



Operational meeting of the AzRCS President at the Lankaran regional branch

Appeal: MDRAZ005	DREF Allocated: CHF 90,800	Hazard: Population Movement	Country: Azerbaijan
Population at risk (if available): -	Operation Start Date: 08-03-2026	Operation End Date: 30-04-2026	
Event Onset: Sudden	Forecasted day of event (or peak): 2026-03-31	Operation Timeframe: 45 days	

Targeted Regions: **Astara, Bilasuvar, Lenkeran, Yardimly**

Scenario analysis

When and where is the hazard expected to happen?

The hazard relates to a potential escalation of cross-border population movement from Iran into Azerbaijan as a result of ongoing military strikes and regional instability. While movements remain controlled as of 1 March 2026, as land borders are closed to routine traffic, and entry requires prior government approval. The situation remains fluid and may evolve rapidly depending on developments in Iran and the wider region.

The most likely window for increased arrivals is within the next 2-4 weeks, particularly if hostilities intensify, civilian infrastructure is further disrupted, or regional airspace closures persist. In such a scenario, people may increasingly rely on land routes for evacuation.

Geographically, the highest likelihood of impact is concentrated in the southern border districts of Azerbaijan, particularly the Astara border crossing, which is currently functioning as a controlled humanitarian corridor. Secondary pressure may extend to Lankaran, Bilasuvar, and Yardimli districts if arrival numbers increase and onward transport to Baku become delayed.

The primary operational risk is a sudden surge of arrivals:

- 800-2,500 arrivals within 72 hours in case of escalation.
 - Up to 5,000 cumulative arrivals within 2-4 weeks.
 - A mixed profile of evacuees including families with children, older persons, persons with disabilities, foreign nationals, and people with chronic medical conditions.
- A surge exceeding 500 people within 72 hours would likely strain local reception infrastructure requiring immediate humanitarian support.

Furthermore, Iran hosts an estimate 15-23 million ethnic Azerbaijanis (roughly 16-24% of its population), concentrated mainly in the north-west provinces bordering Azerbaijan. Iranian Azerbaijanis share strong linguistic, cultural and religious ties with the population of Azerbaijan: they speak Azerbaijani (closely related to the official languages of Azerbaijan), are predominantly Shia Muslim, and could maintain family and social networks across border.

In the event of escalating instability in Iran, these deep cross-border connections, combines with geographic proximity and pre-existing links, create a credible scenario for significant population movement towards Azerbaijan, particularly in border regions where communities are closely interconnected.

Astara, Bilasuvar, Lenkeran, Yardimli

Explain the underlying vulnerabilities and risks the hazard poses for at-risk communities?

Although arrivals into Azerbaijan are currently organized and limited, a potential escalation of hostilities in the region could lead to sudden cross-border movements that expose people to heightened vulnerability.

At-risk groups may include families with children, older people, people with disabilities, foreign nationals without local support networks, and persons with pre-existing medical conditions whose treatment may have been interrupted. Many people arriving may have experienced psychological distress due to exposure to conflict, uncertainty, or rapid evacuation.

Key risks include:

- Sudden congestion at border crossing points, limiting access to water, sanitation, and shelter.
- Insufficient immediate access to First Aid, emergency medical referral, or medication.
- Psychosocial distress and anxiety linked to displacement and uncertainty.
- Family separation or lack of communication with relatives.
- Limited access to reliable information, increasing vulnerability to misinformation.
- Protection concerns for vulnerable individuals during transit or temporary stays.
- Operational strain on local services if arrivals increase rapidly within a short timeframe.

Southern border districts may face limited surge capacity if arrivals rise significantly within 24-72 hours. While authorities are currently managing the situation effectively, the unpredictability of regional developments presents a risk of sudden escalation requiring immediate humanitarian support.

The proposed anticipatory actions aim to mitigate these vulnerabilities by ensuring rapid reception support, First Aid capacity, psychosocial assistance, Restoring Family Links services, and basic relief provision if needed.



Source Name	Source Link
1. Azernews	https://www.azernews.az/?ysclid=mmesna1ai3351214807
2. APA	https://apa.az/?ysclid=mmerjxxspu202507168
3. Reuters Azerbaijan	https://www.reuters.com/world/azerbaijan/

Plan

Will surge personnel be deployed? If yes, please provide the role profile needed.

Yes

Standard logistics surge profile is needed for this action to support procurement process.

Which of the expected severe humanitarian impacts of the hazard are your actions addressing? Why were these impacts chosen?

The anticipated severe humanitarian impacts include:

- Sudden border congestion exceeding local reception capacity.
- Immediate unmet basic needs (water, hygiene, warmth).
- Lack of timely First Aid and emergency referral support.
- Psychological distress among evacuees.
- Family separation and loss of communication.
- Information gaps leading to confusion or misinformation.



These impacts were prioritized because:

- They are life-saving and time-critical within the first 24-72 hours of influx.
- They fall within AzRC's core mandate and operational capacity.
- They are realistic under the escalation scenario (800-2,500 arrivals within days).
- They are directly linked to border-based humanitarian response, which is the most likely pressure point.

Longer-term impacts (livelihood disruption, prolonged displacement, integration needs) were not prioritized under this Imminent DREF as they would be addressed through a separate Response DREF if required.



Proposed Actions

	Sector	Activities	Budget (CHF)
 Early Actions	Migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for staff and volunteers • Equipment for Humanitarian Service Points and temporary sheltering (water, hygiene, first aid, restoring family links and psychosocial support) • Equipment and uniforms for volunteers • Daily monitoring and reporting of arrivals and level of vulnerability • Relief items pre-stocking and replenishment • Insurance for volunteers • Staff salary 	CHF 56,250
	CEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CBRN and referrals information and awareness raising materials 	
 Early Response	Migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relief items distribution • Conducting rapid needs assessments using mobile volunteer teams 	CHF 18,750
Sub-total			CHF 75,000
Surge Deployment (if applicable)			CHF 10,000
Indirect Cost			CHF 5,800
Total			CHF 90,800

Contact Information

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