives. ARCS also participates in the Child Protection Subgroup.

ARCS organised a Refugee Child Protection Regular working group meeting. The working group was established back in 2017 to raise and discuss the implementation of rights of refugee children. Representatives of state agencies, such as the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, MoLSA, respective people from community level education and social protection participate in the working group.

ARCS has been working on drafting a Child Safeguarding Policy, complementing its existing Code of Conduct. The drafted policy is currently in the circulation phase, undergoing review by relevant departments. Subsequently it will be reviewed by the IFRC PGI team. Following this review process, operational guidance will be provided, and staff and volunteers will undergo training on the policy and associated actions. To sensitise Child Protection Case Managers and MHPSS staff, a dedicated training course was organised, covering the ARCS Code of Conduct, ARCS Child Safeguarding Policy, and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA).

ARCS has hired 16 Child Protection Case Managers and 12 psychologists to work all over Armenia. Both volunteers and staff have received briefings on the identification of cases involving special vulnerabilities and have undergone training in child case management. The Child Protection Case Management team currently oversees the well-being of 319 households.

On the onset of the response, ARCS established child-friendly spaces and child corners at reception points and temporary shelters. These have now turned into ARCS Smiley Clubs (please see further details in the Education section).

With the support of IFRC Emergency Appeal funding:

The Child Safeguarding Policy is drafted.

Next immediate steps:

Review and officially adopt Child Safeguarding Policy; implement the policy through training of staff and volunteers.

Train all staff on basic PGI.

Challenges:

Lack of dedicated full-time PGI staff to mainstream and move specific work results is slow process.

With the support of other funding sources:

ARCS implements Child Protection Case Management to ensure timely identification and response to children's protection needs. 16 case managers are involved in the mentioned activity in the framework of UNICEF-funded project.



Community Engagement and Accountability

People reached: 14,226

Objective:

Support safe, continued, and equitable access to education for affected populations, especially children and young people, vulnerable and marginalized groups

Key indicators:**Indicator****Actual****Target**

per cent of people surveyed who report receiving useful and actionable information

-

70per cent

Number and per cent of complaints or feedback about the RCRC operation which receive a response through established community communication

-

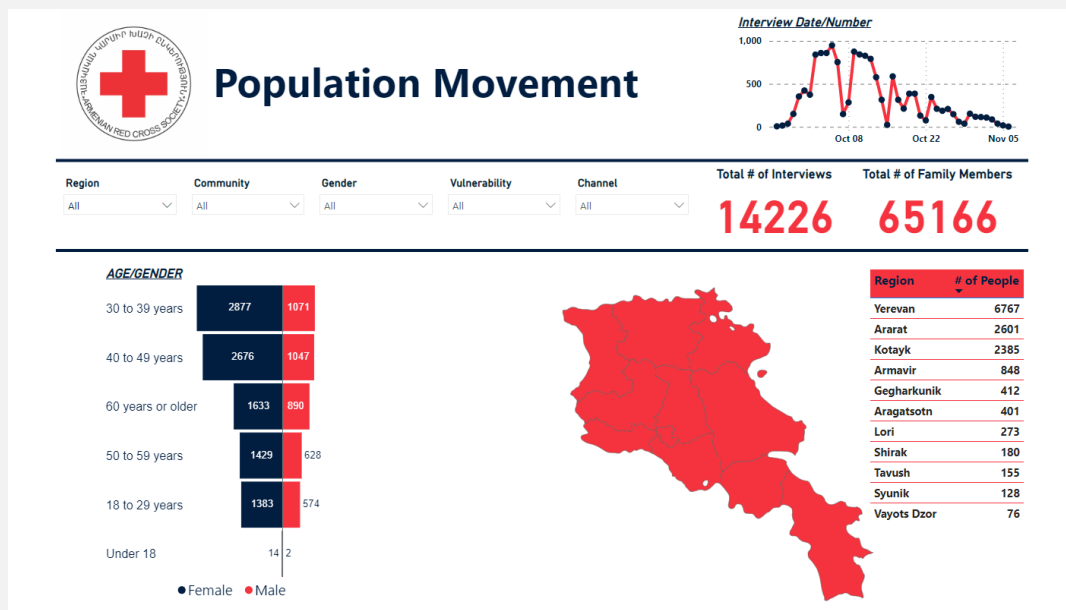
70per cent

per cent of community members who feel their opinion is taken into account during operation planning and decision-making

-

60per cent

In the reporting period, 14,226 arriving families had been registered in the ARCS database, representing a total of 65,166 family members. The graph shows the data that has been collected so far via the needs assessment, which is helpful to understand the overarching situation at present. Moving forward, from December, feedback received will be analysed in order to guide operational decisions and information materials.



The gender distribution among respondents is as follows: 10,012 women constituting 70 per cent, and 4,212 men, accounting for 30 per cent.

The ARCS helpline and social networks collectively received over 14,000 inquiries. Most of these inquiries were related to seeking clarification on the timing and nature of support for individuals who had previously registered. Additionally, calls were made expressing a desire for explanations on the terms and procedures for assistance delivery. Notably, around 35 per cent of the calls conveyed gratitude for the assistance received. ARCS ensured that all questions raised in the calls and letters were thoroughly addressed and answered. Further analysis will be provided in the next update. Inquiries have been answered individually; analysis will look for trends that can inform broader operational decisions.



Migration

People reached: -

Objective:

Specific vulnerabilities of populations arriving to Armenia and people on the move are analysed and their needs and rights are met with dedicated humanitarian assistance, protection, and humanitarian diplomacy interventions, in coordination with relevant stakeholders

Key indicators:

Indicator

of people reached by RCRC social cohesion activities to improve relations between migrants / people arriving to the country and host communities

Actual

0

Target

20,000

Migration

From the first day of the population movement, ARCS staff was on the frontline supporting people with immediate basic humanitarian needs and identifying and responding to specific protection risks. Starting from 24 September, arriving families were reaching ARCS offices in Yerevan and regional branches, as well as contacting the helpline. Their requests predominantly focused on essential items for daily living such as food, essential HH items, bedding, and cash support. In response to this influx of requests, ARCS implemented a specialized registration form in Kobo to systematically record the contact details of the applicants.

GoA adopted a Law on granting a temporary protection status to those who were displaced from Karabakh. This is a rare type of protection status for displaced populations. The law automatically applies to the over 100,000 ethnic Armenians of Karabakh. Those eligible for the new temporary protected status are persons registered as residents of Karabakh, persons living in Armenia or abroad whose last registered address was in Karabakh, and persons who were not registered in Karabakh but lived there and were registered by the Armenian Migration and Citizenship Service as entering the country after 19 September.

Next immediate steps:

ARCS intends to establish four integration centres for the displaced population in four regions where most of them are located. A full comprehensive package of integration activities is going to be suggested in these centres, including awareness raising, information provision, social and cultural integration, cohesion aimed activities, humanitarian assistance, job placement support, MHPSS support, vocational trainings and livelihoods improvement consultancy.



Risk Reduction, climate adaptation and Recovery

People reached: 1,500

Objective:

Affected people are not put at increased risk, and their vulnerability to future disasters and crises is reduced, including to climate change impacts

Key indicators:

Indicator

Actual

Target

of branches that have the capacity to lead the operation at local level

-

12

of volunteers involved in the response operation that have increased their skills in response and management of operations

1,500

2,000

Operational strategy is climate smart

-

Yes

The [MobTable](#) for the operation was formulated and published, including 13 entries, amounting to a total of CHF 1,075,965, widely foreseen for local procurement in Armenia. The MobTable includes vehicles, tents and winter sleeping bags foreseen for international sourcing due to limited availability on the local market.

A collaborative effort ARCS-IFRC was undertaken to prioritize procurement activities within the next three months.

To enhance warehouse capacity, the expedited procurement of essential items for efficient warehouse management is prioritized. Furthermore, a comprehensive plan has been developed to reinforce the infrastructure's structural components.

Within given priority for operational capacity development in recent years for staff and volunteers, the branches in southern Armenia were able to undertake crucial tasks at registration points and later national wide distribution of in-kind assistance, along with providing MHPSS support.

ARCS Relief / Logistics and IFRC Disaster Management (DM) Delegate (from the IFRC Country Cluster Delegation for the South Caucasus) are working on the improvement of the relief/logistics interface and monitoring/reporting systems for in-kind assistance, with the Movement Relief TWG taking shape.

Regular training is compulsory and will be continued intensively on different topics including FA, PFA, assessments, relief, WASH for both staff and volunteers.

Next immediate steps:

In the coming weeks, Disaster Preparedness Awareness sessions (DPAS) will be conducted online for 100 ARCS staff and volunteers from five ARCS regional branches.



Education

People reached: 7,096

Objective:	<i>Support safe, continued, and equitable access to education for affected populations, especially children and young people, vulnerable and marginalized groups</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i># of affected children, adolescents and young adults receiving any form of education support provided by RCRC in affected area</i>	6,457	3,700
	<i># of teachers and education personnel (incl. volunteer facilitators) trained by RCRC in improved teaching and learning approaches in affected areas</i>	639	450

Since the escalation of the conflict in 2020, ARCS established 14 Child-Friendly Learning Spaces ('Smiley clubs') for children displaced from Karabakh, children from vulnerable families and children living in IB communities. After September 2023, new displaced children joined these clubs.

15 new clubs have been deployed in temporary accommodation centres in five regions hosting multiple families during the registration stage in Kornidzor, Goris, and Vayk. 4,615 children took part in ARCS activities carried out by 147 volunteers.

Starting from mid-October, ARCS has transitioned from operating temporary child-friendly learning spaces to collaborating with schools and establishing spaces in schools. This shift was prompted by the integration of

displaced children into standard education programmes (schools), and ARCS intends to provide children with a stable and nurturing environment in permanent places, such as schools. As a result, ARCS is expanding the geographical coverage with 39 permanent “Smiley Club” (child-friendly learning spaces) in schools across seven regions and Yerevan city.

As part of this transformation, ARCS organized briefing and training sessions for 42 newly engaged volunteers, increasing the total number of active volunteers for child-friendly spaces to 310. The dedicated volunteers have already positively impacted more than 1,842 children on a regular basis at the local schools, providing them with education, psychosocial support, and recreational activities.

ARCS continues a close collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports (MESCS). The partnership aims to deliver integration-oriented Life Skills training in schools, with a focus on promoting social psychological well-being, integration, and protection. In a significant development, these training courses are set to commence in November in 10 schools located in Yerevan with a larger number of displaced children.

ARCS has diligently implemented child-friendly feedback mechanisms in the newly integrated schools, ensuring that the voices of children are heard, and their specific needs are effectively addressed.

Next immediate steps:

ARCS is in a process of establishing 15 child-friendly spaces in Yerevan and five regions of the RA. The estimated number of children will be 1,150. 165 volunteers will be additionally recruited and trained to carry out the programme activities.

With the support of other funding sources:

ARCS is also establishing 11 learning spaces funded by UNICEF, three Smiley Clubs funded by Italian Red Cross, eight by ICRC, two by Austrian Red Cross.



ARCS volunteers working with children in a child-friendly space in Charbakh. Photo credit: ARCS.

Enabling approaches



National Society Strengthening

Objective:	<i>Further strengthen the ARCS' institutional and emergency response capacities, complementing and building on the ARCS's Country Plan and Master NSD Action Plan</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i>National Society has successfully articulated short-term emergency and NSD objectives with long-term NSD ones</i>	-	Yes
	<i># of surge missions or deployments</i>	7	10

ARCS has engaged with its IFRC National Society Development counterpart for emergency situations, initiating discussions on the NSD Master Plan 2026. Ongoing active communication is in progress, and a new template for the NSD Master Plan 2026 has been created, which is currently under discussion with IFRC. This implies that there is a structured approach to coordinating efforts and strategies for the specified time frame. These discussions will involve the incorporation of both short-term and long-term objectives into the NSD Master Plan 2026, reflecting a comprehensive approach to planning.

Simultaneously, ARCS is advancing its annual planning in collaboration with sectoral leaders, encompassing both long-term and short-term goals. This involves coordination with sectoral leads across various areas, suggesting a coordinated effort across different departments or focus areas within the organization.



Coordination and Partnerships

Objective:	<i>To guide the operation in accordance with the principles of Collective Movement Response, and strategically harmonize it with response efforts by the public authorities and other actors on the ground, ensuring efficiency and complementarity.</i>
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Movement:

A Movement coordination structure, as per the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) approach, has been established with respective fora on strategic, operational, and technical level, including eight technical Working Groups (TWGs) defined / operational, and regular coordination meetings on strategic and operational level held.

Government:

At the national level, the Office of Deputy Prime Minister is leading the coordination. The Secretary General has regular and upon request meetings at this highest level. At the operational level, ARCS DM is coordinating its activities with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs where Deputy Minister is the focal point for the Humanitarian assistance to displaced population. At local level, ARCS branches are implementing all activities with

the strong collaboration and involvement of local administration with the very strong emphasis to include local social service (social workers) to be fully aware which needs are covered and which are still open in that particular location.

UN:

The UN Country Team has developed the Refugee Response Plan to support and complement the government response by outlining and aligning the activities of humanitarian partners including civil society, refugee-led organisations, UN agencies, international and national non-governmental organisations (INGOs and NGOs).

Interagency working groups have been activated, including Protection (sub-working groups on Child Protection, Gender-based violence (GBV) and Education), Food Security and Nutrition, Essential Household Items and Shelter, Resilience, Health; with Cash and Information as inter-sectoral WGs. Movement partners are actively involved in all mentioned groups.

Moreover, ARCS has activated its pre-existing Contingency Program Agreements with UNICEF, specifically aimed at addressing the needs of children.



Secretariat Services

Objective:

IFRC Secretariat provides strategic orientation, facilitation, and coordination to enhance the ARCS response to the current situation and toward the long-term positioning and further capacity development of the National Society. This will be done building on the existing Country Office and Country Cluster Delegation, toward strong stewardship and accountability for all programming. The IFRC Secretariat will facilitate channeling global resources to sustain the localized response and recovery efforts.

IFRC has been supporting the ARCS response with focus on:

- Strengthening the response capacity of ARCS by providing tailored operational and sectoral support and guidance from IFRC Secretariat, including Surge capacity deployed to Armenia;
- Resource mobilisation within the IFRC membership and with external donors;
- Scaling up communications with the global public (media engagements in Armenia and internationally, including social media);
- Scale-up information management and data analysis to support the ARCS in crisis / disaster management;
- Producing data analysis and visualization products with IFRC Information Management capacity;
- Ensure continued and effective support in planning, monitoring, and reporting, including structured data collection / analysis, and monitoring on achievements;
- Strategic strengthening the position of ARCS, specifically in areas with unique added value of ARCS;
- Coordination with Movement and external stakeholders;
- Capitalization of learnings and knowledge gained from the operation and wider programming in country.

The below table outlines the personnel deployed to Armenia PMO during the period of 26 September and 31 October.

Role Profile	Status	Deploying Entity
	In field / pipeline /requested	PNS, IFRC
Emergency Operations Coordinator	In field	IFRC (seconded by Austrian RC)
PMER Coordinator	In field	IFRC
CVA Delegate	In field	IFRC
Finance and Admin Delegate	In field	IFRC
Support Service Delegate	In field	IFRC
DM Delegate	Hybrid (field mission ended)	IFRC
Communications Delegate	Hybrid (field mission ended)	IFRC
PRD Delegate	Hybrid (field mission ended)	IFRC
MHPSS Delegate	Hybrid (field mission ended)	IFRC

D. FUNDING

As of 9 November, the funding situation under the current EA is as follows:

- IFRC received CHF 3,547,605, which represents 24 per cent of the IFRC Secretariat request of CHF 15 million. The current expenditure stands at CHF 404,241.08.
- Bilateral contributions to the Federation-wide Emergency Appeal amount to a total of CHF 1,099,156, which makes 22 per cent of CHF 5 million foreseen.

The total Federation-wide Emergency Appeal, therefore, stands at 23 per cent out of CHF 20 million requested.

Federation-wide coverage	Amount Raised (CHF)	Funding Gap (CHF)	Coverage per cent	Funding Requirement (CHF)
Total bilateral contributions to Federation-wide Appeal	1,099,156	3,900,844	22 per cent	5,000,000
Total Secretariat hard contributions	3,547,605	11,452,395	24 per cent	15,000,000
Total Federation-wide contribution (bilateral + Secretariat)	4,646,761	15,353,239	23 per cent	20,000,000

Contact information

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

At the Armenian Red Cross Society

- **Secretary General:** Dr. Anna Yeghiazaryan
- **Operational Coordination:** Lusine Kocharyan, Head of Disaster Management Department, arcs-dm@redcross.am

At the IFRC

- **IFRC Regional Office for Europe:** Jennifer Vibert, Manager, Operations Coordination, Jennifer.vibert@ifrc.org
- **IFRC Country Cluster Delegation:** Ivar Schram, Programme Coordinator, ivar.schram@ifrc.org
- **IFRC Country Office:** Hicham Diab, Programme and Operations Manager, hicham.diab@ifrc.org
- **IFRC Country Office:** Juergen Hoegl, Emergency Operations Coordinator, jurgen.hoegl@ifrc.org
- **IFRC Geneva:** Antoine Belair, Senior Officer, Operations Coordination, antoine.belair@ifrc.org

For IFRC Resource Mobilisation and Pledges support:

- **IFRC Regional Office for Europe** Andrej Naricyn, Head, Strategic Partnerships and Resource Management, Andrej.naricyn@ifrc.org

For In-Kind Donations and Mobilisation table support:

- **Global Logistics Services,** Stefano Biagiotti, Head, Global Humanitarian Services & Supply Chain Management, Europe, Stefano.biagiotti@ifrc.org
- **Logistics Coordinator,** Riku Assamaki, Logistics Coordinator, Europe, riku.assamaki@ifrc.org

Reference documents



Click here for:

- [Link to IFRC Emergency landing page](#)
- [Previous Appeals and updates](#)
- [IFRC GO Platform](#)
- [Emergency Appeal](#)
- [Operational Strategy](#)

How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere the **Code of Conduct** for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief, the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere)** in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable, to **Principles of Humanitarian Action** and **IFRC policies and procedures**. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.