



@UNICEF Armenia/2023/Martirosyan - Viktoria is in the children's corner in Goris established by UNICEF Armenia to ensure a dedicated space for ethnic Armenian refugee children and to offer essential services, encompassing recreation, paediatrics, psychosocial support, and more—all under one roof.

Reporting Period: 2 October 2023

Highlights

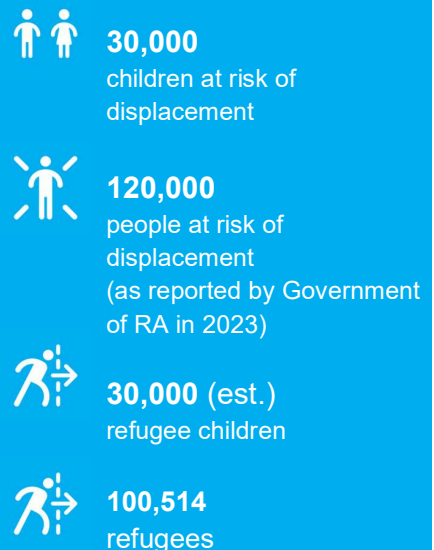
- As of 1 October, 100,514 refugees, including an estimated 30,000 children had arrived in Armenia. It is assumed that virtually all children from the affected area have now arrived in Armenia.
- Registration of arriving populations to Armenia continues; to date an estimated 86% of refugees have registered with the State Migration Service. It is expected registration will be completed soon, in view of the cash assistance program offered by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.
- At present, almost 48,000 refugees are accommodated in shelters provided by the Government, most of which in Ararat marz (12,445) and Kotayk marz (11,630), followed by Syunik, Armavir, Gegharkunik, and other marzes (regions).
- UNICEF mobilized emergency capacities within 24 hours of the first arrivals into Armenia. This includes prepositioned supplies (tents, blankets, hygiene kits, first aid kits, diapers, recreational, early childhood development, and education kits) to reach 5,000 children; and partnerships to immediately provide psychosocial first aid, mental health and psychosocial support, child protection case management, vouchers for clothing, mobile paediatric units and temporary learning spaces.
- UNICEF delivered family hygiene kits to 100 families initially registered at the coordination center in Parakar, close to Yerevan. UNICEF, in partnership with Armenian Red Cross, has established two Children's Corners in Goris, providing mental health and psychosocial support and recreational activities for refugee and host community children and installed 15 mobile bio-toilets in proximity of registration centres in Goris and Vayk communities.
- 50 social workers who are continuously supporting the rapid needs assessments in the Goris Humanitarian Center have received training on child protection in emergencies and case management.
- UNICEF requires US\$ 7 million to address the immediate needs of children and their families in Armenia for the first three months of the response. Given however that the humanitarian situation remains complex, UNICEF funding requirements are likely to increase over the medium term.

Armenia

Humanitarian Situation Report No. 1

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Situation in Numbers



Funding Overview and Partnerships

The scale and complexity of the humanitarian situation of refugee children and their families in Armenia remains high, requiring timely humanitarian assistance and protection for affected populations. At the onset of the crisis, UNICEF Armenia was able to leverage investments that had been made in preparedness through Global Humanitarian Thematic (GHT) funding, and was able to quickly mobilize emergency capacity within the first 24 hours. UNICEF Armenia also immediately received and is already using US\$ 975,000 GHT to expedite and scale up its response.

The Government of Armenia is taking urgent measures to respond to the immediate needs of the refugee population. International humanitarian support is required to support and sustain these efforts. UNICEF requires US\$ 7 million to deliver a multi-sectorial response for affected children and their families for the next three months. Given however that the humanitarian situation is quickly evolving, with increasing needs for assistance and protection of children and their families, UNICEF's funding requirements are likely to increase.

Timely support from donor partners is required to ensure critical humanitarian and protection assistance for affected children and their families. Funding for the crisis is being mobilised against UNICEF's [Europe and Central Asia Region Humanitarian Action for children \(HAC\) appeal](#), which caters for rapid onset crisis in the region.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

As of 8 pm Yerevan time, on 1 October 2023, 100,514 persons, including an estimated 30,000 refugee children from the areas affected by the recent military hostilities, arrived in Armenia and it is assumed that virtually all children have now arrived in Armenia. As reported by the Ministry of Health (MoH), a total of 363 patients from areas affected by military hostilities are being treated in hospitals across Armenia, of which 214 are victims of the fuel tank explosion, while 114 are victims of the military operations. It was reported earlier that 10 children are being treated in medical facilities in Armenia, two of whom are in critical condition. In addition, two more children were taken to the hospital due to a car accident while fleeing the areas of military hostilities.

Registration of the refugee population in Armenia is ongoing, conducted by the State Migration Service (SMS). To date, over 86% of refugees have been registered, with others expected to register soon, in light of the anticipated cash assistance programme, that will also include housing rental subsidies, announced by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). According to the available data, 51% of those registered are women, while over 20,000 are children. To date, 2,083 persons with a disability have been registered. At present there is no precise information how many children are in this group. The Government has already started providing temporary accommodation and shelter to the refugees in need, and to date nearly 48,000 people have been accommodated in Government provided shelters, most of which are in the following marzes (regions): Ararat marz (12,445) and Kotayk marz (11,630), followed by Syunik, Armavir, Gegharkunik, and other marzes (regions). The Government and its line ministries are also engaging in the registration of school-age children with an aim to develop and implement a 'back to school' strategy for the refugee children. So far, over 2,000 children are reported to be enrolled in schools. Given the pre-existing shortage of preschool infrastructure, it is expected that access to early childhood education will be a challenge that needs to be addressed as well as potential capacity constraints in primary and secondary education.

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) has announced the opening of a treasury account to accept the donations that will be primarily directed towards covering the socio-economic needs of the refugees. An initial needs assessment has been done via platforms for self-reporting as well as by the field-based social workers from the Unified Social Service. The hotline service established by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) continues to receive calls (over 20,000 to date) on various issues. Two cash assistance mechanisms have been announced by the OPM – a one-time universal cash assistance to all refugees and monthly cash support (per person) for housing and communal expenses for the next six months, targeting specifically the refugee families who do not own any property in Armenia.

Summary Analysis of UNICEF Programme Response

As part of its mandate, UNICEF had invested in preparedness to respond to a humanitarian crisis. UNICEF had pre-positioned supplies¹ to reach 5,000 children and established contingency arrangements with implementing partners that could be immediately activated to provide psychosocial first aid (PFA) and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), child protection case management, vouchers for clothing, mobile paediatric units and temporary learning spaces. UNICEF had also invested in establishing a field presence in Goris, Syunik region, the main registration and transit point for arriving populations. UNICEF was able to leverage these investments to quickly mobilize emergency capacity within 24 hours of the first arrivals. A cargo of additional supplies airfreighted from UNICEF Supply Division is in customs clearance process and is expected to be ready for distribution shortly.

Health: Critical medicines and medical supplies for children were delivered to the MoH for distribution to health facilities in areas with high concentration of refugee population. UNICEF is in touch with MoH and regional health authorities and is on standby to deploy mobile paediatric units to the area as soon as the need emerges. Procurement of first aid kits and life-saving equipment for health facilities is ongoing. UNICEF is also working with the MoH to monitor the situation of immunization status of the refugee children and their rapid inclusion into the national Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) programme.

¹ Such as tents, blankets, hygiene kits, first aid kits, diapers and recreational, ECD and ECE kits.

Nutrition: UNICEF has directly observed that many children among the refugees appear to show signs of malnourishment. There are also reports of cases of low birth weight among children in the area affected by the military hostilities. Taking this into account, UNICEF has organized the establishment of mobile paediatric units equipped to monitor and address these cases that can be activated upon request of MoH. Procurement is ongoing for 3,000 food boxes for young children and 1,500 therapeutic biscuits for moderately and severely malnourished children.

Child Protection: UNICEF established the first two Children's Corners in Goris, in partnership with Armenian Red Cross, which are operational, continuously receiving children from among refugees and local communities in the town. To date, at least 100 children visit the Corner daily benefiting from MHPSS and recreational activities, while their parents and caregivers are engaged in registration processes or other arrangements for the family to settle in. Children's Corners are places where children can play, mothers can breastfeed, and paediatric support is at hand for acute concerns.

Goris Deputy Mayor told the UNICEF team on the ground that the Corner has proven to be helpful in reducing epidemiological risk among children and in providing a safe, child-friendly environment that is helping to reduce the psychological stress and traumatization of children and their caregivers. UNICEF is working with partners to establish similar facilities in other regions of Armenia, focusing on communities with high concentration of refugees. While equipment and materials for these spaces are being custom-cleared and will be soon ready for distribution, UNICEF is engaging the local authorities to establish partnerships and agreements on the establishment of child-friendly spaces.

UNICEF continues to organize and provide training and capacity development of frontline social workers, in charge of local needs assessment at registration places, aiming to strengthen and expand the overstretched capacity of the system. To date, 50 social workers who are continuously supporting the rapid needs assessments in the Goris Humanitarian Center received training on child protection in emergencies and case management. Two partnerships have already been activated for provision of MHPSS and PFA services, and child protection case management, two more are being established for MHPSS and parenting support and one for multi-disciplinary support to children with disabilities. Children with disabilities among the refugees are being identified. UNICEF is in regular communication with the MoLSA and partner Organizations of People with Disabilities (OPD) to support needs assessment and provision of specialized services and assistive technology. UNICEF conducted a rapid needs assessment in the regions of Syunik, Gegharkunik and Vayots Dzor, as well as Yerevan to understand the protection and humanitarian needs of the newly arriving families.

Education: UNICEF is engaging with the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports (MESCS) to support enrolment of the refugee children to education and learning and to support expansion of the capacity of school and preschools in the country to host new students. At present the MESCS is engaged in the process of registration of school-aged children and initiation of continued education for refugee children. UNICEF is in touch with local authorities and other counterparts about establishing the first temporary early learning space in Goris. UNICEF is also ready to establish temporary learning spaces and early childhood education (ECE) spaces elsewhere in the country, as per observed needs. UNICEF has prepositioned School-in-a-box kits sufficient to cater for the needs of at least 1,400 children and Early Childhood Development (ECD) kits sufficient to cover the needs of 1,800 young children. Both types of kits are ready for distribution and UNICEF is working with its partners to identify locations where those kits will be most needed.

Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH): UNICEF and the Armenian Red Cross Society have installed 15 mobile bio-toilets in proximity of registration centres in Goris and Vayk communities, to address the immediate needs for sanitation in those areas and in response to a public health hazards alarm raised by the MoH. UNICEF delivered family hygiene kits to the 100 families who had initially registered at the recently established Unified Social Services (USS) coordination center in Parakar, in proximity to Yerevan.

Cash Assistance and Social Protection: UNICEF has been providing technical assistance and expertise to MoLSA to develop an in-depth emergency needs assessment tool, which will be used for a more detailed assessment of needs of refugee children and their families. UNICEF is procuring 160 tablets for social workers from Unified Social Services as well as local communities that will support the process of in-depth needs assessment, case registration and management. MoLSA is currently developing a framework and mechanism for distribution of one-time cash assistance to all refugees announced by the Prime Minister, including registration that will be mandatory for all people that will be eligible to receive kind of assistance. In the coming weeks, it is expected that MoLSA will launch a new platform for registration of refugee children and UNICEF is actively working with MoLSA to support this effort. UNICEF activated a partnership to provide voucher support for clothing for children and is in discussions with MoLSA on implementation of this activity – initially targeting at least 6,000 children (0-3 years of age). In the meantime, UNICEF has been providing ad hoc in-kind support to complement the efforts of local authorities, including blankets and mattresses for children and families in the locally established temporary accommodation and humanitarian crisis centres.

Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

The Government of the Republic of Armenia is taking the lead in providing the humanitarian response to the affected population, and will remain in charge of the overall coordination of the response. The Government is discussing with the United Nations the possibility for the support to the national response, including technical coordination with the relevant Government institutions. This dialogue is also focusing on the possibility and timing of a joint rapid needs assessment that will include the UN and MoLSA as stakeholders. UN agencies are currently working on the development of an Inter-Agency Refugee Response Plan (IARRP), including an update of the existing contingency plan prepared in early 2023.

UNICEF is also updating its own Humanitarian Response Strategy, focusing on an immediate three month response plan, that will constitute UNICEF's input to the IARRP.

As envisioned in the existing version of the Inter-Agency Contingency Plan, the response coordination structure in Armenia is drawing upon the respective mandates, capacity and comparative advantages of United Nations agencies and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in providing support to the Government led response. At present, UNICEF is leading the work of two sub-working groups (Child protection and Education), which are currently part of the Protection working group. UNICEF is also co-leading (with UNHCR) the Cash Working Group and is actively participating in the work of the Health and Nutrition working group and the working group on Shelter and Non Food Items (NFIs), which at present also includes coordination of WASH activities. UNICEF is working closely with the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) on further development of humanitarian response coordination architecture in Armenia, advocating for strengthened sectorial coordination as well as a robust overall inter-sectorial coordination of the response.

External Media

UNICEF is maintaining regular updates on the response on all social media channels, with some recent posts below:

UNICEF Website: [In the midst of the crisis, UNICEF stands with Armenia's children](#)

UNICEF Facebook:

- [Numbers of refugee children](#)
- [Post on hygiene kits delivery](#)
- [Post on child corner](#)
- [Post on medical supplies delivery](#)

UNICEF X:

- [More than 100,000 people have been impacted by recent military hostilities & have sought refuge in #Armenia - 30,000 of them are #children. UNICEF is on the ground, working with armgov to provide support. Our focus is the safety and well-being of these children & families.](#)
- [Lina & Luisa crossed the Lachin corridor with their brother & mum seeking safety in Armenia UNICEF works to address the urgent needs of refugee children & families. This week, UNICEF delivered 100 family hygiene kits & will provide more](#)
- [After months of worsening conditions & an escalation of hostilities, children need a safe space to be children again Victoria & Vahe visited the children's corner set up by UNICEF in Goris, where ethnic Armenian refugee children can play & get psychosocial & paediatric support](#)

UNICEF Instagram

- [Post on hygiene delivery](#)
- [Post on child corner](#)
- [Post on medical supplies delivery](#)

Next SitRep: Monday, 9 October 2023

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Annex A: Initial three-month funding requirement (October to December 2023)²:

Sector	Requirements in US\$
Health	490,000
Nutrition	260,000
Water Sanitation and Hygiene	370,000
Child Protection	1,090,000
Education	670,000
Social Protection (Humanitarian Cash Transfers, Vouchers)	3,930,000
Adolescent Development and participation (ADAP)	160,000
Cross Cutting Areas (Gender, Disability and AAP)	130,000
Total	7,100,000

² This is UNICEF's immediate requirement to deliver a multi-sectorial response for affected children and their families for the first three months. Given however that the humanitarian situation is quickly evolving, with increasing needs for assistance and protection of children and their families, UNICEF's funding requirements are likely to increase.