

## Armenia

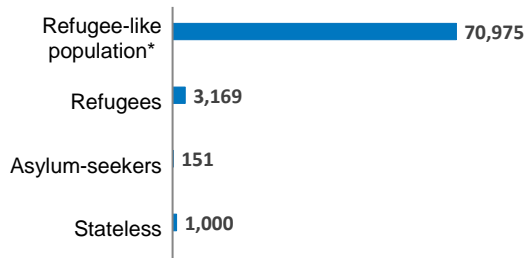
31 March 2021


UNHCR, jointly with the UN Resident Coordinator's Office, and in close cooperation with the Government of Armenia, **continues to co-ordinate the response** to address the needs of the refugee-like population from Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) and host communities.

An **Inter-Agency Response Plan** to comprehensively address those needs was launched on 22 January. The **Government of Japan** extended an Emergency Grant of USD 3.6 M to UN Armenia, of which, **USD 2 M was allocated to UNHCR**.

UNHCR continues strengthening the **asylum procedure and reception conditions** in Armenia for refugees and asylum-seekers. In light of **COVID-19**, the Migration Service, in cooperation with UNHCR, issued good practices for adjusting the asylum procedures to the COVID-19 situation.

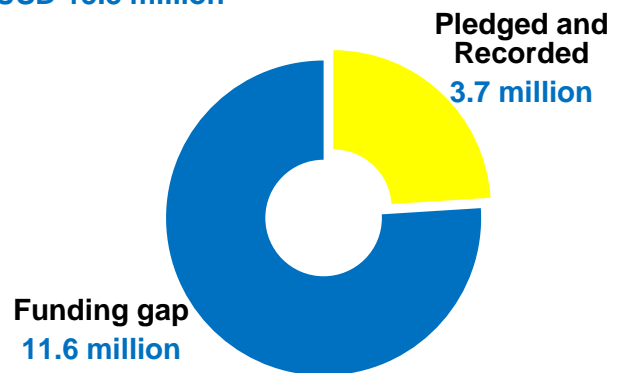
### Persons of Concern



 **\*Of which, 66,051 persons in a refugee-like situation as a result of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict**  
(Source: Migration Service, March 2021)

### Financial information (as of 30 March 2021)

USD 15.3 million\*



(\*including USD 12.1 million in the Inter-Agency Response Plan)



Mother and daughter displaced from Syria to Armenia engaged in traditional Armenian embroidery work in the framework of UNHCR-MADE51-HDIF partnership aimed at improved livelihood for refugees. Yerevan, Armenia. ©UNHCR/Inna Mkhitarian

## Operational context

According to the Government of Armenia, there were around 87,140 persons of concern to UNHCR in Armenia (as of 28 February 2021): 160 asylum-seekers, 2,700 refugees, 14,744 persons in refugee-like situation from Syria, 1,000 stateless persons and 66,051 persons who found themselves in a refugee-like situation as a result of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. It is estimated that 30,000 to 50,000 individuals may have returned to NK after the ceasefire.

Documentation, housing, decent employment and livelihood opportunities remain the most pressing needs of asylum-seekers and refugees hosted in the country prior to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The COVID-19 pandemic, combined with the escalation of the conflict, further aggravated the challenges associated with the difficult socio-economic situation in Armenia.

During the reporting period, UNHCR worked with its partners toward enhancing the protection environment for those most at risk, while providing assistance to meet their basic needs. UNHCR also advocated for strengthening the integration of persons of concern in national response plans (including the COVID-19 Socio-Economic and Recovery Response Plan), and for their mainstreaming in other legislative and administrative reforms. UNHCR continues to advocate for the inclusion of eligible asylum-seekers and refugees in COVID-19 vaccination program launched by the Government.

### Immediate needs of the refugee-like population from Nagorno-Karabakh

On 27 September 2020, heavy clashes broke out along the line of contact and quickly expanded to other areas in and around **Nagorno-Karabakh**, until a nine-point ceasefire statement was signed on 9 November. The six weeks of conflict resulted in significant civilian casualties and destruction of many houses and public infrastructure in the conflict zone, including schools, roads and communication networks, leading to a large displacement of around 90,000 people from Nagorno-Karabakh and the adjacent districts to Armenia.

According to the Migration Service, **66,051 persons** were still in a refugee-like situation in Armenia as of 30 March 2021, spread across the country at the peak of the emergency. The vast **majority are women and children**, hosted by relatives or in collective accommodation shelters, some of which are in substandard conditions.

Under the leadership of **UNHCR and the UN Resident Coordinator's Office in Armenia**, an [Inter-Agency Response Plan 2020-2021](#) has been developed to support the humanitarian response. The Plan is country-specific and covers a nine-month period from October 2020 to June 2021.

It presents planned activities of 35 UN, NGO and Red Cross Movement partners with overall required funds of \$62 million. The Plan is linked to broader UN plans, such as the COVID-19 UN Socio-Economic Response Plan and the UN Sustainable Development Framework (under development).

UNHCR also expanded the **Protection Monitoring** launched in November 2020, which gives UNHCR firsthand information about the trends, threats, vulnerabilities as well as possibilities to intervene and provide necessary support. It plays an important role in identifying vulnerable persons and determining the most critical needs among people in a refugee-like situation. During the period of January-March 2021, 2,872 individuals were reached through protection monitoring household interviews during field visits or by phone, and 1,484 individuals were identified for referrals.

**Shelter, cash, household items, employment, clothing items, food, access to healthcare and hygiene kits** remain, in order of priority, the main needs among persons in a refugee-like situation displaced from conflict-affected territories. The top three needs of refugee-like persons have not changed since February 2021. However, currently more families prioritize employment and clothing items over food, which is an indicator for refugee-like persons getting prepared for a longer stay in Armenia.

### UNHCR priorities

#### Protection

- Continue conducting **protection monitoring** to identify protection risks and monitor living conditions of persons of concern to UNHCR;
- Raise awareness and provide **legal support and assistance** in specific situations where individual legal support related to documentation and access to rights and services is necessary;
- Support **prevention of and protection from gender-based violence**;
- Strengthen communication with communities to raise awareness among persons of concern and host communities about their **access to rights and services** using a community-based protection framework.

#### Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI)

- Provide **shelter assistance** (including through repairs in collective accommodation centres), especially in light of the winter weather, while advocating for long-term solutions;
- **Provide and distribute NFI kits** to the most vulnerable individuals and families in a refugee-like situation, including personal **hygiene kits**, **domestic items** (household hygiene items), kitchen supplies, **winterization kits** (bed frames, mattresses, sheets, pillows, blankets and electric heaters) and cash assistance.

## Achievements to date:



Around **4,950 persons** from the refugee-like population from NK received **hygiene kits**, around **22,800 individuals received in-kind assistance for basic needs**, and **about 43,000 received winter clothes** with support from UNHCR partner the Armenian Red Cross Society. In addition, **1,127 households** were provided with non-cash assistance by UNHCR partner Mission Armenia.



During the period of January-March 2021, UNHCR conducted **654 protection monitoring interviews**, of which **256** were held during field visits and NFI distributions, and **389** by phone.



Around **4,000 individuals** benefited from social services provided by Mission Armenia, while about **1,000** individuals received cash assistance.



**723** persons of concern received health care services.



Around **3,500** individuals were reached through awareness raising activities during protection monitoring visits and interviews by UNHCR Armenia.



**78 persons** were provided with legal counselling and assistance by Mission Armenia.

## Working in Partnership

UNHCR Armenia, operating within the UN Country Team, cooperates with state and non-state stakeholders, including the Migration Service, Human Rights Defender's Office, Public Defender's Office, line ministries, the judiciary, Parliament, the Police, regional administrations and municipalities, as well as diaspora-based, financial and faith-based organizations, civil society, media and academia. UNHCR is a member of UN inter-agency coordination platforms and mechanisms. In a joint effort with the UN Country Team, it continues to promote the implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 in Armenia.

The UN Country Team in Armenia has established a flexible coordination structure under the co-leadership of UNHCR and the UN Resident Coordinator's Office to coordinate the response to meet the needs of persons displaced as a result of the large-scale fighting, which took place in and around Nagorno-Karabakh. At the technical level, the coordination structure is centered around four humanitarian Working Groups (WGs), as well as a fifth WG focused on Early Recovery to strengthen the resilience capacity of both the refugee-like population and host communities. Under this structure, UNHCR leads the Protection WG and the Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI) WG and co-leads the Sub-WG on Cash Assistance.

## Financial Information

In 2021, UNHCR is seeking **USD 15.3 million** to respond to the most urgent needs of persons of concern in 2021, including under its regular programme. The [Inter-Agency Response Plan](#) presents all partners' planned activities from October 2020 through June 2021, with financial requirements reaching USD 62.1 million.

**UNHCR is grateful to donors who contributed to support its programmes in Armenia in 2021, including:**

Armenia | CERF | Japan

**UNHCR also thanks donors who provided unearmarked contributions to its 2021 global programme, including:**

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For more information, visit the [Data Portal](#)



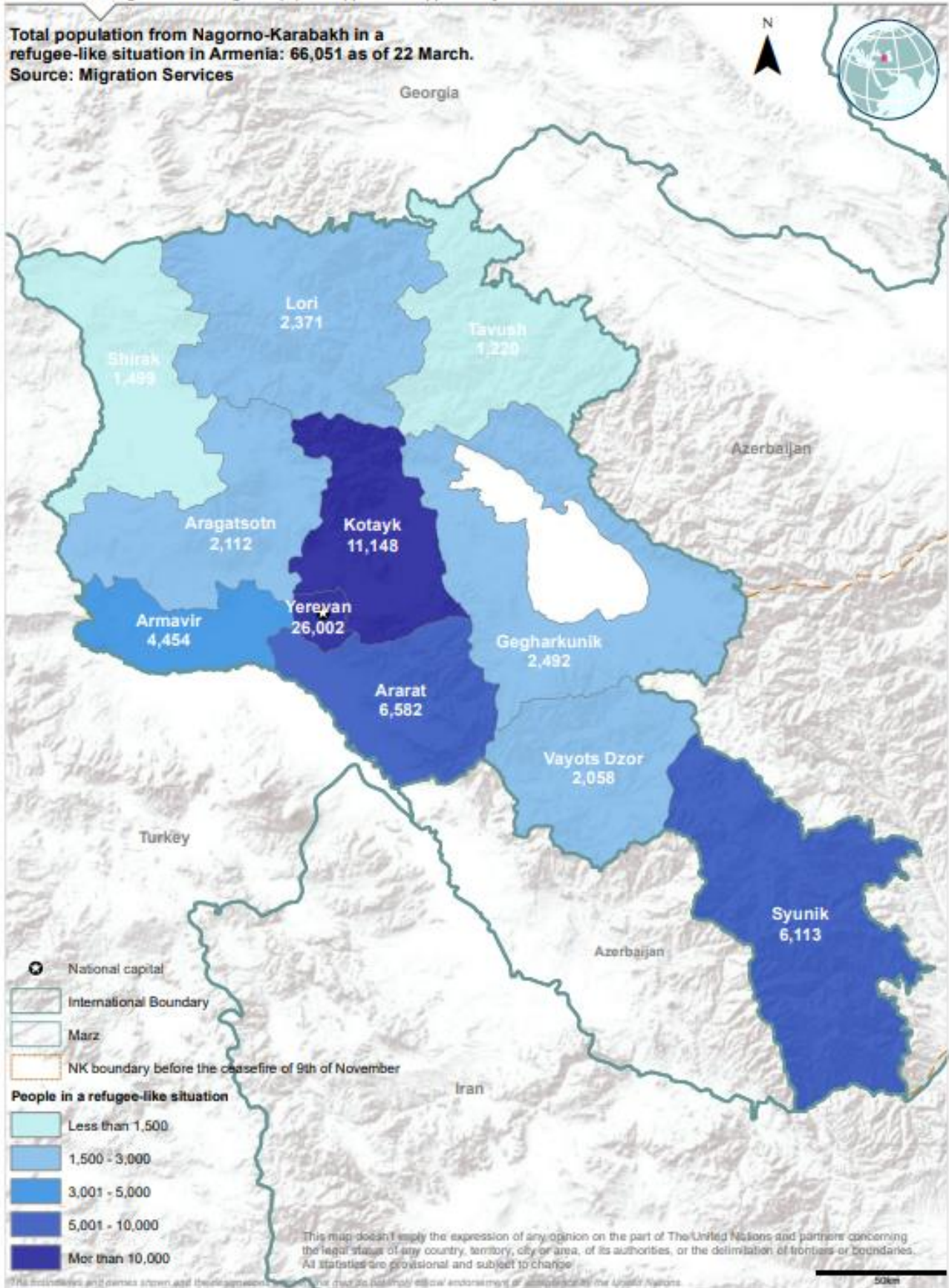


Coordination  
Steering Group  
Armenia

## Armenia - People in a refugee-like situation from NK

Information Management Working Group (IMWG) product supported by UNRCO and UNHCR

Total population from Nagorno-Karabakh in a  
refugee-like situation in Armenia: 66,051 as of 22 March.  
Source: Migration Services



Printing date: 23 Mar 2021 Sources: UNHCR, UNCS, REACH, MoLSA, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, IOM, MoTAI (MS) Author: UNHCR - Armenia  
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