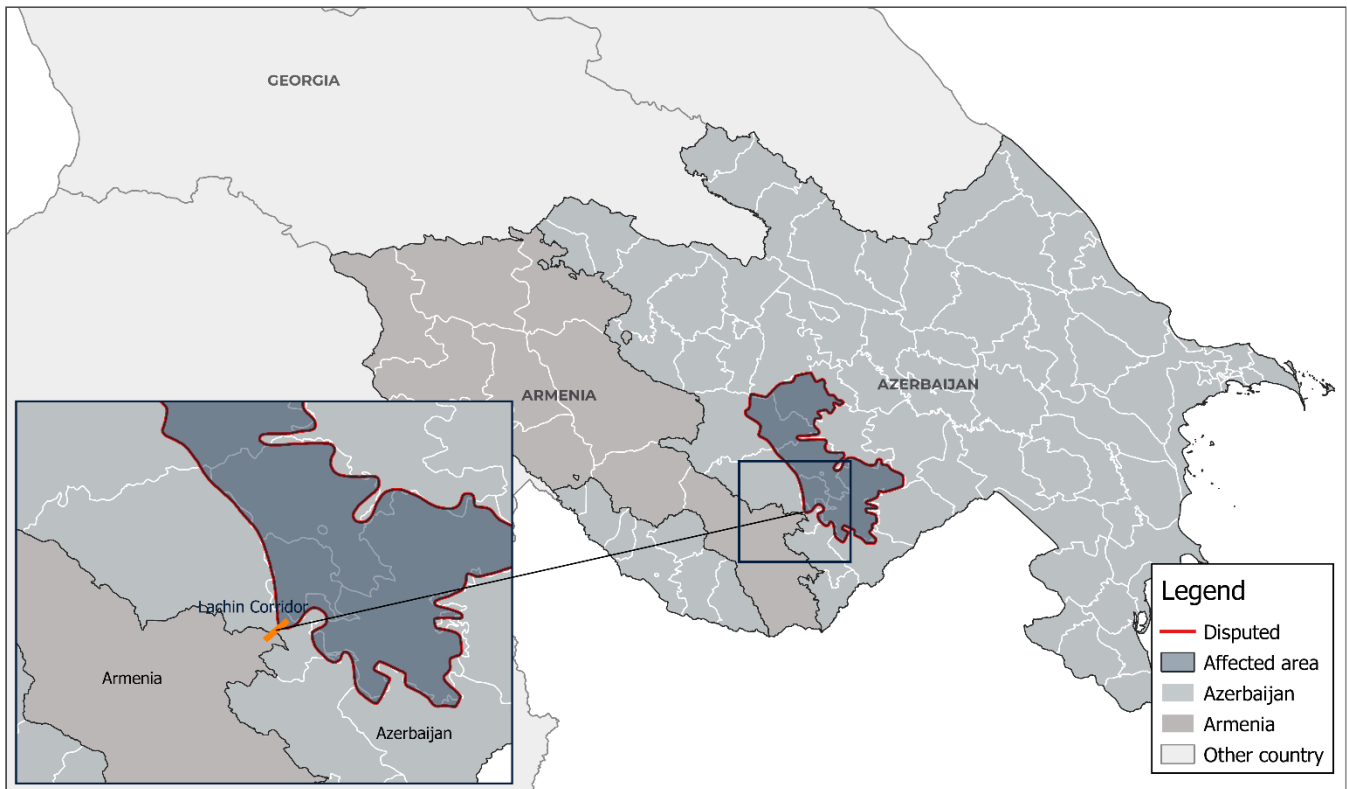




Armenian Red Cross volunteers offer essential aid to the affected communities. From registration and information provision to first aid and psychosocial support, our teams are here to assist. Photo: Armenian Red Cross Society

Appeal №: MDRAM012	IFRC Secretariat Funding requirements: CHF 15 million Federation-wide Funding requirements: CHF 20 million	
Glide №: OT-2023-000180-ARM	People affected/at risk: 120,000 people	People to be assisted: 90,000 people
DREF allocation: CHF 498,752	Appeal launched: 30/09/2023	Appeal ends: 31/12/2024



The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.

Map data sources: ICRC, BBC, IFRC. Map produced by: IFRC Europe Region Office, Budapest.

0 1 2 km



Agency Contingency Plan), which creates a need for a large-scale humanitarian intervention to respond to the immediate and enduring needs of the people who left for Armenia.

Recognising the humanitarian needs, the Armenian authorities initiated a set of preparatory measures, including the mobilisation of relevant governmental entities, such as the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, as well as regional and local authorities. In parallel, the authorities established a set of collaboration mechanisms with non-governmental organisations and civil society to streamline humanitarian assistance efforts. The authorities set up reception points in Kornidzor, Goris and Vayk, where there is a steady influx of people in extremely vulnerable situations seeking support.

The humanitarian consequences of the escalation of hostilities requires a comprehensive and sustained response. Governmental entities, non-governmental organisations, and volunteers are working

SITUATION OVERVIEW

On 19 September, Azerbaijan launched a military operation aimed at “restoring the constitutional order of the Republic of Azerbaijan”. After a local ceasefire on 20 September, large-scale population movements into Armenia commenced on 24 September when some 5,000 people arrived in Armenia seeking shelter. Since that time, the number of people arriving in Armenia has drastically increased; by 29 September, the reported number of people leaving for Armenia reached up to 85,000.

On 22 September, the Armenian public authorities declared their readiness to receive and accommodate 40,000 families of people leaving for Armenia. However, the number of expected arrivals may total up to 90,000, of which 50,000 persons are likely to be populations in need of humanitarian assistance or protection services (according to the Inter-

collaboratively to address the pressing needs of the affected population. According to the triangulation of primary data collection efforts and initial needs assessments carried out by multiple actors, the immediate primary needs of those who left for Armenia include the provision of food, household items, psychosocial support, first aid and medical referrals, running helplines, Restoring Family Links (RFL) services, and essential care materials. Providing safe shelter is also a clear priority in the form of offering accommodations in hotels, boarding institutions, and the homes of friends, relatives, and host families.

The Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS) has been closely engaged with governmental authorities at the highest levels, including the Prime Minister's Administration, and local authorities who have highlighted the pressing need to support the response to the imminent and medium-term needs of those who have arrived in Armenia.

Regarding demographics and protection profiles – women, children, and older people comprise a larger portion of arrivals. As per the latest, 28 September, official update, of the 50,000 people registered, 52% are female and 48% male. About 30% of those registered are under 18, and 2% are people with disabilities. Apart from persons arriving with the recent escalation, there are unresolved integration

needs for some 20,000 persons who left for Armenia back in 2020.

A comprehensive rapid needs assessment is expected to be undertaken in the coming week: initial assessments are primarily drawn from primary data collected by the ARCS directly from those affected and key informant interviews with the central government and local authorities, particularly in the areas of Armenia where people have sought shelter. An immediate and pressing need that has become apparent is the necessity to support people with food and household items upon arrival. The findings from the field also call for an instant and urgent response to the mental health and psychosocial needs of people who have left for Armenia. At the same time, it is unlikely that this situation will be resolved quickly, and the intentions of the arrived population regarding the duration of their stay remains uncertain; therefore, the medium-term needs of both the displaced population and host communities in Armenia are of similarly critical importance. It is expected that the response to the short and medium-term needs will involve support for the socio-economic, socio-cultural, and well-being aspects of those displaced. This will cover livelihoods and basic needs, including cash and voucher assistance (CVA), mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), and critical attention to protection issues for the vulnerable population, including support to children.

TARGETING

The operation targets an anticipated 90,000 people comprising those in vulnerable situations who have arrived in Armenia as well as host communities together with people who arrived in previous population movements, promoting social cohesion in line with the IFRC's principled humanitarian approach. The humanitarian needs requiring immediate attention are those in the areas of: 1) Shelter, 2) Food security, 3) Health and Care, including MHPSS, and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH). With this sectoral approach, a focus will be placed on the target groups and cohorts experiencing multiple vulnerabilities, including households led by women, families with multiple children, people living with disabilities, older individuals, particularly those living alone, and other people in vulnerable situations. The strategy envisions a transition from immediate response to early recovery with a focus on: 1) Livelihoods and Basic needs, 2) Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (including child protection,

safeguarding, and education), and 3) MHPSS, all of which will contribute to improved coping mechanisms for displaced people at individual, household and community levels.

PLANNED OPERATIONS

Through this Emergency Appeal, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) aims to support the ARCS in response to the ongoing population movement. The strategy of the IFRC response will be to contribute to support 90,000 people with assistance and protection in the immediate and medium to long-term integration and transition to recovery, as follows:

Integrated assistance

- The operation will ensure that those who arrived in Armenia have access to safe and dignified temporary shelter conditions complete with essential services, such as water and sanitation, electricity, and heating, and that the shelters accommodating the affected population adheres to humanitarian standards. This will include proactive and systematic monitoring and quality assurance of shelters, focusing on protection, safety, and maintaining dignified living conditions.
- In previous response operations, the humanitarian needs persisted long after the hostilities ended, putting an additional strain on host communities. Private and public shelters needed ongoing humanitarian support, especially financial assistance for utility costs. The operation will include a focus on host communities to support their financial capacities to host those displaced.
- Cash and Voucher Assistance will be the main response modality to address the immediate and early recovery needs of the people who left for Armenia. The response will further target economically vulnerable individuals, families, and individuals to cover essential accommodation-related expenses costs, such as rent and utilities.
- The strategy is designed to provide timely, effective, and efficient humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable people in a dignified, safe, and inclusive manner. Therefore, the ARCS will deliver humanitarian assistance that upholds the dignity and autonomy of the affected population, allowing them the freedom to make their own choices regarding their and their families' needs and priorities. In this way, the Cash and Voucher Assistance modality will address urgent needs for shelter, food, and household items.
- Early recovery activities will be designed to assist the people who left for Armenia with restarting or recovering livelihoods by supporting sustainable income generation opportunities. Families and individuals who have arrived in Armenia shall benefit from vocational/professional and life skills training, which will facilitate their integration into the labour market. Activities will build on the previous experience of the ARCS, with similar target groups and income-generating models increasing employability or entrepreneurial capacities.



Health & Care including Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)



- Migration and displacement, especially in situations of conflict, are complex processes that are stressful and often traumatic. In Armenia, given the challenging social circumstances in recent years and months leading up to the escalation, mental health has emerged as a pressing concern, and with the scale of the population movement expected to proceed in the coming days, the need for MHPSS is expected to grow in the weeks and months ahead.
- Findings from field observations and direct engagement of ARCS staff and volunteers with the displaced population indicate a severe need for basic psychological support interventions such as Psychological First Aid (PFA), which allows for the identification and referral of individuals in need of professional psychological or mental health care. Needs for professional counselling and relevant referrals are also not being sufficiently met. The operation will, therefore, focus on improving the mental health and psychological well-being of the affected population by establishing self and mutual support groups for families and individuals, providing individuals with MHPSS services, and establishing an ARCS Helpline providing Psychological First Aid. Referrals to other organisations providing MHPSS are also foreseen as is MHPSS support for ARCS volunteers and staff.
- There is a high demand for medical examination upon arrivals. Medical teams from the Ministry of Health are operating at reception points which are supported by PFA/PSS teams of the ARCS. According to the Prime Minister's administration briefing, medical teams have helped 342 patients continue their treatment in various health institutions, with 11 children placed in intensive care (four of which are newborns). Most people are arriving in a state of poor health and nutritional well-being, which requires timely First Aid on the ground by the ARCS. The operation will prioritise the provision of First Aid, hygiene items, and psychological first aid to respond to the immediate needs of the arriving people.

Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA)



- Community engagement and accountability will be integrated across the operation as a cross-cutting priority throughout the response, with meaningful participation from people through information and a feedback mechanism at the centre of the response.
- The IFRC and ARCS will take proactive measures to ensure that those affected are consulted about their needs and priorities, have the opportunity to engage in planning the response, and are informed about the mandate, methodology, and response plans of the ARCS.
- The central feedback and complaints mechanism of the ARCS will be integrated into the response; by making the mechanism proactively available to the target communities, the ARCS will ensure two-way communication with those affected. The mechanism will also ensure that people are aware of the communication channels available to them, able to access them, and feel confident that giving feedback will result in a response. The obtained feedback will be tracked, regularly analysed, and used to inform programme adaptation and decision-making.

Protection and Prevention



- Dignity, access, participation, and safety will be ensured by mainstreaming Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) standards in support interventions and protection through education.
- PGI standards will be mainstreamed throughout needs assessments to ensure that the varying needs of the diverse population are adequately considered, including those influenced by gender and diversity factors.
- Specialised protection considerations, including Restoring Family Links, and referrals to relevant services, will be extended to the most vulnerable groups, including children, pregnant and lactating women, older people, and representatives of minority communities.
- Targeted children and families will be supported with activities to improve their resilience using the IFRC complex approach. This includes the provision of humanitarian education to schools and educational institutions, training targeting teachers and caregivers on PFA and Teaching Tolerance, as well as providing child-friendly learning spaces for children.
- School-aged children will be supported to access formal education through the provision of necessary materials (stationery), clothing, equipment, transportation, and other relevant types of support.

Migration



- Since the current situation primarily centres on population movement, the operation will ensure that sectoral plans and priorities are well-informed and consistently adjusted to align with evolving trends in migration flows and the needs of those who left for Armenia.
- There will be a strong focus on the continuous analysis of the legal protection frameworks, applicable entitlements, and the public policy landscape that will be relevant to the displaced people.
- Effective assistance and protection will be offered through information and/or Humanitarian Service Points providing holistic support to the population at all stages of their journey.
- Ensuring a timely transition to medium and long-term integration and inclusion support aligned with socio-economic integration (livelihoods, shelter, education), socio-cultural aspects (such as information and orientation, social connections), protection, and meaningful participation.
- Ensuring continued positioning and engagement with authorities and other stakeholders to advocate for the integration and inclusion of displaced people in the host community, including effective access to essential services.

Enabling approaches

The sectors outlined above will be supported and enhanced by the following enabling approaches:



Coordination and Partnerships

The IFRC will coordinate its membership for an effective Federation-wide response, utilising expertise and support from in-country partners and the wider membership. The IFRC will support the ARCS and work in close cooperation with the International

Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to actively liaise with donors and external partners to maximise support for the collective Movement Response, while also supporting participation in relevant external coordination mechanisms.

IFRC Secretariat Services



The IFRC will support the ARCS in strategic coordination and communications, humanitarian diplomacy, information management, and other technical sectors and support services as needed, including supporting supply chain and procurement. The IFRC will rally support for resource mobilisation and strategic partnerships for the operational response. A comprehensive monitoring and reporting system will be expanded with the support of the IFRC, capturing the Federation-wide work undertaken. The IFRC will mobilise support from its offices in the South Caucasus, the Regional Office for Europe, and IFRC headquarters in Geneva. Coordination will be ensured through regular information sharing and coordination mechanisms at multiple levels as necessary.

National Society Strengthening




The Emergency Appeal will aim to further strengthen the institutional and emergency response capacities of the ARCS, complementing and building on its Country Plan. The activities undertaken through this Emergency Appeal will improve the capacities of the ARCS with lasting positive impacts and an eye to the sustainability of interventions while benefiting from the experiences and expertise throughout the Europe region. There will also be a focus on enhancing longer-term preparedness and response capacities, including support for the operational capacities of the ARCS, covering logistics, support services, and information management. Technical support from the IFRC will identify the priority areas for the ARCS where capacity strengthening can be the most expedient and will reflect the priorities identified in the ARCS Country Plan. The IFRC will leverage the collective support of the Movement to enhance sectoral capacities, e.g., for Cash Assistance, Livelihoods programming, and Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (PMER). The operation will also reinforce PGI and safeguarding policies and ensure the application of the minimum standards for PGI.

The planned response reflects the current situation and is based on the information available at the time of the launch of this Emergency Appeal. Details of the operation will be updated through the Operational Strategy to be released in the upcoming days. The Operational Strategy will also provide further details on the Federation-wide approach, which includes the response activities of all contributing Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) National Societies, and the Federation-wide funding requirement.

RED CROSS RED CRESCENT FOOTPRINT IN COUNTRY

Armenian Red Cross Society



Core areas of operation	
	
Number of staff:	300
Number of volunteers:	6,850
Number of branches	12

As an auxiliary organisation to the public authorities in the humanitarian field and the largest voluntary organisation in the country, the ARCS has a network of 11 regional, one territorial and 52 community branches, over 60 experienced and committed staff, and over 5,000 volunteers. The ARCS is the main and largest humanitarian partner to the public authorities in the response covering the whole country.

To respond to the current situation, the president of the ARCS declared the emergency status and nominated the Secretary-General as the Response Coordinator. Coordination between the ARCS and the government, including the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, regional and local authorities, and the Ministry of Emergency

Situations, takes place regularly. Updates on the situation and needs of people who are arriving in Armenia are consistently provided by local authorities.

The ARCS has safe and localised access to all areas where those displaced are residing. Moreover, the ARCS has a proven track record of cooperation and partnership with the government and local communities, has successfully cultivated a positive reputation, and enjoys high trust from both the authorities and communities.

Due to its previous response operations to conflict escalations and the structured preparedness measures undertaken in recent months, the ARCS has initiated a timely response in accordance with the Movement Contingency Plan. The situation now unfolding aligns with the scenarios determined by the Movement Contingency Planning process and has mobilised its response units at both the national and local levels. Within the framework of the partnership with the IFRC and USAID BHA, the ARCS has established prepositioned stocks for food and household items and established an efficient system for CVA, through which the ARCS distributes humanitarian assistance immediately to the affected population.

IFRC Membership Coordination

Membership coordination and collaboration in Armenia with National Societies supporting the ARCS is strong. Excellent conditions are in place to make strategic and operational coordination fully functional and effective to further support the strategic objectives of the ARCS and respond to the country's complex humanitarian and development needs. Several collaboration platforms have been created that allow building on each RCRC member's activities to strengthen the collective impact of the work being carried out while creating a more enabling collaborative environment.

The IFRC is closely coordinating with the three Participating National Societies supporting the ARCS – the Austrian and Swiss Red Cross with a presence in Armenia, and the Italian Red Cross with a presence in neighbouring Georgia. One partner has an integration agreement in Armenia, and the IFRC stands ready to support new integration agreements for partners invited to work in Armenia by the ARCS. The Italian Red Cross and Danish Red Cross have also provided financial and technical support to the ARCS from their respective headquarters and regional delegations, and have visited the country. The Monaco Red Cross provides its support via the Swiss Red Cross, while the Norwegian Red Cross does so via the ICRC Delegation in Armenia. With the launch of this Emergency Appeal, the IFRC will engage in its regular coordination mechanisms with its membership.

A scale-up of IFRC human resources in Armenia to support this coordination role and support for the ARCS was initiated in the days before the population movement and started with support provided by in-country partners. Several surge profiles have also been requested to augment capacities in Armenia. The upcoming Operational Strategy will reflect a Federation-wide picture and provide an overview of the collective Movement response.

The ARCS is part of the IFRC Network-wide New Way of Working initiative piloted in 14 countries. It aims to establish a new model of membership coordination, working over multiple years to instil thorough change in how the IFRC Network works together and placing the Operating National Society at the centre. This includes prioritising effective coordination, optimising the power of working as one IFRC Network by sharing resources, learning, and common standards, and ultimately achieving a more substantial impact. A Country Coordination Team (CCT) has been established and is co-chaired by the IFRC and the Armenian Red Cross, and has a membership of the committed Participating National Societies in Armenia (the Austrian Red Cross, Italian Red Cross, and Swiss Red Cross), and the ICRC as an observer.

Red Cross Red Crescent Movement coordination

The IFRC plays a constructive and proactive role in supporting the collective Movement response in close coordination with the ARCS and ICRC. Movement coordination in Armenia rests on Movement Coordination Mechanisms that have been continuously strengthened, particularly since the escalation of the situation in 2020. The Movement Coordination Agreement is being updated but has for years provided a foundation for functional coordination on all levels, including regular tripartite meetings between the leadership of the ARCS, IFRC and ICRC. In May 2023, the ARCS and all Movement partners met to draw learning from the Movement Cooperation, including the Movement Coordination for Collective Impact Agreement (Seville Agreement 2.0) which was introduced in mid-2022 and applied in the Armenian context after the escalations in September 2022. Joint Movement Calls are envisioned as one way of informing and engaging the wider Movement in the early stages of the operation.

A Movement Contingency Plan (MCP) has been developed in the spirit of the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) process; plans are set in a Movement-inclusive manner. Coordination mechanisms within Movement partners in Armenia were established and operate through the "Movement Coordination Agreement (MCA)". In line with the Seville Agreement 2.0, the ARCS is entrusted with the role of "convener" for this situation. A Mini-Summit took place on 20

September to identify and agree on the direction for Red Cross Red Crescent Movement response coordination.

The ICRC has been partnering consistently with the ARCS since its presence in 1992. Since 2020, it has further enhanced support in the areas of communications, Restoring Family Links (RFL), Disaster Management (DM), dead body management, first aid, preparedness for emergency response, access to education, weapon contamination, and significantly strengthening the capacities of the regional and community branches in four areas exposed to conflict. In response to the escalations in hostilities in September 2020 and September 2022, the ICRC provided services within its mandate to the ARCS.

External coordination

In response to the current situation, national authorities have assumed a crucial role in managing the situation and facilitating the provision of humanitarian aid. National authorities are at the forefront of crisis management efforts. They coordinate the overall response to the current situation, working closely with regional and local governments and humanitarian organisations. They establish command centres, task forces, and communication channels to ensure efficient coordination.

In its auxiliary role, the ARCS coordinates closely with the government, including the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Ministry of Internal Affairs, and regional and local authorities. Regular updates on the situation and needs of people who are arriving in Armenia are provided by local authorities.

The UN Country Team has activated the Inter-Agency Contingency Plan and is starting to organise different sector coordination meetings. The ARCS has a partnership with UNICEF for access to prepositioned stocks targeting children.

After 31 December 2024, response activities to this situation will continue under the IFRC Network Armenia Country Plan for 2025. The IFRC Network Country Plans show an integrated view of ongoing emergency responses and longer-term programming tailored to the needs in the country, as well as a Federation-wide view of the country's action. This aims to streamline activities under one plan, while still ensuring that the needs of those affected by the disaster are met in an accountable and transparent way. Information will be shared in due time, should there be a need for an extension of this specific response beyond the above-mentioned timeframe.

Contact information

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

At the Armenian Red Cross Society

- **Secretary General:** Dr. Anna Yeghiazaryan, redcross@redcross.am
- **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 Delegation:** Hicham Diab, Programme and Operations Manager, hicham.diab@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