



Urgent needs in Armenia and Azerbaijan related to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict

Figures at a glance



22,500

VULNERABLE PEOPLE IN A REFUGEE-LIKE SITUATION IN ARMENIA TARGETED FOR PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE

30,000

TEMPORARY DISPLACED PEOPLE OR IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED AREAS OF AZERBAIJAN TARGETED FOR PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE

90%

OF ALL DISPLACED PEOPLE ARE WOMEN AND CHILDREN

\$25.4 million
TOTAL REQUIREMENTS

This appeal presents UNHCR's adjusted financial requirements for its response to the needs of the people who fled from Nagorno-Karabakh and the adjacent districts to Armenia and are currently in a refugee-like situation, as well as for the provision of assistance to people temporarily displaced in conflict-affected areas of Azerbaijan. UNHCR requires **\$17.3 million** to support the lives and protection of **52,500** people affected by the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict for the **first six months of 2021**, bringing UNHCR's overall financial needs for Armenia and Azerbaijan to **\$25.4 million**.

Overview

On 27 September 2020, fighting broke out along the line of contact between Armenia and Azerbaijan and quickly expanded in Nagorno-Karabakh and adjacent districts until a ceasefire was signed on 9 November 2020. The conflict forced a large number of people to flee from Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia and forced tens of thousands of people living near the conflict area into temporary displacement within Azerbaijan.

Above: A displaced Azerbaijani man with his young child in a house damaged during the conflict. He and his wife are expecting a second child in the summer.
©UNHCR/Elsevar Aghayev

According to Armenia's Migration Service, as of 8 December 2020, some 90,000 people were in a refugee-like situation across the country, almost 90% of whom are women and children. Critical needs include basic assistance in the areas of shelter, food assistance, and winter items such as heater, warm clothing, and shoes. Protection interventions, including legal assistance, mental health and psychosocial support, also continue to be urgently required. Reports indicate that several thousand people have returned to Nagorno-Karabakh since mid-November 2020, but the nature and sustainability of these returns are yet to be determined.

In Azerbaijan, 112,000 people were found to be affected by the conflict, of whom 80,000 were temporarily displaced. Although most have returned home, the rapid needs assessment found that there are up to 60,000 people still in need of humanitarian assistance, given that their homes are still damaged. Following the ceasefire statement, some 30,000 have been unable to return as their homes were heavily damaged or destroyed. Rapid needs assessments confirmed the urgency of providing displaced people living in temporary shelters or villages/settlements with household and core relief items. Emergency shelter, education, psychosocial support and mine action to address the threat of unexploded remnants of the conflict are among the most urgent protection needs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact in both countries, especially during the peak of the conflict when the number of cases were reported to have risen significantly. It is compounding the socioeconomic consequences of the conflict on the displaced and host communities and brings an additional layer of complexity to the delivery of humanitarian response.

Both in Armenia and Azerbaijan the central and local authorities, supported by national civil society organization, displayed significant efforts to assist the affected populations, also with the strong engagement of the host communities. From the onset of the crisis, UNHCR worked closely with its local partners to support the national response. Three months after the end of the conflict, UNHCR's collaboration with authorities has further intensified.

It is against this backdrop that UNHCR adjusted its financial requirements for its operations in Armenia and Azerbaijan to be able to continue responding to the needs of the forcibly displaced. UNHCR is seeking **\$25.4 million for Armenia and Azerbaijan** in 2021, including **\$17.3 million needed within the next six months** to urgently assist and protect 52,500 people affected by the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict. This appeal does not cover the needs of people in Nagorno-Karabakh itself, an area where UNHCR has not had access to date.



Armenia, Dilijan, Tavush Province. Refugee-like children play in a new child-friendly space created in a former boarding school, that is now being used as an emergency shelter. ©UNHCR/Anahit Hayrapetyan

UNHCR's response to date

From the start of the conflict in late September to the end of 2020, UNHCR's response included the following:

Armenia

- ❖ As part of the winterization response, **14,244** people received hygiene kits, over **1,600** folding beds were distributed, over **58,000** items of clothing were provided, **8,000** people received bedding supplies, and **2,200** families received electric heaters¹.
- ❖ **239** families (nearly **950** people) were interviewed during protection monitoring where protection risks, needs and living conditions were identified in a systematic and harmonized manner².
- ❖ Daily monitoring was conducted of people returning to Nagorno-Karabakh from the Yerevan bus station.

- ❖ **200** people were provided with legal assistance related to documentation and access to services.
- ❖ **5,000** people received psychosocial support.
- ❖ **1,500** children were supported through psychosocial projects.
- ❖ **350** children and adolescents were reached through peaceful coexistence projects.

Azerbaijan

- ❖ As part of the winterization response, **30,000** blankets, **12,000** pillows, **6,000** mattresses, **4,000** kitchen sets, **580** dignity kits and **50** rolls of reinforced plastic tarpaulins were distributed through partners such as the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society and local authorities.

¹ As of 31 December 2020.

² As of 5 December 2020.



UNHCR visits a displaced family in Armenia to deliver hygiene supplies and COVID-19 preventive items. ©UNHCR/Anahit Hayrapetyan

UNHCR's continued response during the first six months of 2021

In this context, UNHCR's key strategic objectives during the first six months of 2021 are as follows:

1. Assist the Governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan in providing gender-sensitive protection support to refugee-like and displaced populations, particularly the most vulnerable, enabling them to enjoy their rights equally and efficiently, including through the provision of legal assistance and counselling.
2. Strengthen access of the forcibly displaced population to dignified living conditions, and provide support to meet their basic needs, including strengthened access to basic services.
3. Strengthen the resilience and access to livelihoods of people of concern and enhance the integration of the forcibly displaced population hosted in the two countries.

Armenia

- Provide shelter assistance (cash) during the winter months while advocating for long-term solutions, including social housing initiatives. Undertake repairs at collective accommodation centres and other public buildings, including the rehabilitation and improvement of water and sanitation systems.
- Provide core-relief items to the most vulnerable individuals and families from the refugee-like population. This includes personal hygiene kits, domestic items (household hygiene items), kitchen supplies and winterization kits (bed frames, mattresses, sheets, pillows, blankets and electric heaters).
- Conduct protection monitoring to identify protection risks and needs of people of concern in a systematic and harmonized manner. Enhance access to protection services, including free legal assistance.
- Support the prevention of and protection from gender-based violence targeting people from the refugee-like population and the host community.
- Raise awareness among people of concern and host communities about their rights and access to services, using a community-based protection framework.

- Enhance community-based protection mechanisms, including but not limited to activities related to mental health and psychosocial support, referral and feedback mechanisms.
- Strengthen self-reliance and access to livelihoods for the refugee-like population, and search for durable solutions.

Azerbaijan

- Carry out protection interventions, including free legal assistance, aimed at ensuring that the rights of affected individuals who are still displaced as a result of the recent escalation of the hostilities are respected.
- Raise awareness among people of concern and host communities on their rights and access to services.
- Provide cash assistance or, where not feasible, distribute non-food items, including winterization kits, core relief items and electric heaters, to meet the basic needs of the displaced population.

Initial needs prior to the conflict

Activities mentioned to the right will be additional to the ones already planned in the regular programmes of both countries.

Prior to the conflict, Armenia was hosting some 18,000 people who were granted international protection and 961 stateless persons. In 2021, UNHCR with its partners will continue to work towards providing assistance to people of concern to meet their basic needs while enhancing the protection environment for those most at risk. UNHCR also advocates for the strengthened integration of people of concern into national response plans, including the COVID-19 Socio-Economic Response and Recovery Plan. Furthermore, preventing and reducing statelessness and protecting the rights of stateless persons will be key priorities for the Office.

Azerbaijan continues to host some 1,884 refugees and asylum-seekers. In 2021, UNHCR will continue with its core protection and advocacy interventions to widen the protection space—and potential for solutions—for people of concern. The operation will pursue a strategy for the inclusion and integration of people of concern into Azerbaijani society as well as support the authorities to align and enhance the national

Urgent needs



Shelter and basic needs

- Monthly rental cost support for shelter assistance.
- Provide urgent repairs and building upgrades to improve living conditions in public facilities/collective centres.
- Provide winterization kits.
- Deliver emergency cash assistance for basic needs.

Requirements: Armenia: \$10,780,571;
Azerbaijan: \$2,136,397



Protection

- Ensure communication with communities and community-based protection mechanisms.
- Conduct awareness-raising campaigns targeting people of concern to facilitate access to their rights.
- Conduct gender-based violence prevention and response.
- Strengthen access to information about assistance programmes and services.

Requirements: Armenia: \$1,374,036;
Azerbaijan: \$1,169,955



Community empowerment (Azerbaijan)

- Community mobilization.

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https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_18068

