



Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS) volunteers registering displaced people at a shelter in Metsamor, October 2023. Photo credit: Nora Peter/IFRC

OPERATION UPDATE #4

Armenia, Europe Region | Population Movement

Emergency Appeal No: MDRAM012 Emergency Appeal launched: 30/09/2023 Operational Strategy published: 26/10/2023	Glide No: OT-2023-000180-ARM
Operation Update #4 Date of issue: 05/06/2024	Timeframe covered by this update: From 27/09/2023 to 30/04/2024
Operation timeframe: 21 months (initial 30/09/2023 - 31/12/2024, extended until 30/06/2025)	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

As of 30 April 2024, the Federation-wide Emergency Appeal in Armenia including IFRC Secretariat and other Partner National Societies, which seeks CHF 20 million, is 51 per cent funded. Further contributions are essential to enable the Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS), with the support of the Federation-wide partners, to continue with the provision of humanitarian assistance and protection to people on the move.

STORIES FROM THE FIELD



Armenian Red Cross Society volunteers are organizing educational activities for children in Smiley Clubs. Photo credit: Nora Peter/IFRC

„I love working with kids because we can share our knowledge and experience with them, and become a role model for them.”

Meri Vardanyan (16) is leading a small team of Red Cross volunteers who are organizing educational activities for local children in a Smiley Club.

This is one of many child-friendly spaces across the country, managed by the Armenian Red Cross Society, where children can go after school to play and get help with their homework.

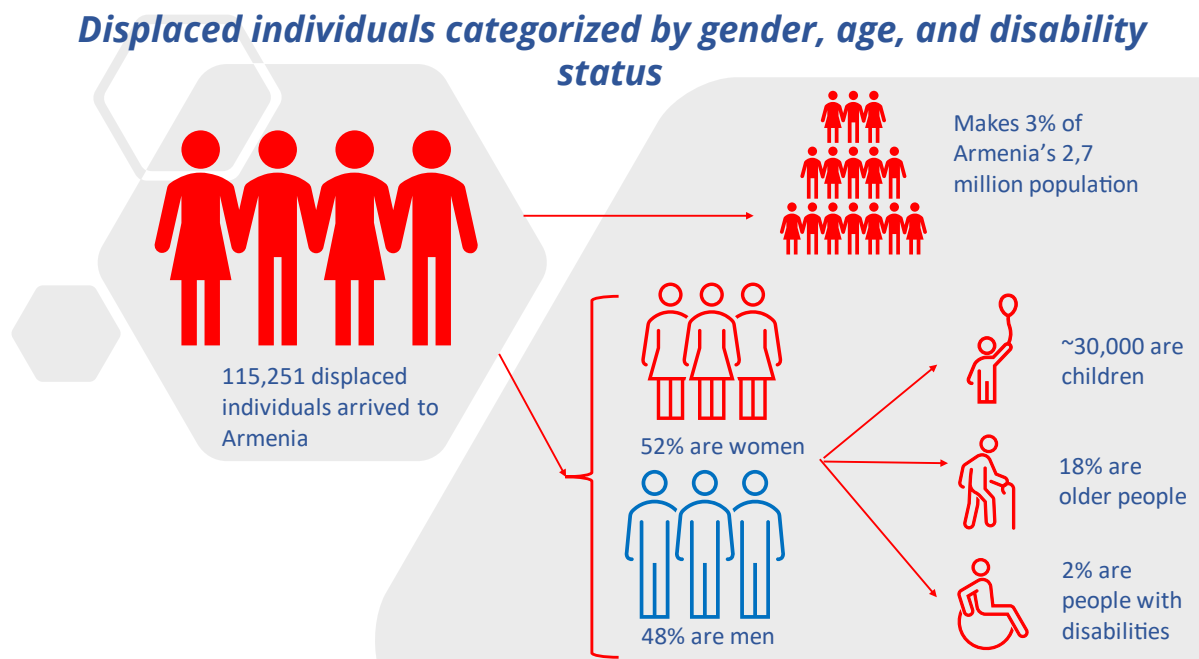
The topic of the day was ecology, and kids learned about the environment surrounding them and how they can protect it. This Smiley Club is located in the Charbakh district of Yerevan, which hosts communities with immigration backgrounds. Thanks to the support of the Austrian Red Cross, the room of the club has been recently renovated, offering a safe and comfortable space for children to learn and play.

A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Description of the Crisis

From 19 September 2023 until the end of April 2024, a total of [115,251](#) individuals have arrived and been registered in Armenia following the escalation of hostilities in Karabakh. Among them, [over 100,000](#) arrived through Lachin corridor within the initial two weeks after the escalation.

In total, the displaced population accounts for nearly 3 per cent of Armenia's total [population of 2.7 million](#). According to the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)), 52 per cent of those who have arrived are female, 48 per cent male, 18 per cent are over the age of 65. 31 per cent under 18, and 2 per cent are people with disabilities.

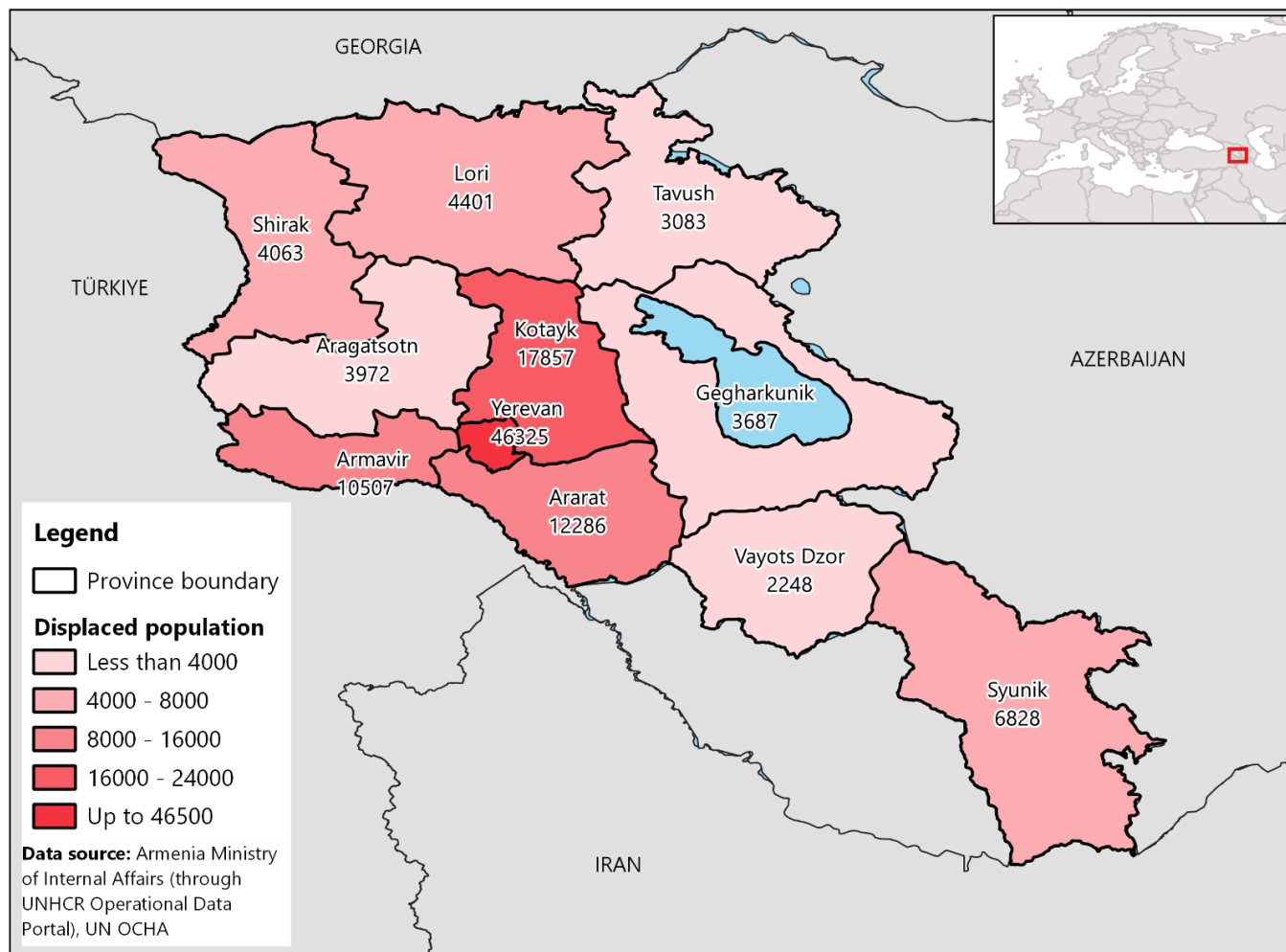


Displaced individuals categorized by gender, age, and disability status, graphic by IFRC based on data from [UNHCR](#), [UNICEF](#), [WHO](#), [GoA](#)

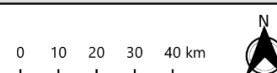
As of April 2024, about 70 per cent of these individuals are residing in the capital region, encompassing Yerevan, along with the adjacent regions of Kotayk and Ararat. Many displaced individuals choose to reside in these three regions, where they have existing family or social support networks. A significant majority ([84.8 per cent](#)) of refugees express contentment with their present community in Yerevan, Kotayk, and Ararat, signifying that conditions are perceived as satisfactory for a long-term stay. The majority ([64.2 per cent](#)) of refugees indicate no desire to relocate, indicating a preference for stability in their current location and a readiness to integrate into and contribute to their current community.

Distribution of displaced people

As per May 2024, by Armenia Ministry of Internal Affairs



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



The situation surrounding the status of displaced people in Armenia adds another layer of complexity due to uncertainty about their future in the country. Although the Armenian Government has pledged to grant them refugee status and citizenship upon request, confusion has arisen because many displaced people believed they were already Armenian citizens, as they held Armenian passports with limited citizenship privileges. Prior to the recent conflict, displaced individuals travelled abroad using passports issued by the Republic of Armenia, which were recognized by numerous countries and allowed them to work within governmental agencies in Armenia. However, the temporary protection status, granted for a one-year duration, revoked these privileges. The Government's decision to grant them [temporary protection or refugee status](#) aligns with international norms, yet it raises questions regarding their future integration, eligibility for pensions and military service in Armenia. Official strategies for addressing these concerns are pending clarification.

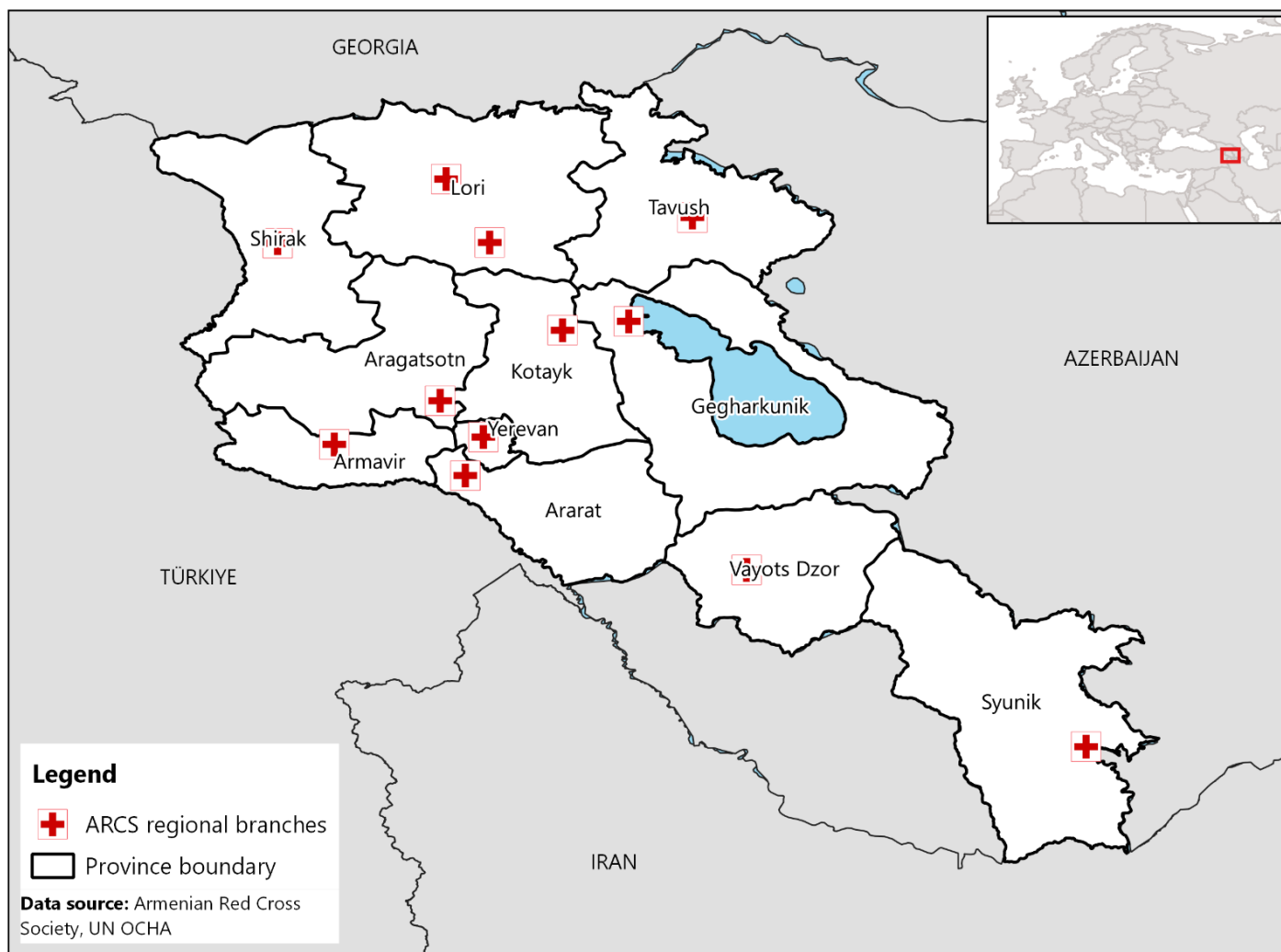
As seven months have passed since the arrival of displaced people in Armenia, the country is now transitioning from addressing immediate needs to focusing on longer-term ones. This includes not only fulfilling the urgent humanitarian needs of the displaced population - such as shelter, food, healthcare, and psychological support- but also facilitating their integration into the country and creating [employment opportunities](#). All these efforts must be undertaken amidst the challenge of managing geopolitical uncertainties arising from [the ongoing dispute over the unmarked border](#) between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which led to recent protests in Yerevan.

Summary of Response

The Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS) is the largest voluntary organization in Armenia, operating through a network comprising 12 regional branches, one territorial branch, and 52 community branches. With over 300 experienced staff and 9,028 dedicated volunteers, of whom 2,265 are active, ARCS enjoys a positive reputation and a high level of trust from both authorities and local communities. This enables ARCS to securely access all areas where displaced individuals have been located.

Since early February 2024, ARCS is experiencing an internal institutional crisis that has affected the capacity to deliver humanitarian services. IFRC, together with Partner National Societies in country, Austrian Red Cross, Italian Red Cross and Swiss Red Cross, has been working since the beginning to preserve business continuity, including a more direct role in implementation of activities, coordination with ARCS branches and with local governmental authorities. Despite the challenges, thanks to this temporary operating mechanism overall progress has been commendable, ensuring that critical services reach vulnerable communities in Armenia, including displaced people. IFRC will maintain this approach until the internal institutional crisis is solved.

Armenian Red Cross Society Branches



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

0 19 38 57 76 km



Since the onset of the Karabakh conflict escalation, the ARCS, as an auxiliary organization to the Government of Armenia and local authorities, has provided urgent humanitarian aid to displaced people, including food, clothing, hygiene items, and medical supplies. A total of 1,500 volunteers and staff members have been deployed within the response operation, working around the clock during the first phase, covering the end of September, October, and November 2023. They worked at reception points (in Kornidzor, Goris, and Vayk), facilitated the distributions of essential household (HH) items, food, and hygiene materials, as well as the operation of Child-Friendly Spaces (CFS).

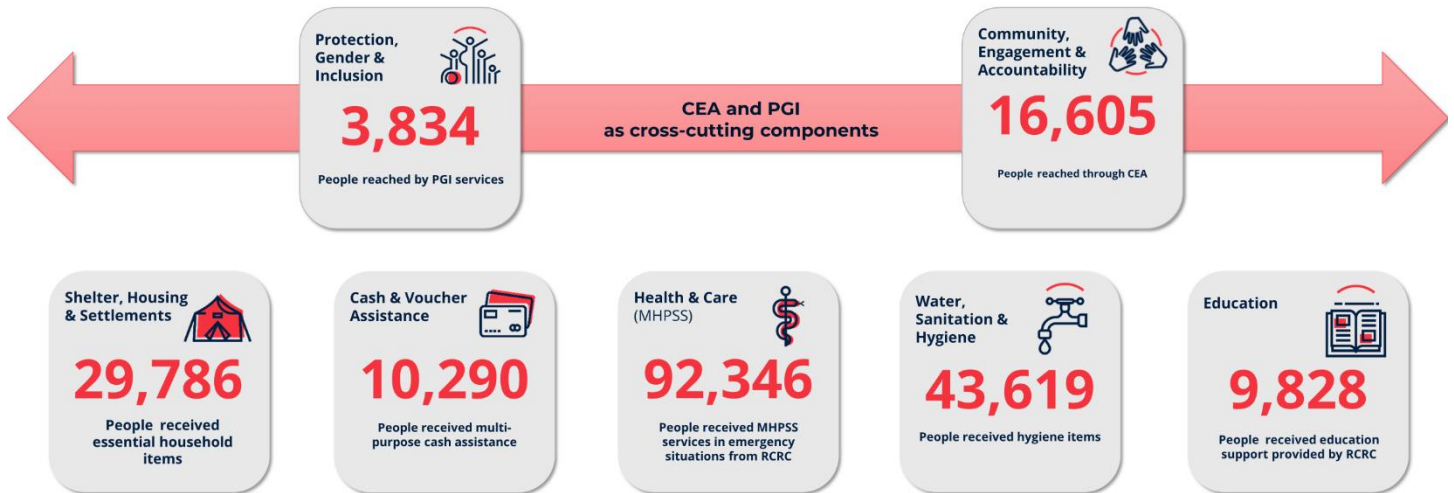


Briefing for volunteers at the registration center during the first days of the escalation, photo credit: ARCS

Volunteers serve as the primary force in executing activities and offering services to displaced individuals, whose ongoing needs include basic household items, cash and voucher support, livelihood support for job opportunities, integration initiatives, continued mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), and education services for both children and parents in CFS. These efforts are carried out with a commitment to quality assurance through the Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) component while also considering gender-specific needs and safeguarding against sexual exploitation and abuse through the Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) component. Continuous efforts are being made to enhance the capacity of volunteers and staff across headquarters and ARCS branches.

The Emergency Appeal (EA) draws upon ARCS's extensive capacity and rich experience since its foundation in 1920; the EA was developed to address the wide range of identified needs of displaced people comprehensively. The graph of response is also presented visually below. By February 2024, 16,605 interviews had been conducted by phone or in person, amounting to the registration of 76,647 individuals. The registration sought to understand needs and vulnerabilities so that the response could appropriately target those most in need. The primary focus was on immediate household requirements reaching 29,786 people, considering the onset of late autumn during the escalation, where individuals had limited time to gather belongings before fleeing.

Additionally, ARCS aligned with the Government's initiative for standardizing shelter support and food provision through the ["40+10" social assistance programme](#), which provided AMD 40,000 (CHF 100) for rent and AMD 10,000 (CHF 25) for utilities; and one-off multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) of AMD 50,000 (CHF 125) designated for food and winterization needs reaching 10,910 people in total through cash assistance. Continuing its MHPSS efforts, ARCS maintained activities with trained staff and volunteers, reaching 92,346 people. Expansion of services in CFS named Smiley clubs was achieved by engaging teaching staff volunteers from communities where displaced children and their families resettled, reaching 9,828 people. MHPSS and education services were divided into two phases: the initial phase covering October and November 2023, followed by longer-term support from December 2023 onwards. This adjustment accommodated the initial arrival of displaced people, which gradually transitioned to longer-term planning as individuals settled and solidified their plans for extended stays. Comprehensive measures were implemented through CEA to identify needs and PGI components to ensure quality in the planning and implementation phases, as well as to prevent instances of sexual exploitation and abuse. The infographic below summarises and highlights the main achievements of ARCS's response as of 30 April 2024.



Figures on people reached by the Emergency Appeal as of 30 April 2024, IFRC

Ongoing training for existing and newly recruited staff members and volunteers across various domains was prioritized. A total of 332 ARCS staff members and volunteers were trained in MHPSS, with 231 receiving training through Smiley clubs, encompassing education services and MHPSS, and 179 receiving training in PGI within this Emergency Appeal. Acknowledging the institutional circumstances of the ARCS it is essential to adapt operations and implement necessary measures to ensure strengthening of the implementation capacity. Emphasizing these initiatives will also contribute to attracting support from partners across the Movement, ultimately bolstering the capacity of the National Society.

Armenia:

EA Response National Society Development/NSD (as of 30 April 2024)



National Society Strengthening under the Emergency Appeal, IFRC.

The **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)** team supports ARCS in daily activity planning and implementation. A budget scenario plan has been completed to align with the current funding status, prioritizing the distribution of household items, cash and voucher assistance (CVA), MHPSS, educational activities within Smiley clubs, and national society strengthening, along with CEA and PGI as cross-cutting components.

Given the ongoing operational needs and in recognition of the institutional requirements, the IFRC and PNSs in the country are actively reinforcing the implementation capacities of ARCS. This collaborative effort is facilitated by a joint operational task force (JOTF) involving ARCS, IFRC, PNSs, and the ICRC. The JOTF meets regularly to coordinate efforts, ensuring the functionality and support of the ARCS. These initiatives cover essential programs such as cash distribution, home-based and residential care, MHPSS, and educational activities in Smiley clubs. Despite some implementation challenges, overall progress has been commendable, ensuring that critical services reach vulnerable communities in Armenia, including displaced people. Close coordination with ARCS branches and collaboration among Secretariat and ARCS entities in-country remains pivotal. To strengthen the implementation capacity of the ARCS, the IFRC has increased its human resources capacity to support the response. For further details, please see the National Society Strengthening under Enabling Approaches section.

The **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)** scaled up its response, working closely with the ARCS to respond to displaced people's protection and assistance needs in border regions (Syunik, Gegharkunik, Vayots Dzor) and Yerevan. As part of its response, ICRC set up a helpline with the ARCS to support people finding their loved ones. Other services include providing hospitals with supplies, MHPSS, food and essential household items, multi-purpose cash, as well as support in capacity strengthening of ARCS branches to continue responding to the needs of affected people.

External humanitarian community and the Government of Armenia (GoA): The GoA, under the coordination of relevant ministries overseeing Protection, Education, Basic Needs, Resilience, Health, and Nutrition sectors, is collaborating with international organizations (including UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, IOM, and FAO), international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as ACTED, Médecins Sans Frontières, Save the Children, and Caritas, as well as local NGOs like the Women's Support Centre, Armenian Progressive Youth (APY), Children of Armenia Fund (COAF), and Mission Armenia, among others, to address the needs of those who have arrived in Armenia. United Nations agencies are co-leading the GoA-coordinated technical working groups¹, with UNHCR taking the lead on both strategic and operational layers. A comprehensive approach and effective coordination among international and local stakeholders are imperative. Therefore, Movement partners (ARCS, ICRC, and IFRC) are actively participating in coordination forums to ensure coherent efforts to support the affected persons and communities.

Needs Analysis

The initial assessment of short-term needs relied on data from the ARCS database, with displaced people reaching out to ARCS via the helpline or by directly contacting its HQ and branch offices. Furthermore, the findings of the inter-agency [Rapid Needs Assessment \(RNA\)](#) report, which evaluated the immediate needs of the refugee population in Armenia, were utilized as the foundation for the short-term needs assessment. This assessment was conducted collaboratively with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) in close collaboration with various line ministries, UN agencies, civil society organizations (CSOs), local authorities, and municipalities. After addressing these urgent needs, longer-term plans and interventions are informed by a multi-sector needs assessment conducted by MoLSA and UNICEF, while cash intervention has been implemented in alignment with the [Government's cash programme](#). The long-term needs assessment integrates findings from post-distribution monitoring (PDM) results to evaluate the support for cash assistance, gather feedback, and refine future activities through focus group discussions (FDGs) for livelihood intervention. In addition to this, given various actors' involvement in crisis response continuously, ARCS and its Movement partners hold coordination meetings. One such meeting occurred in March 2024 in Aragatsotn, focusing on coordination, synergy, on-site needs discussion, and reaching agreements on the distribution of people assisted among humanitarian actors.

As ARCS actively participated in extensive registration efforts within registration centres, operating around the clock with staff and volunteers working in shifts, it successfully registered people and established temporary safe spaces in the initial critical days. These spaces facilitated the provision of substantial initial psychosocial support to arriving individuals, who had endured an escalation in hostilities and were compelled to flee Karabakh once the Lachin corridor opened. Additionally, ARCS distributed hygiene kits and installed bio-toilets at these registration sites. Due to its active engagement during this initial phase, ARCS gained wider recognition as a humanitarian organization providing auxiliary support within the country among the arriving population. Consequently, numerous phone calls to the helpline and in-person requests for support were received, forming the basis for the initial needs assessment and planning of the Emergency Appeal.

As of 30 December 2023, the ARCS database had registered 16,605 arriving families, totalling 76,647 people. The highest volume of inquiries was recorded in October, as depicted in the image below, based on which a rapid assessment was conducted. The dashboard was set up to present information on inquiries, categorized by region and age group (refer to CEA section). Most inquiries were received from women and displaced people settling in Yerevan, Ararat, and Kotayk. The inquiries revealed that during the initial phase, the most significant needs were for food, bedding items, sanitary or hygiene products, household items, cash, and clothing, especially considering the autumn weather conditions and colder temperatures. Additionally, shelter and medicines were crucial, addressing primarily the foundational needs. However, subsequent longer-term assessments identified different priorities, with a notable emphasis on employment requirements.

¹ For further details, see the section on “Coordination”.

The [Rapid Needs Assessment \(RNA\)](#) report provided a snapshot of the immediate needs of the displaced population in Armenia during the initial phase of the population movement. Key informants (KIs) identified specific needs within their communities, further emphasizing that groups in vulnerable situations include pregnant or breastfeeding women, people with disabilities, and those with severe medical conditions. Concerns were raised about the MHPSS needs, particularly for children exposed to violence, and legal assistance emerged as an essential need. Critical need for shelter and essential household items were further identified, with KIs emphasizing the need for cash assistance to cover rent, utilities, and living conditions enhancements. Food security heavily relied on humanitarian aid, local markets, and community support, with state assistance playing a crucial role. Health issues prevalent among displaced people included chronic conditions, serious injuries, respiratory infections, and skin diseases, raising concerns about the health system's capacity. Education challenges included low kindergarten enrolment due to housing uncertainties, infrastructure concerns, and shortages of teachers and textbooks. KIs underscored the pressing need for employment support, emphasizing mid and long-term interventions for integration, social cohesion, and economic empowerment.

Reaching the seven-month mark of the situation's escalation and the beginning of the population movement, various needs, in addition to basic needs, have been identified through a multi-sectoral assessment conducted by MoLSA and UNICEF in March 2024. The assessment highlights employment support as a priority to ensure people affected have the necessary income to cover adequate accommodation and their necessities. Consequently, efforts within this Emergency Appeal are being expedited to implement livelihood interventions, including educational training and seed grants to facilitate the initiation of income-generating activities.



Focus Group Discussion on designing livelihoods intervention. Photo credit: ARCS

Other challenges concerning employment opportunities and the integration of displaced individuals are related to stress around legal status and the exhaustion of savings, which emphasizes the need to enhance MHPSS and educational support further.

The GoA initially introduced a [“40+10” social assistance programme](#) for the first six months, from October 2023 to March 2024. The Cash Working Group decided to extend this programme until the end of 2024 since most displaced people stay in rented accommodation and need cash support to cover daily

expenditures. Therefore, as part of the Emergency Appeal, ARCS aligns its cash support programme with the government's initiative, continuing assistance until the end of July.

Operational risk assessment

The operational risk assessment for Armenia remains high, with attention focused on three main areas of concern:

1. Conflict resurgence:

The ongoing peace negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan currently focus on the "[Zangezur corridor](#)," a road project aiming to connect Azerbaijan with its exclave of Nakhichevan through southern Armenia. This corridor is pivotal for a comprehensive peace agreement, as it would establish a direct land route to Nakhichevan, which is presently accessible only by air or through Iran. However, negotiations have reached a critical point, with both sides holding divergent views on its implementation.

The risk of escalation of tensions in Armenia is attributed to ongoing protests in Yerevan, which stem from Armenia's decision to withdraw from four border villages in the [Tavush province](#) as part of a border delimitation agreement with Azerbaijan. Residents of Tavush's border villages have been expressing their discontent with Armenia's territorial concessions to Azerbaijan since 19 April.

2. Unclear legal status:

The GoA's decision to grant refugee status to displaced population from Karabakh, in compliance with international law and norms, presents unique circumstances. These individuals already hold Armenian passports issued as "travel documents" without conferring citizenship. According to the law from 2008, [refugee status](#) can only be granted to foreign citizens or stateless persons. Initially intended for facilitating travel to and from Karabakh, these passports are now part of the larger discussion on citizenship. Under the temporary protection status provided by the GoA, displaced people can apply for Armenian citizenship if they choose. This temporary status, initially granted for one year with the option for extension, has implications for their integration into Armenian society, including questions surrounding future military service.

3. CVA programme related risks:

Risks related to cash support span contextual, programmatic, security, and institutional categories. Contextual risks include governmental regulations, security concerns due to conflict escalation, and economic crises. Programmatic risks involve limited funding and risks associated with using third parties for assistance delivery. Security risks include threats to staff, volunteers, and people assisted, as well as the possibility of conflicts arising within the community. Institutional risks encompass accountability, fraud, corruption, and reputational risks. Mitigation measures include continuous monitoring, contingency planning, communication with stakeholders, transparent targeting of people to be assisted, complaint mechanisms, and verification processes to ensure programme integrity.

Operational risk assessment is expected to stay high. The central focus remains on possible increases in conflict, amid the absence of a bilateral peace agreement, and managing the risks associated with unclear legal status of displaced people in Armenia, as well as CVA programme related risks.

B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

Update on the strategy

The Operational Strategy reflects ongoing adjustments to align with the evolving situation and governmental directives. Considering budget constraints, strategic shifts have been made to optimize resource allocation and enhance coordination with other stakeholders. In response to the institutional requirements within ARCS, which have led to operational constraints and impacted the pace of implementing response activities, the IFRC has taken a more active role in support to the ARCS and implementation. **To address the long-term needs of the affected population, this Operations Update updates and extends the Emergency Appeal and the Operational Strategy by six months until 30 June 2025.**

Further changes and updates to the Operational Strategy are described in more detail below:

- **Shelter, Housing, and Settlements:**

- In-kind support will be maintained at a minimum level to assist those most in need who are not covered by CVA. Additionally, emergency stock will be organized on the central level to cover urgent needs and needs in case of the reescalation of the conflict.

- **Multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA):**

- To ensure alignment with the government's response in the second phase, the Cash for Rent and Utilities program for 9,500 individuals was supported by three months and subsequently extended.
- Similarly, as mentioned in the previous Operation Update, the allocation for winter clothing, initially intended for 4,500 children, has been transformed into a more flexible one-off multi-purpose cash (MPC) assistance of AMD 50,000 (CHF 125) for 3,600 individuals. This aligns with the government's MPC scheme and maintains the original budget without financial alterations. This flexibility allows families to prioritize their needs when allocating these resources.
- The Government of Armenia launched a new cash scheme called "cash for basic needs" which builds upon the previous "40+10" social assistance program and extends it to include people displaced in 2020. The Emergency Appeal (EA) plans to cover four months (April – July) of this new nine-month phase (April – December 2024). The Government will declare additional phases based on national budget availability and resources of in-country partners. IFRC is signing agreements with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MLSA), the Union of Social Service Workers (USS), and Converse Bank to strengthen implementation capacity.

- **Livelihoods:**

- Livelihoods assessment and intervention design is currently ongoing. Key Informant Interviews (KIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), household surveys and secondary information review is ongoing and will inform a livelihoods assessment report and Plan of Action for this sector. Livelihoods specific intervention activities are planned to start by the end of May or beginning of June.

- **Education:**

- Due to changes in the local context and needs of the NS, the Emergency Appeal covers 32 out of 45 smiley clubs in total around the country.

As the ARCS was present at the arrival point from day one to assess and respond to the initial needs of displaced people arriving from Karabakh, the National Society has reached most people crossing the border (85 per cent by November 2023) on arrival and with initial support. Two phases of the response were identified to avoid double counting of people reached. Accordingly, the total number of people reached during the first phase of the operation is not added to the number of people assisted during the second phase. Please see a detailed explanation of the two phases below.

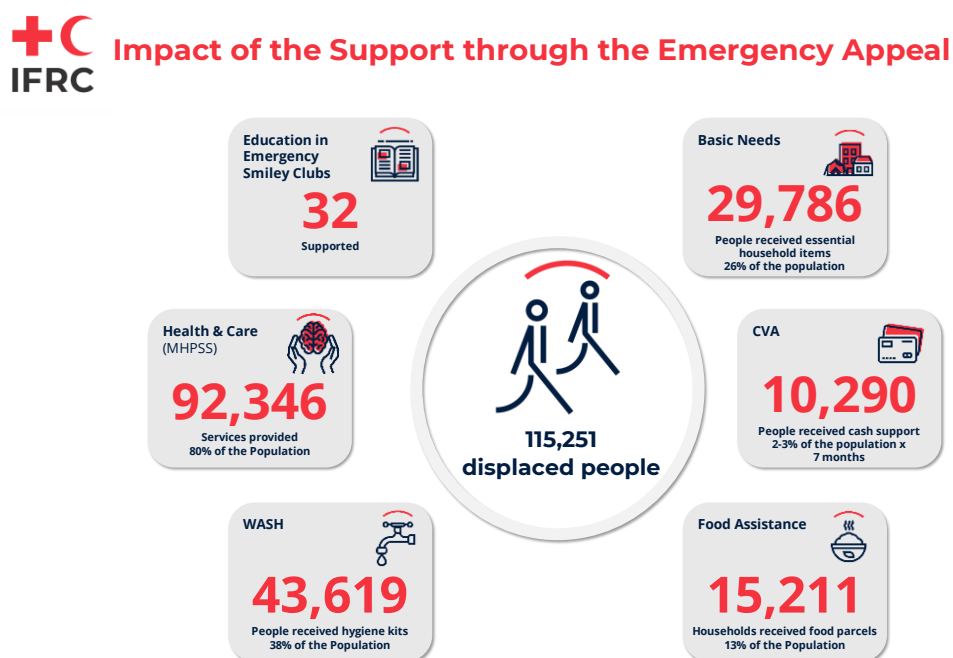
Phase 1 - On arrival and initial support (September 2023 – end of November 2023):

In this initial phase, the ARCS quickly mobilized staff and volunteers and offered support to over 80,000 people upon arrival to Armenia. Some of the activities included psychological first aid, setting up and supporting children at child-friendly spaces, and the **distribution** of essential food and household items. During this phase, the **Helpline** was activated and scaled up to support the rising needs of the newly arrived population while providing critical information, orientation, and referrals. The operation continued working with tens of thousands of newly arrived people until the end of November 2023.

Phase 2 - Long-term support (December 2023 – end of April 2024):

The second phase of ARCS activities is characterized by the continuation of provision of essential services as well as a holistic and integrated support to displaced people's integration and inclusion in the society. This is achieved through **MHPSS activities including PFA, counselling and community-based activities**. CVA has also been a modality of support, in accordance with the government coordinated CVA scheme. More **Child-Friendly Spaces** will be up and running while the **Helpline** continues to respond to the information and orientation needs of the displaced people.

The graph below illustrates support provided to displaced people within the current Emergency Appeal through the Secretariat funding, while the section below on Strategic Sectors of Intervention provides Federation-wide data, including PNS, as well as external actors such as UN agencies implemented through the ARCS. Additionally, numerous initiatives encompassing both soft and hard components have been executed to strengthen the capacity of ARCS, which is crucial for exit strategy planning and long-term sustainability objectives.



Figures on the impact of the secretariat-funded Emergency appeal activities, IFRC

DETAILED OPERATIONAL REPORT

STRATEGIC SECTORS OF INTERVENTION



Shelter, Housing and Settlements

People reached (phase 1): 21,825

People reached (phase 2): 7,961

Objective:	<i>Population arriving to Armenia and host communities restore and strengthen their safety, well-being and longer-term recovery through shelter and settlement solutions</i>
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Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i># 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</i>	29,786 people (7,580 HHs)	6,600 people (1,650 HHs)

Household items

Items Distributed	Total items distributed ²
Blanket (individual)	21,760
Bed linen (individual)	7,825
Pillows (individual)	3,525
Heater (HH)	2,635
Water boiler (HH)	2,815
Mattresses (individual)	1,500
Kitchen set (HH)	2,175
School bag (child)	2,544
Foldable bed (child)	20

ARCS has distributed the following essential household items in the reporting period, reaching a total of 7,580 households (29,786 people). The breakdown of items distributed are outlined in the table.

Funding from the initial Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF), prior to launching the current Emergency Appeal, was used to procure essential household items. The distribution of the items, which were acquired for 1,000 families in January 2024, was delayed from February to March due to institutional changes within ARCS. Additionally, delays were experienced due to the Government of Armenia's requirement for prior approval from local authorities regarding distribution logistics and dates. In March 2024, the ARCS successfully distributed essential items to 180 households, which included 725 individuals. These items included blankets, mattresses, heating materials. The distribution

process took place on-site with the active involvement of community representatives in Yerevan city considering that 40 per cent of the displaced individuals reside either within the city or in its surrounding districts. The remaining items are scheduled to be distributed in the forthcoming months.

Next immediate steps:

- **Household items:** ARCS aims to distribute this remaining stock by mid-June 2024. To restock these items, alternative funding sources beyond the Emergency Appeal resources will be tapped into, including donations from Kuwait RC and similar sources.

With the support of other funding sources:

- Distributions of pre-stocked items from other funding sources, including a pre-established IFRC-USAID's BHA project and a UNICEF partnership.³

² To avoid double counting, the total number of items distributed is slightly different than the number of people reached.

³ Based on a pre-agreed ARCS-UNICEF partnership on preparedness and response, covering Child Protection, Education, WASH, Humanitarian Relief, Warehouse Management, Cash Assistance, and Communication, the following activities have been activated through formal letters in the



Multi-purpose Cash

People reached: 10,290

Objective:	<i>Households are provided with unconditional/multipurpose cash grants to address their basic needs</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i># of targeted people reached with Multi-purpose Cash Assistance to address basic needs (new indicator)</i>	10,290	3,600 (winterization) and 13,100 (for rent)

The shelter cash intervention was initially planned under the 'shelter, housing, and settlement' component of the Emergency Appeal. As steps were being taken to design and define the intervention, the Government of Armenia initiated a cash assistance programme. To enhance synergy and coordination, the Government requested all partners in the country to align their programmes with its initiative in terms of funding amounts and recipients' list, which was centrally provided by the Government. IFRC, along with other partners, subsequently joined this programme and covered November, December and March with one-off multi-purpose cash assistance of AMD 50,000 (CHF 125) per individual.

For a new nine-month phase from April to December 2024, the EA plans to cover the four months of April, May, June and July. Subsequent phases will be declared by the Government of Armenia depending on the resources available in the national budget and the resources of in-country partners.

Selection criteria for the rental and utility programme (AMD 40,000+10,000 assistance project) were established collaboratively by IFRC and ARCS, with input from the Cash Working Group. Targeted households include those recently displaced with three or more children, as well as families with disabled members. ARCS volunteers verified and validated recipient lists received from Unified Social Service (USS) before initiating payments, ensuring eligibility criteria were met. Recipients were notified via SMS after each transfer, with helpline numbers provided for feedback.

To evaluate and gather feedback on the cash assistance provided through the ARCS, a post-distribution monitoring (PDM) was conducted in April-May 2024. The sample consisted of 208 households. Key findings are presented in brief.

According to the findings, 88 per cent of individuals predominantly live in rented accommodations, 8 per cent are hosted by friends, 2 per cent reside in public facilities, and the rest left the answers blank. Given that displaced people left their properties in Karabakh, it is expected they will continue renting for an extended period.

current response: 10 bio toilets and hygienic supply have been installed at registration points; Case managers for child protection have been engaged in all branches, reaching 2,000+ children by now; 11 Temporary Learning Spaces (Child-Friendly Spaces) have been established; Blankets, schoolbags, diapers have been distributed to approx. 570 families.

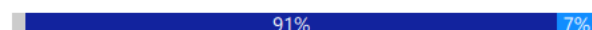
How did you receive the cash assistance?

● (Blank) ● Counter / At the branch ● Credit Card / Converse ...



Problem with receiving your cash to your bank card?

● (Blank) ● No ● Yes



PDM findings concerning cash assistance provided

As registration on the online platform and opening a bank account for transfers were prerequisites, most individuals (88 per cent of the total) received cash primarily through bank transfers, with funds deposited into their cards, while 14 per cent of individuals collected cash from the bank counter, and the rest refrained from providing answers.

Given that most individuals reside in rented accommodations, the cash received was predominantly utilized to cover expenses related to rent and utilities, with a portion allocated for food and other essential needs.

Eligibility criteria included families with three or more children and/or families with individuals with disabilities, following the same criteria as the [“40+10” social assistance programme](#).

CRM tool for improved data management

The IFRC Digital Transformation Team, in collaboration with [510 \(the Data & Digital initiative of the Netherlands Red Cross\)](#) adapted EspoCRM software to streamline CVA interventions for the ARCS. This digital customer relationship management (CRM) solution, tailored to the specific needs of the ARCS, encompasses various categories of support. The system is designed to process and monitor CVA provided not only by the Emergency Appeal, but also by other contributions from within the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and external partners. The platform allows for comprehensive tracking of payment status, along with providing contact information and indicating the source of funding, as well as conducting analyses and generating reports based on gender, age, uniqueness criteria.

Next immediate steps:

- IFRC to finalise the signing of the agreement with USS for direct implementation starting from April 2024.
- Continuous monitoring during the encashment will take place to address any issues that may arise.

With the support of other funding sources:

- Pre-existing funds (from an IFRC-USAID BHA project) are topping up the MPCA with additional 1,643 persons.
- A pre-existing project involving IFRC Digital Engagement Hub (DEH) and the Netherlands Red Cross has been amended to create a solution for CVA data management on short notice.
- ICRC and UNHRC funds with ARCS, positioned as an Implementing Partner for UNHRC, are being co-used to increase the number of people assisted via the “rental and utility” cash scheme.



Livelihoods

People reached (phase 1): 67,649
People reached (phase 2): 0⁴

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	Preparation phase	1,000 HHs (4,000 people)
# of targeted households (and people) reached with essential services/information for income generation	Preparation phase	500 HH
% of households receiving food rations from RCRC are satisfied with the amount/volume received	PDM under preparation	70%

Food assistance:

The ARCS distributed food parcels to a total 15,211 households since the operation began. In addition, ARCS distributed wheat flour (50 kg per family) to families with more than seven members living in rural areas.

Livelihoods:

According to the findings of the multi-sectoral needs assessment conducted by MoLSA and UNICEF, a significant challenge encountered by displaced individuals is the absence of employment opportunities or income-generating activities.

Three separate focus group discussions (FGDs) were organized by ARCS in April 2024 in Yerevan, Kotayk, and Armavir, each attended by 10-15 displaced individuals. Prior to the initiation of the intervention, a recommendation was made to formulate a two-component employment-related programme to initiate income-generating activities. The proposed programme includes a training component, regarded as the soft element, and cash allocated as seed funds, which is the hard component.

During the FGDs, participants were asked about the impact of displacement on their livelihoods, whether any household members are currently employed, and if not, the type of barriers they face in finding jobs. They were queried about their interest in vocational, business management, and language training, and whether they believe such training would aid in employment. Additionally, participants were asked if they are interested in self-employment or starting their own businesses, and if so, what support they would require. Suggestions were sought on how the Red Cross could assist them in job placement, along with any other recommendations they might have. The FGDs findings suggest that participants who fled Karabakh reported being deprived of their belongings, including property, livelihoods, and livestock, upon displacement. Challenges in finding employment were highlighted, particularly for older individuals and those lacking Armenian passports, limiting access to state-related positions. Discrimination based on their origin exacerbated their employment struggles. Available jobs often offer low pay and rigid schedules, posing difficulties for women with childcare responsibilities and leading men to take up night shifts as security guards. Many displaced individuals, previously engaged in agriculture, expressed a preference for similar work, such as cattle breeding or beekeeping. Business grants in cash were favoured for

⁴ Please note that the actual number reported in this report is lower than in the last OU due to a counting error.

support, with specific suggestions including expanding bakery operations. While ARCS offered training opportunities, participants preferred direct grants for entrepreneurial ventures, citing time constraints. Urgency in addressing daily expenses led to a preference for immediate support over training sessions. FGD participants stressed the importance of promptly launching the project to support their livelihoods and ensure sustainability.

Next immediate steps:


- Families identified as vulnerable among the recently arrived (vulnerability criteria to be developed) will receive comprehensive support through the IFRC Emergency Appeal funding, including assistance in income generation, facilitation of job placement, and participation in requalification/vocational training programmes.

Challenges:

- Not all agencies and donors engaged in the ongoing response are planning interventions for the recovery phase and funding opportunities are limited. Thus, the intended livelihoods support will have to prioritize vulnerable individuals with adequate potential and possibilities of self-reliance to generate best impact.

With the support of other funding sources:

- ARCS continues the implementation of economic integration activities with the support of UNHCR which includes provision of income generation tools, financial literacy, and business trainings.
- In collaboration with Austrian Red Cross, ARCS started the implementation of the RENEW project, funded by the ECHO HIP. The livelihood component allows to support 1,000 persons with proper referrals and job placement support.

	Health & Care <i>(Mental Health and psychosocial support / Community Health / Medical Services)</i>	People reached (phase 1): 85,902 People reached (phase 2): 6,444	
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 (Phase 1: Arrival and Initial Support)	85,902	61,850
	# of people who receive mental health and psychosocial services in emergency situations from RCRC (Phase 2: Long-term Support)	6,444	TBC
	# of people trained in Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (including Psychological First Aid and other MHPSS related trainings)	332	350
	# of people reached with health promotion activities related to NCD management in emergencies	De-prioritized	20,000
	# of First Aid community volunteer teams	De-prioritized	50

Through MHPSS service, the newly arrived were supported in two phases:

- **Phase 1 - Arrival and Initial Support (September 2023 – November 2023):**

In this initial phase, the ARCS offered Psychosocial First Aid (PFA) by trained staff and volunteers to approximately 70,000 individuals arriving to Armenia, at the reception points. This included comforting people in distress, helping them feel safe and calm, assessing needs and concerns, as well as providing emotional support, active listening, and information to help individuals regain a sense of support and safety while making referrals to other relevant institutions as required.

During this phase, the **helpline** was activated and scaled up to support the rising need of the newly arrived population. The Helpline also received requests from individuals to be referred for further MHPSS support. In response to the increased demand, four additional operators have been trained and joined the ARCS helpline offering online PFA and remote counselling for individuals who require specialised mental health support. For more information on the Helpline, please refer to the Community, Accountability and Engagement section below.



ARCS staff and volunteers are providing PFA to displaced people. Photo credit: ARCS

- **Phase 2 - Long-term support (December 2023 – April 2024):**

During the second phase of ARCS MHPSS activities, the focus remains on delivering PFA via the helpline and face-to-face counselling sessions. Additionally, this phase witnessed a substantial expansion of support programmes, including group and individual psychosocial support sessions, along with information and sensitization sessions. ARCS hired two instructors from Karabakh to help overcome the dialect barrier and to better handle challenges around communication and cultural sensitivity. The helpline remains active in addressing the needs and inquiries of the vulnerable population, directing them to relevant services as needed.

During the reporting period, in addition to psychosocial support activities, the ECHO-HIP project established peer support groups in four regions where most of the displaced population resides. The helpline and the provision of PFA continued. Supportive supervision is provided to the helpline team by an external psychologist, while the MHPSS

team also supports the Gyumri Care Centre and the Austrian and Swiss Red Cross Home Care Project in their multidisciplinary health team.

The ARCS Social and Health Care Department staff participate in different meetings and discussions such as Interagency Working Group, WHO WG and Network of older people, to present ARCS services and to keep up to date on the MHPSS activities provided by other organizations. The ARCS, IFRC, and ICRC established a Movement Technical MHPSS Working Group to ensure harmonized operational response based on the MHPSS framework, which has been inactive since February 2024 due to the institutional crisis.

Information-sensitization sessions have been carried out in communities to inform and educate people about ARCS's MHPSS activities for those aiming to reach out to other services. To further expand and enhance MHPSS services, 332 staff and volunteers were trained to provide PFA and basic psychosocial support within different departments.

Next immediate steps:

- Identify socio-cultural needs of the displaced population to expand PSS activities in the communities;
- Implement PSS activities for children during summer holidays;
- Train new ARCS staff and volunteers;
- Implement Staff and Volunteer care activities in HQ and regional branches;
- Restore positive relationships with external MHPSS actors and revive the MHPSS Working Group

Challenges:

- - Inconsistency in support group attendance due to other family demands, which also suggests that support groups need to be expanded into a space that is more accessible to the community.

With the support of other funding sources:

- Given the direct intervention of the ICRC in the border areas, ARCS substituted MHPSS activities in the areas of attention in the regions of Ararat, Armavir, Kotayk through the ECHO HIP project from March 2024.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

People reached: 43,619

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	43,619	23,200

Since the beginning of the operation, 10,025 households received hygiene kits and 5,600 children received hygiene items, reaching 43,619 individuals in total.

Item name	Quantity distributed on the 1 st round	Quantity distributed on the 2 nd round	Quantity distributed on the 3 rd round	Total
Hygiene kits (HH)	7,400	450	2,175	10,025
Hygiene items (child)	2,000	3,600	0	5,600


During December 2023, more than 25,000 families received basic information on water sanitation and hygiene through trained community volunteers.

With the support of IFRC Emergency Appeal funding:

The initial DREF fund was used to procure hygiene material (1,150 HH hygiene kits and 4,033 hygiene items).

With the support of other funding sources:

- Distributions of pre-stocked items from other funding sources, including USAID funded preparedness project.
- 1,567 hygiene items for children procured with UNICEF support.

	Education	People reached (phase 1): 7,096 People reached (phase 2): 2,732	
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 (Phase 1: Arrival and initial Support)</i>	7,096	-
	<i># of affected children, adolescents and young adults receiving any form of education support provided by RCRC in affected area (Phase 2: Long-term Support)</i>	2,732	3,700
	<i># of teachers and education personnel (incl. volunteer facilitators) trained by RCRC in improved teaching and learning approaches in affected areas</i>	231 ⁵	450

According to [UNICEF data](#), over 30,000 children arrived from Karabakh after 19 September 2023, requiring immediate attention, including mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) activities such as art therapy, reading, dancing, and singing. Additionally, they needed supplementary education to aid in their adaptation process. In response, children and youth were assisted upon their arrival in September 2023 through Child Corners established by ARCS. These secure environments catered to 7,096 young individuals during their arrival and initial stage.

As part of its long-term support, the ARCS is actively advancing its initiative to establish more Child-Friendly Spaces (CFS) called Smiley Clubs. A group of volunteers, mainly comprised of schoolteachers, are recruited and trained to deliver Smiley Club services. The selection of schools, classrooms, volunteers, and students are then conducted using the Smiley Club selection criteria. Children aged 6-14 receive homework support, PSS activities, as well as social and cultural events aimed at fostering the integration of children and cultivating a sense of community bond and social cohesion.

⁵ Please note that the actual number reported in this report is lower than in the last Operation Update (OU No. 3) due to a counting error.

In the country, there are currently 45 Smiley clubs.⁶ As of April 2024, 43 out of 45 clubs are now operational, with the remaining two expected to resume activities in May 2024. Nevertheless, certain activities remain temporarily suspended due to a shift in funding modality. Specifically, initiatives such as classroom and toilet renovations, previously supported by UNICEF, are currently on hold pending resource allocation.

In January 2024, a training session was conducted for 21 new Smiley Club leaders and school directors. The training, led by the Project Coordinator and field officer, included presentations on project details, partners, and areas of cooperation. Directors were also briefed on various topics including an introduction to ARCS, stay safe protocols, child safeguarding, Psychological First Aid orientation, overview of the Children Resilience Programme, Healthy Lifestyles, Climate Change, Promotion of Human Values, and Child Participation and Community Engagement and Accountability.

Training Conducted	Date of training	Total number of people trained (m,f)	Smiley Club Location which they are associated with
CFS Service	22.01.2024	21	Yerevan, Tavush, Shirak, Vayots Dzor, Lori, Gegharkunik
Safe Volunteering	22.01.2024	21	Yerevan, Tavush, Shirak, Vayots Dzor, Lori, Gegharkunik
PFA	22.01.2024	21	Yerevan, Tavush, Shirak, Vayots Dzor, Lori, Gegharkunik
M&E procedures	22.01.2024	21	Yerevan, Tavush, Shirak, Vayots Dzor, Lori, Gegharkunik

The set up of 21 new Smiley Clubs included classroom selection with access to natural light and windows, space to conduct the formal and non-formal learning activities, access to clean and safe WASH facilities, and accessibility to carry out this non-formal educational activity after academic hours. Selection of children included displaced children from Karabakh and vulnerable pupils from the host community with academic gaps, as outlined by parents and teachers, for class grades 1-7. The involvement of both the host community and displaced children is essential to promoting social integration and humanitarian values within the school community. The activities of the clubs in each community are carried out with the direct participation of 10 volunteers (most of them are teachers at the same schools, and the others are ARCS RB volunteers) and 1 volunteer leader.

The 21 newly established Smiley Clubs are currently supporting 832 displaced children (376 boys and 405 girls) from Karabakh and vulnerable host communities. Working schedules are created according to children's preferences/hobbies, as well as subjective or educational deficiencies. The clubs provide after-class lessons learnings, hobby groups (e. g. painting, chess, handicrafts, healthy lifestyle, among others) for the target group of children attending 1-7 classes, as a part of non-formal education in addition to the formal education. Registration forms, attendance journal and schedules were created, printed, and distributed to the SCs. All 21 spaces which have been already established are operational. To discuss matters such as challenges, need for additional supplies, and to exchange experiences, the ARCS is conducting weekly meetings with volunteers. Furthermore, volunteers' capacities are strengthened through a range of trainings exploring topics such as PFA, PSS for children, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Child Safeguarding Policy, and Safety and Security of volunteers.

A comprehensive educational and PSS needs assessment of the children has been completed. The findings of this assessment were used in shaping the activities planned for January - May 2024.

⁶ 13 Smiley clubs were in operation before September 2023 and 32 established thereafter. Among the 32 newly established clubs, 11 were funded by UNICEF, 15 by IFRC, and 6 by ECHO HIP through the Austrian Red Cross under the Federation-wide Emergency Appeal. Given operational changes and budgetary constraints among partners, efforts have increased to maintain the operation of the Smiley Clubs throughout the country. IFRC currently funds a total of 32 out of all 45 Smiley Clubs.

A community feedback system has been established, incorporating procedures to handle sensitive complaints, ensuring that community voices are acknowledged and valued. Feedback is gathered through various channels: Child-friendly suggestion boxes are strategically placed in Smiley Clubs to enable children to anonymously share their thoughts, fears, wishes, and complaints. Children also participate in focus group discussions for needs assessment, providing valuable insights for adjusting activities. Parent meetings and focus group discussions are utilized to gather insights from parents, shaping project development. Additionally, regular feedback sessions and informal discussions with volunteer teachers maintain an open line of communication, promoting collaboration and improvement.

Next immediate steps:

- **Refurbishment and Upgrading of Child-Friendly Spaces (CFSS):** The renovation process will commence with a specialist visiting the communities supported by these activities in order to conduct a needs assessment. Subsequently, surveys will be conducted at the central and local levels based on the specialist's assessments. The renovation of the SCs is scheduled to be completed within the next three months.
- **Training:**
 - Volunteer Training for 23 CFSSs. A total of 230 volunteers will undergo training for the 23 CFSSs.
 - PFA trainings planned to be implemented for all volunteers.
- **Summer activities:** In collaboration with the MHPSS team of ARCS, the organisation of summer activities for children supported by Smiley Clubs is planned. The budget and the criteria for selection is under discussion.

With the support of other funding sources:

- ARCS established 11 learning spaces supported by UNICEF, three Smiley Clubs funded by the Italian Red Cross, eight by ICRC, two by the Austrian Red Cross, and six through the joint funding of the Austrian Red Cross and ECHO HIP, along with 15 supported by the IFRC Emergency Appeal.
- The three Smiley Clubs funded by the Italian Red Cross will continue their activities until August 2024.
- Two Smiley Clubs supported by the Austrian Red Cross in dormitories will continue their activities until October 2024, with an extension planned for further continuation.
- Six Smiley Clubs supported by the Austrian Red Cross and ECHO HIP will continue their activities until November 2024.

	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	Actual	Target
	# of people reached by RCRC social cohesion activities to improve relations between migrants / people arriving to the country and host communities	Preparation phase	20,000

The IFRC and ARCS are currently discussing this initiative. The main focus is to establish and pilot an integration centre in Yerevan to facilitate various activities aimed at the socio-economic and socio-cultural integration and inclusion of displaced people. These centres may adopt a similar approach to other National Societies' modalities

for supporting integration and inclusion, offering a large range of services in a holistic way. These services may include MHPSS, employment support, education support, protection, and the mainstreaming of a CEA approach.

Next immediate steps:

- Coordinate with stakeholders, including governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in integration & inclusion and migration.
- Develop specifications for the required physical infrastructure and determine the necessary facilities.
- Engage in discussions with the government to explore potential collaboration and support for establishing such premises.
- Finalise the budget and oversee the implementation of migration-related activities. These may encompass awareness campaigns, information dissemination, initiatives for socio-cultural integration, social cohesion activities, humanitarian aid, job placement assistance, MHPSS services, vocational training programmes, and guidance on improving livelihoods.



Protection, Gender and Inclusion

People reached: 3,834

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

10

4

of people trained on implementing the PGI Minimum Standards

179

200

of people reached by protection, gender, and inclusion service

3,834

15,000

With the support of IFRC Emergency Appeal funding:

ARCS and IFRC representatives actively engage in sectoral coordination working groups led by the Government of Armenia and co-led by UN agencies, such as the Protection Working Group and the Child Protection Sub-Working Group. Within these coordination groups, ARCS contributes to information coordination, facilitating coordinated approaches with other partners to address protection, gender and inclusion needs on a case-by-case basis.

The Child Safeguarding Policy that was drafted in 2023, continues to be implemented, for more details refer to the last Operations Update. To date, 179 people were trained on the safeguarding policy and/ or PGI minimum standards, including social workers, psychologists, teachers, and volunteers working in child protection and at the ARCS Smiley Clubs as well as focal points from regional branches, HQ department representatives and individuals responsible for CEA and organizational development. The sessions focused on fundamental aspects of Protection, Gender, and Inclusion, emphasizing safe referrals and adherence to ARCS's child safeguarding policy. ARCS is committed to extending PGI training to all essential personnel. Additionally, 82 people were trained on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) through an UN online training.

A new PGI focal point/coordinator has been designated to spearhead the planning and implementation of PGI training for all staff members. Additionally, the PGI focal point will oversee a cascade training model for volunteers, facilitated by volunteer leaders. These newly appointed PGI focal points will report to the Population Movement Department and hold qualifications as trained Child Protection Case Managers.

A comprehensive plan and budget have been devised to integrate PGI into the organization's HR policy. This initiative involves partnering with department heads to conduct sector specific PGI self-assessments and implementing a training programme for both staff and volunteers on safeguarding policy and PGI principles. The newly appointed PGI focal points have convened with each department head to facilitate a sector specific PGI self-assessment. Presently, the outcomes are undergoing analysis to aid departments in formulating action plans. These plans will undergo periodic review, conducted jointly by the PGI focal points and sectoral department leads, on a bi-annual basis.

Additionally, the ARCS PGI team collaborated with the CEA and capacity building fund (CBF) teams to develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for handling sensitive feedback. They remain actively engaged in this process and currently serve as the primary focal point for managing sensitive feedback.

Furthermore, PGI assessment analysis continues to be integrated into case management. PGI assessment of individual needs are conducted through requests that come to ARCS via email, helpline, and branches. Through this individual assessment, needs based on gender, disability and protection needs are evaluated to meet the specific necessities of each person. This may include providing furniture to institutions for vulnerable older people (complementing the renovations by UNDP) or providing specific mobility aids and medical equipment to individuals.

PGI constitutes a fundamental aspect integrated across various services provided by ARCS. Although accounted for across distinct sectors, the outreach figures for PGI encompass aiding 2,108 individuals (1,058 males, 1,050 females) in registering children for secure after-school learning environments. This support extends to social integration activities, psychosocial support (PSS), and educational initiatives. Volunteers associated with Smiley Clubs have undergone introductory PGI training, with a current focus on prioritizing them for child safeguarding and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) efforts.

Next immediate steps:

- Seven training sessions are scheduled for PGI development, encompassing two PGI Training of Trainers (TOT) sessions tailored for ARCS staff focal points and volunteer leaders. The remaining five sessions will focus on PGI training for new staff members, volunteers, and Smiley Club volunteers with designated responsibilities.

Challenges:

- Conducting PGI specific and/or integrated assessments is challenging, as the government is leading in needs assessments. The respective indicator, therefore, can be interpreted as integrated into analysis, such as case management, through internal assessments that will be conducted through the PGI training, and individual activity assessments, for instance through design of individual Smiley Clubs.

With the support of other funding sources:

ARCS implemented Child Protection Case Management to ensure the timely identification and response to children's protection needs within the framework of a UNICEF-funded project. Case managers for child protection have been engaged in all branches, reaching 4,475 children by the end of March. These case managers handled 1,251 child protection cases and provided support to 2,774 children (1,414 male, 1,360 female). The cases were referred to child protection through the ARCS helpline and directly from ARCS branches.



Community Engagement and Accountability

People reached: 16,605

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

% of people surveyed who report receiving useful and actionable information

Preparation phase

70%

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

Preparation phase

70%

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

Preparation phase

60%

On September 25 and 29, 2023, in response to the population movement, the ARCS CEA Coordinator conducted a briefing for ARCS HQ staff and volunteers on communication with communities, focusing on collecting feedback and communicating with people during the emergency. As a result, the trained personnel became more confident in carrying out their work and knew how to communicate in ways that avoided unnecessary tensions in this difficult situation.

Additionally, due to communication challenges encountered during the registration of displaced people—arising from differences in dialect and hearing or visual impairments—a training session was organized at ARCS HQ in collaboration with MHPSS on community participation. Four participants from MHPSS, three from Disaster Management, and nine volunteers from the Yerevan branch attended. As a result, the participants were better equipped to communicate and improve interactions.

Initial efforts towards building the CEA community of practice have begun. Branches submitted nominations for local CEA focal points, who will be trained in CEA in 2024. These focal points will play a key role in strengthening the central feedback mechanism, as they will be trained in feedback collection and tasked with ensuring that feedback is consistently recorded and submitted.

Central Feedback Mechanism

ARCS is in the process of optimising its central feedback mechanism with the support of IFRC and the Netherlands Red Cross (NLRC) 510 Team. This work includes developing a digital feedback tool with enhanced capacity for feedback case management and a structured approach to data analysis. Concurrently, more robust processes are being designed and codified to guide the tool's use in a harmonised manner and to ensure ARCS can strategically act on feedback obtained through various channels, including helplines, social media, and face-to-face interactions. Combined, these components can improve ARCS's understanding of community needs and preferences, enabling informed steps to ensure that programmes are responsive and accountable.

Collaboration among ARCS, the NLRC 510 Team, and IFRC on this work has included a series of online sessions as well as in-person workshops. In December 2023, the second in-person workshop was organised by ARCS, the NLRC 510 Team, and IFRC. During the workshop, NLRC provided a demo of the "Digital Engagement Hub" (DEH), the digital feedback tool under development. The ARCS team, including helpline operators, practised using the system

and provided feedback to guide the details of its final design. Additionally, all participating parties collaborated on defining fields, workflows, roles and responsibilities, and initiated training on the administration of the system and designing dashboards.

To prepare for the launch of the DEH, ARCS developed a work plan outlining major milestones and required policy documents, including the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the use of the new system. Within the SOPs is a section on the management of sensitive feedback. To ensure a robust approach to sensitive feedback, a workshop was held on 26 January 2024, bringing the ARCS-IFRC team working on the feedback mechanism together with ARCS and IFRC PGI focal points. They reviewed the existing measures for managing sensitive feedback and agreed on action points to finalise the SOPs. In April 2024, development of the major component of the DEH, EspoCRM, was completed, and steps were taken to customise the tool to the ARCS context, including decisions regarding mandatory fields, notifications, and permissions within the system. Additional work is still required to translate the system and pilot it at ARCS HQ, starting with the helpline team.

While roll-out of the optimized feedback mechanism will initiate at HQ-level, features are built into the system to ensure that it can also be used at branch level in a variety of contexts, including at the branch, at events or service provision, and to allow for centralized management of feedback and coordinated follow-up. This includes the preparation of a KoBo form linked directly to the DEH that will allow anyone with access to the form to submit feedback. In this way, interaction with the mechanism is not limited to users with access to the DEH EspoCRM, but rather encourages interaction on a much larger scale.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Efforts related to the feedback mechanism are focused on not just data collection, but also on closing the feedback loop. This includes the development of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to empower ARCS staff and volunteers, especially the helpline team, to respond to more feedback directly and to guide the National Society in building information materials. Collaboration among ARCS, NLRC 510 Team and IFRC is addressing this topic as well, aiming to use NLRC 510 “Helpful Information App” (HIA) to this end. HIA is a web-app providing a user-friendly presentation of FAQs. In April, HIA was prepared for deployment and content is in the process of being compiled from all ARCS Departments. The helpline team has been instrumental in its preparation, having shared some of most frequently asked questions they recall from their shifts.

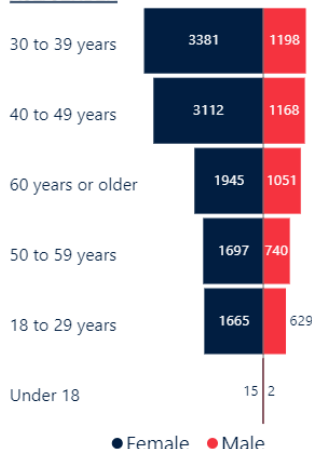
ARCS Helpline

The ARCS helpline for general inquiries operates through multiple lines, including the short number ‘8184’. The helpline is to gather inquiries/feedback related to ARCS activities, with a separate number allocated for cash assistance. The helpline has been operating throughout the reporting period, providing support to displaced people and residents alike.

In addition to general feedback calls, the ARCS helpline was instrumental in conducting the ‘registration’ of people displaced. By February 2024, 16,605 interviews by phone or in person had been conducted, amounting to the registration of 76,647 people. The registration sought to understand needs as well as vulnerabilities, such that the response could appropriately target those most in need.

Region	Community	Gender	Vulnerability	Channel	Total # of Interviews	Total # of Family Members
All	All	All	All	All	16605	76647

AGE/GENDER



Region	# of People
Yerevan	7699
Ararat	2821
Kotayk	2816
Armavir	1111
Gegharkunik	537
Aragatsotn	479
Lori	407
Tavush	249
Shirak	226
Syunik	175
Vayots Dzor	85

Total number of people interviewed and registered disaggregated by sex, age and location.

Community Engagement

The CEA approach is integrated throughout the response, including in the following examples:

In February and March 2024, the Yerevan branch organised five meetings with district authorities and community members to better understand community needs in terms of in-kind support. These meetings informed the March distributions.

ARCS CEA Coordinator participated in aid distribution, taking note of community feedback which was presented in a report to the Disaster Management Department. The report highlighted feedback related to distribution locations, types of assistance as well as impact.

To understand whether assistance is meeting needs, PDMs are conducted, including those regarding the cash assistance and livelihoods support. The cash assistance PDM found that nearly half of respondents (45%) had contacted the hotline number provided to them regarding the cash assistance program, and that the majority (78%) were satisfied with the support provided by the hotline. Following cash transfers, the people receiving this assistance are informed via SMS that the transfer has been made, as well as that they can seek support or provide feedback via the CVA helpline.

Additionally, as the livelihoods programme is starting up, focus group discussions (FGDs) were held in Yerevan, Kotayk and Armavir regions to learn about challenges and priorities so that the programme can be responsive to community needs. Analysis of the feedback gained during the FGDs has been recently completed and will be used to design the livelihood programme. Information provision is also a key element of the livelihoods support, as it involves information on opportunities, procedures, and relevant referrals to link people with available socio-economic support.

As part of the launch of new Smiley Clubs, an introduction to CEA was included in the training for Smiley Club leaders and school directors. Smiley Club activities are guided by feedback from the community, especially that of the participating children. In addition to regular needs assessments, the Smiley Clubs have developed a dedicated mechanism offering various channels for children, parents, and volunteers to share their feedback. Feedback gathered via suggestion boxes, focus group discussions, as well as both formal and informal discussions, is used to tailor activities to participants' needs and preferences.

An evaluation form was developed for people using ARCS MHPSS services, aiming to understand satisfaction and recommendations for the counselling sessions. During visits in Armavir and Kotayk provinces, 29 individuals received information on how they can share feedback with ARCS.

Coordination within the RCRC Movement

To improve coordination on accountability to affected population (AAP)/CEA activities and to improve efficiency across the Movement-wide response, an AAP/CEA technical working group was proposed in discussions among ARCS, IFRC and ICRC. A ToR was drafted in November 2023, though it has not yet been adopted. Collaboration to this end was revived in April 2024 and the ToR is again shared for agreement.

Next immediate steps:

- The final steps are being taken to prepare for the launch of the central feedback mechanism and FAQs, including the initiation of training sessions to ensure the ARCS team will utilise the mechanism in a harmonised manner.
- Upon launch, ARCS will also begin regular analysis and reporting on trends in the feedback data captured. Based on this information, recommendations will be developed jointly with the relevant departments to further strengthen their CEA approach.
- The initiative to build a network of CEA focal points, both at HQ and branch level, will be revisited and appropriate trainings and modalities for collaboration are planned.
- Discussions about consolidating all helplines into one call centre begin in May 2024, and steps to initiate this process will continue.



Risk Reduction, climate adaptation and Recovery

People reached: 1,500

Objective:	<i>Affected people are not put at increased risk, and their vulnerability to future disasters and crises is reduced, including to climate change impacts</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i># of branches that have the capacity to lead the operation at local level</i>	longer-term indicator	12
	<i># of volunteers involved in the response operation that have increased their skills in response and management of operations</i>	1,500	2,000
	<i>Operational strategy is climate smart</i>	longer-term indicator	Yes

Disaster management

ARCS is evaluating the local market for the products expected to be procured locally in the [MobTable](#). There could potentially be a transition from global to domestic procurement for certain items, depending, for instance, on availability, price, quality, and environmental impact. The procurement of essential items for efficient warehouse management is prioritized to enhance warehouse capacity. Following the results of the logistics and procurement assessment, it has been suggested to enhance the system, upgrade warehouse conditions to maintain optimal storage conditions, and implement a digitalized tracking system. Additionally, it is proposed to arrange an experience-sharing workshop.

Next immediate steps:

Training

- Organize an online Disaster Preparedness Awareness Sessions (DPAS) for 100 ARCS staff and volunteers from five ARCS regional branches.

Procurement

- Organize an experience sharing workshop (with ARCS logs, finance, and programmes; IFRC and PNS staff) to compare tools used by IFRC and ARCS and to discuss the best options.
- Simulation exercise of the procurement process for various goods/amounts/deliveries.

Warehouse management

- Organize workshop/training for warehouse managers introducing them to the basics of warehousing using IFRC tools. Simulation exercises for the whole process using, amongst other things, the procurement tracking that show case all movement and enable the information to be centralised with the Head of Logistics
- Market assessment on simple, efficient measures to insulate warehouses.
- Evaluate needs for additional shelves, offices, warehouses.

Fleet/Transport

- Develop a road safety mentality and encourage the ARCS to write up a manual if doesn't exist.
- Purchase a 4x4 truck.

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>	ongoing	Yes

ARCS has identified the following priority actions, which the National Society is following up on with the IFRC and other Movement partners:

Staffing, recruitment, and onboarding of personnel

The recruitment process has been initiated following extensive management meetings and discussions regarding the project staff organization and responsibility framework. Each department has delineated its responsibilities and identified the pertinent staff members to participate in the response activities. For instance, in the Organizational Development department, the Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (PMER) Officer oversees the reporting process, collaborating with the newly hired Reporting Officer and departmental focal points. Additionally, close collaboration with the regional branch coordinator and interregional coordinator is established

to acquire and verify data collected from various regions. Recruitment decisions are strategic, guided by informed considerations tailored to each position's requirements.

Increase in the operational capacities (both sectoral and at branch level)

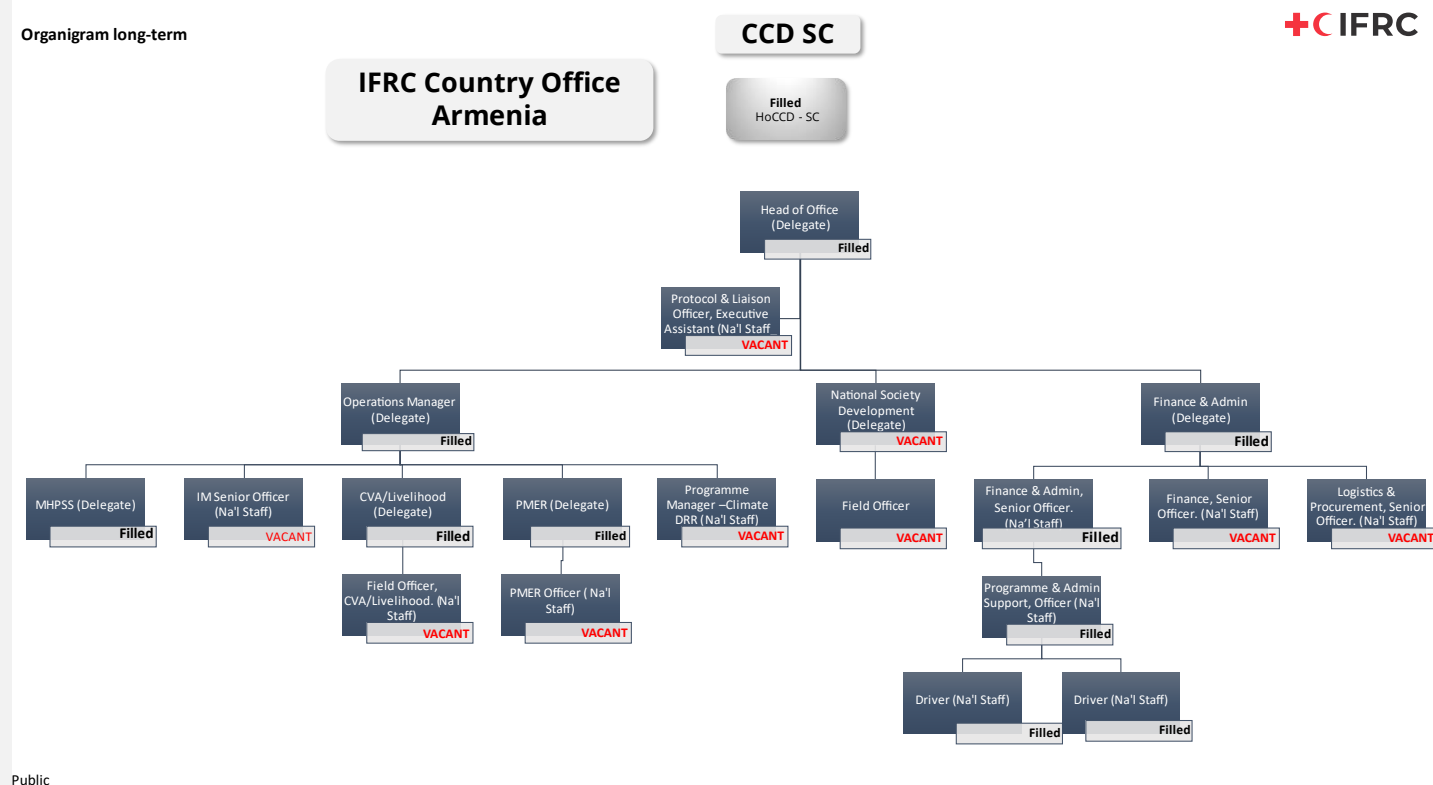
Operational capacities are expanding in tandem with the ongoing transformations within the ARCS, particularly associated with the integration of Community Engagement and Accountability, implementation of Feedback mechanisms, enhancement of the PMER system, digitalization initiatives, branch development efforts, and various other initiatives.

Volunteer management (new Armenian law on volunteering; Duty of Care)

In December 2023, the package of agreements to be signed by volunteers was completed through collaboration with an external lawyer. All regional branches were duly informed and invited to familiarize themselves with the updated requirements.

The finalization of the National Society Development (NSD) plan is underway, with an emphasis on testing the new NSD plan template, which now includes a dedicated section for Human Resources (HR). Each department has been tasked with assessing and addressing their HR needs and gaps within the framework of this template.

To ensure the timely implementation of activities, IFRC has increased its human resources capacity supporting the response. For further details, please see the section on National Society Strengthening within Enabling Approaches.



Next immediate steps:

- Engage RCRC partner in country to align foreseen HR contributions to ensure feasibility of the ongoing operation.
- Fully integrate the Emergency Appeal operation into the ongoing wider NSD support, ensuring compliance with existing plans, goals, and frameworks.

















Coordination and Partnerships

Objective:

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.

Within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, ARCS plays an active role in coordination and partnerships, working closely with IFRC, ICRC, and Partner National Societies (PNSs), namely the Austrian Red Cross, Italian Red Cross, Swiss Red Cross, and Monaco Red Cross represented by the Swiss Red Cross, including JOTF. ARCS is part of the New Way of Working (NWoW) pilot, which involves joint analysis, multi-year country plans, a common accountability framework, and a harmonized resource mobilization plan. This initiative is also used in the Emergency Appeal to compile Federation-wide reports. These partnerships are pivotal in facilitating the delivery of effective humanitarian assistance.

ARCS also engages in inter-agency coordination with government bodies and UN agencies to comprehensively respond to humanitarian needs. Moreover, ARCS extends its collaboration beyond traditional humanitarian actors, involving the Armenian diaspora and private enterprises to support refugees from Karabakh. This multi-stakeholder approach demonstrates ARCS's commitment to addressing affected populations' diverse and complex needs through coordinated efforts across sectors and with various partners within and outside the RCRC Movement.

Working groups	Comms	MHPSS	Protection	NSD	PMER	Relief	CVA	Livelihoods
Partners								
ARCS 	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
AustrianRC 		X			X		X	
ICRC 	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
IFRC 	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Italian RC 			X	X		X		
Swiss RC 							X	



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 channelling global resources to sustain the localized response and recovery efforts.

IFRC has been supporting the ARCS response since the start of the operation, 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 mobilization within the IFRC Membership and with external donors;
- Scaling up communication with the global public (media engagements in Armenia and internationally, including social media);
- Scaling 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;
- Ensuring continued and effective support in planning, monitoring, and reporting, including structured data collection / analysis, and monitoring of achievements and impact;
- Strategic strengthening of the position of ARCS, specifically in areas with unique added value of ARCS;
- Coordination with Movement partners and external stakeholders;
- Capitalization of learnings and knowledge gained from the operation and wider programming in country.

IFRC conducted a mission briefing session in Tbilisi, Georgia in December 2023, by inviting representatives from various embassies as well as representatives from offices of international organizations covering Armenia. The attendees were briefed on the IFRC and ARCS current activities in the areas of Population Movement response by highlighting the existence of both short-term as well as mid to longer-term needs and the eventual shift from relief to recovery.

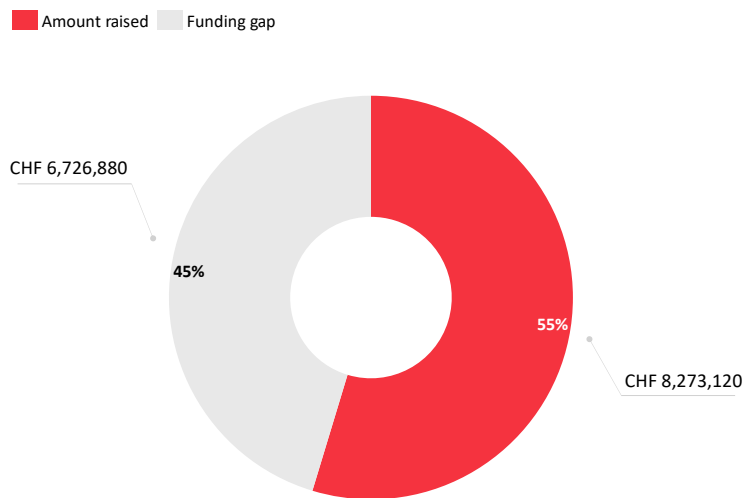
Since the launch of the Emergency Appeal, the IFRC has deployed various technical staff to support the operation, including an Operations Coordinator, PMER Officer, Finance and Admin Officer, MHPSS Officer and Communication Delegate. Further support is continuously provided by staff in a hybrid modality.

C. FUNDING

As of 30 April 2024, IFRC has mobilized CHF 8,273,120 representing 55 per cent of the IFRC Secretariat’s request of CHF 15,000,000. Additional funding is being negotiated.

AS OF APRIL 2024, THE IFRC HAS SECURED 55% OF ITS CHF 15 MILLION RESOURCES REQUIREMENT, TOTALING CHF 8.2 MILLION

EMERGENCY APPEAL ARMENIA | POPULATION MOVEMENT



PROGRESS ON FUNDING

As of April 2024, 55% of the CHF 15,000,000 IFRC funding requirement has been secured, amounting to CHF 8,273,120, leaving a **funding gap of CHF 6,726,880**, which accounts for 45% of the total requirement.

Emergency Appeal funding requirement, IFRC

The current expenditure stands at CHF 2,912,179. Bilateral contributions to the Federation-wide Emergency Appeal amount to a total of CHF 2,016,544 which makes 40 per cent of CHF 5,000,000 foreseen. The total Federation-wide Appeal therefore stands at 51 per cent out of CHF 20,000,000 requested.

Federation-wide coverage	Amount Raised (CHF)	Funding Gap (CHF)	Coverage %	Funding Requirement (CHF)
Total Secretariat contributions*	8,273,120	6,726,880	55%	15,000,000
Total bilateral contributions to FW Appeal	2,016,544	2,983,456	40%	5,000,000
Total Federation-wide contribution (Secretariat + bilateral)	10,218,492	9,781,508	51%	20,000,000

*[Donor contributions](#) (registered hard pledges)

**Bilateral contributions comprise:

Donor	Contribution	Amount (original currency)	Amount (CHF)
Austrian Red Cross	Bilateral cash contribution	30,000 EUR	28,948 CHF
	ECHO HIP	1,470,000 EUR	1,418,440 CHF
Monaco Red Cross	Bilateral cash contribution	20,000 CHF	20,000 CHF
Swiss Red Cross	Bilateral cash contribution	450,000 CHF	450,000 CHF
Hungarian Government	Bilateral cash contribution	40,000,000 HUF	99,156 CHF
Total			CHF 2,016,544

Operational Strategy

INTERIM FINANCIAL REPORT

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2023/9-2024/4	Operation	MDRAM012
Budget Timeframe	2023-2024	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 21 May 2024

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

MDRAM012 - Armenia - Population Movement

Operating Timeframe: 28 Sep 2023 to 31 Dec 2024; appeal launch date: 30 Sep 2023

I. Emergency Appeal Funding Requirements

Total Funding Requirements	15,000,000
Donor Response* as per 21 May 2024	8,273,120
Appeal Coverage	55.15%

II. IFRC Operating Budget Implementation

Planned Operations / Enabling Approaches	Op Strategy	Op Budget	Expenditure	Variance
PO01 - Shelter and Basic Household Items	8,982,000	3,385,563	1,459,195	1,926,369
PO02 - Livelihoods	795,000	733,199	16,720	716,479
PO03 - Multi-purpose Cash	0	0	16,324	-16,324
PO04 - Health	495,000	475,667	150,583	325,084
PO05 - Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	466,000	213,850	0	213,850
PO06 - Protection, Gender and Inclusion	91,000	63,961	0	63,961
PO07 - Education	433,000	342,522	124,015	218,507
PO08 - Migration	246,000	0	9	-9
PO09 - Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	703,000	726,405	45,130	681,275
PO10 - Community Engagement and Accountability	50,000	49,523	0	49,523
PO11 - Environmental Sustainability	5,000	5,325	0	5,325
Planned Operations Total	12,266,000	5,996,015	1,811,976	4,184,038
EA01 - Coordination and Partnerships	0	0	0	0
EA02 - Secretariat Services	1,145,000	1,036,669	297,328	739,341
EA03 - National Society Strengthening	1,589,000	725,720	802,875	-77,155
Enabling Approaches Total	2,734,000	1,762,389	1,100,203	662,186
Grand Total	15,000,000	7,758,404	2,912,179	4,846,224

III. Operating Movement & Closing Balance per 2024/04

Opening Balance	0
Income (includes outstanding DREF Loan per IV.)	6,844,855
Expenditure	-2,912,179
Closing Balance	3,932,675
Deferred Income	1,459,677
Funds Available	5,392,352

IV. DREF Loan

* not included in Donor Response	Loan :	1,000,000	Reimbursed :	1,000,000	Outstanding :	0
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Operational Strategy

INTERIM FINANCIAL REPORT

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2023/9-2024/4	Operation	MDRAM012
Budget Timeframe	2023-2024	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 21 May 2024

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

MDRAM012 - Armenia - Population Movement

Operating Timeframe: 28 Sep 2023 to 31 Dec 2024; appeal launch date: 30 Sep 2023

V. Contributions by Donor and Other Income

Opening Balance						0
Income Type	Cash	InKind Goods	InKind Personnel	Other Income	TOTAL	Deferred Income
American Red Cross	373,806				373,806	
Bloomberg	4,737				4,737	
Danish Red Cross	106,716				106,716	
European Commission - DG ECHO	192,910				192,910	
Finnish Red Cross	113,861				113,861	
French Government	2,370,352				2,370,352	
Italian Government Bilateral Emergency Fund	1,900,332				1,900,332	
Italian Red Cross	103,346				103,346	
Japanese Red Cross Society	29,917				29,917	
Slovenian Red Cross	9,667				9,667	
Spanish Government	193,564				193,564	
Swedish Red Cross	83,243				83,243	
Taiwan Red Cross Organisation	8,812				8,812	
The Canadian Red Cross Society	38,452				38,452	
The Canadian Red Cross Society (from Canadian Gov	25,907				25,907	
The Netherlands Red Cross (from Netherlands Govern	279,069				279,069	
United States Government - USAID	1,010,166				1,010,166	1,459,677
Total Contributions and Other Income	6,844,855	0	0	0	6,844,855	1,459,677
Total Income and Deferred Income					6,844,855	1,459,677

Contact information

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

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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 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.