



Gurgen, his wife, mother and four children sought refuge in Armenia following an escalation of hostilities in their communities.

unicef   
for every child

## Humanitarian Action for Children

# Armenia

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Between 24 September 2023 and 31 March 2024, the Government of Armenia registered 115,243 ethnic Armenian refugees, including an estimated 36,000 children<sup>1</sup> who fled due to an escalation of hostilities. They joined around 26,700 people<sup>2</sup> displaced during the 2020 conflict.
- Given continuing humanitarian needs of affected children and families uprooted from their homes and communities, UNICEF is extending its response until the end of 2024<sup>3</sup>. Thereby, UNICEF will sustain and expand the scope of service provision in mental health and psychosocial support, child protection case management - including for children with disabilities, education, health and nutrition outreach and counselling services. UNICEF will also aim to support families with humanitarian cash to facilitate their integration and access to essential services.
- UNICEF now requires a total of US\$14.3 million to reach 100,000 people (including 41,000 children) with critical humanitarian support<sup>4</sup>. Given the increase in the number of registered refugees in Armenia since October 2023 and the need to ensure service continuity, this revised appeal will enable UNICEF to sustain delivery of critical humanitarian assistance for refugee and host community children and families.

IN NEED  
**236,900**  
people<sup>5</sup>

**66,800**  
children<sup>6</sup>

TO BE REACHED  
**100,000**  
people<sup>7</sup>

**41,000**  
children<sup>8</sup>

## KEY PLANNED TARGETS



**35,000**

children/caregivers  
accessing community-based  
mental health and  
psychosocial support



**25,000**

children accessing formal  
or non-formal education,  
including early learning



**11,500**

households reached with  
UNICEF-funded  
humanitarian cash transfers  
(including for social  
protection and other sectors)



**50,000**

people sharing their  
concerns and asking  
questions through  
established feedback  
mechanisms

## FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

**US\$14.3**  
million

## HUMANITARIAN SITUATION AND NEEDS

Between 24 September 2023 and 31 March 2024, the Government of Armenia registered 115,243 ethnic Armenian refugees, including an estimated 36,000 children, who fled their home communities in the months preceding and then following an escalation of hostilities in late September 2023. Nearly 75 per cent of this population live in Yerevan and surrounding regions (Kotayk, Ararat, and Armavir).<sup>9</sup> Around 52 per cent are women and girls, 31 per cent are children, and 16 per cent are people with disabilities.<sup>10</sup> They joined around 26,700 people,<sup>11</sup> who were displaced during the previous escalation of hostilities in 2020. To date, the Government of Armenia has granted temporary protection to 78,005 refugees.<sup>12</sup>

This influx of refugees into Armenia was unprecedented both in scale and pace: Over 100,000 refugees arrived between 24 September and 4 October 2023 through the city of Goris, home to 20,000 people, overwhelming local response capacities. Given the large refugee population compared to the national population (62 refugee children per every 1,000 national children), key services for children such as education, social services, health, and psychological support continue to remain overstretched. Since the onset of the crisis, the Government of Armenia has led the emergency response, which it has extended until the end of 2024. Given continued humanitarian needs, the Government has requested international organizations to complement its effort addressing the unmet gaps. UNICEF is committed to delivering support and upholding the rights and dignity of affected children and their families in line with the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action.

Refugee children who arrived in Armenia had experienced significant trauma, including from repeated military escalations and well as long periods of uncertainty and limited access to education, health, and other services. Children with disabilities still encounter specific challenges to access education and other essential services, that can be limited considering high demand and lack of community-based services throughout the country. A total of 30 children were unaccompanied or separated on arrival; 23 of them were reunified with their families or placed in family-type care. The need for mental health and psychosocial support remains high. As of 28 March 2024, about 80 per cent of refugee children are enrolled in schools and five hundred refugee teachers are currently working in schools across the country. While the Government is committed to full enrolment, concerns remain especially over access to pre-school as well as dropout among adolescents. Despite several cash assistance programmes being rapidly rolled out by Government, with support of humanitarian partners, UNICEF's monitoring has revealed high numbers of families with acute social and child protection needs.

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## STORY FROM THE FIELD



Armine and her family have settled in Vanadzor but remember vividly their journey to safety where they endured fear, illness, financial insecurity, and uncertainty. “We spent two days in the basement, followed by two to three days here and there, unable to return home. [Eventually] we began our escape”, Armine recalls. In response to the crisis, UNICEF provided critical humanitarian support to refugee families, including hygiene kits, food packages, clothing vouchers, warm blankets and bedding. In cooperation with the Government of Armenia, UNICEF ensured access to essential services such as enrolling children in school and providing crucial healthcare.

Armine and her family fled their home community and sought refuge in Armenia in September 2023.

# HUMANITARIAN STRATEGY

Under the leadership of the Government of Armenia and in close collaboration with other humanitarian partners, UNICEF is committed to enhancing existing systems to address critical gaps and ensure sustained humanitarian services to cover ongoing needs of refugee children, their caregivers, and vulnerable children in host communities, abiding by principles of 'do no harm' and equity.<sup>13</sup> The revised HAC Appeal aims to maintain continuity of services until the end of 2024 and address the needs of a larger number of population in need, compared to the initial HAC Appeal for October 2023-March 2024.

UNICEF's support will aim to reach affected children and their families within the overall, increased refugee caseload, as well as to strengthen national system capacities, promoting links between humanitarian development programmes. UNICEF will work with central and local government and civil society partners to ensure inclusive, age- and gender-appropriate and disability-sensitive services for children, adolescents, and their families. As required, UNICEF will continue to lead/co-lead the child protection and education sub-working groups within the protection working group, co-lead the cash working group and actively participate in the health and nutrition, mental health and psychosocial working groups.<sup>14</sup>

Over 2024, UNICEF will sustain and expand the scope of service provision in mental health and psychosocial support, child protection case management (including specialized services for children with disabilities) and parenting support to refugees and host communities. The capacity of existing community-based, child and adolescent-friendly spaces and 'child and family support hubs' will be further strengthened, and their geographic coverage and accessibility expanded, focusing on settlements hosting the displaced population. The capacity of social workforce professionals will be strengthened to ensure quality services and proper coordination along referral pathways.

To ensure access to formal education and prevent school dropout, UNICEF will provide remedial education classes to refugee students. UNICEF will continue to enhance mental health and psychosocial support services in schools with special focus on social emotional learning, first psychological aid training, and support for teachers. To increase access to pre-schools, UNICEF will invest in infrastructure rehabilitation of existing kindergartens including provision of WASH facilities, provide teacher training and organize preparedness classes for 6-year-olds from the refugee and host community during the summer. Non-formal education opportunities, especially for adolescent boys and girls, will continue to be provided.

UNICEF will continue providing infant and young child feeding counselling sessions, as well as system strengthening efforts through capacity building of health professionals, especially at primary health care level.

UNICEF will continue to support cash assistance to refugee children and to strengthen the shock-responsiveness of the social protection system. The completion and analysis of the Multi-Sector-Needs Assessment will be further supported to inform Government and partners' medium and long-term planning. This assessment will facilitate the development of tailored and needs-based support on case management, including through cash assistance, and the piloting of new social assistance programmes.

# 2024 PROGRAMME TARGETS



## Health and nutrition

- **10,000** children and their caregivers receiving health services, through UNICEF supported mechanisms
- **8,000** children/caregivers receiving infant and young child feeding counselling sessions through UNICEF supported mechanisms



## Child protection, GBViE and PSEA

- **35,000** children, adolescents and caregivers accessing community-based mental health and psychosocial support
- **40,000** women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention and/or response interventions.
- **45,000** People with access to safe spaces, protection and support hubs
- **90,000** people with safe and accessible channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse by aid workers



## Education<sup>15</sup>

- **25,000** children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning
- **11,500** children receiving individual learning materials



## Social protection<sup>16</sup>

- **32,000** households benefitting from new or additional social assistance (cash/in-kind) measures from government-funded programmes with UNICEF technical assistance support
- **11,500** households reached with UNICEF-funded humanitarian cash transfers (including for social protection and other sectors)



## Cross-sectoral (HCT, SBC, RCCE and AAP)

- **100,000** people reached through messaging on prevention and access to services (including social and child protection, health, nutrition, education, etc.)
- **50,000** people sharing their concerns and asking questions through established feedback mechanisms

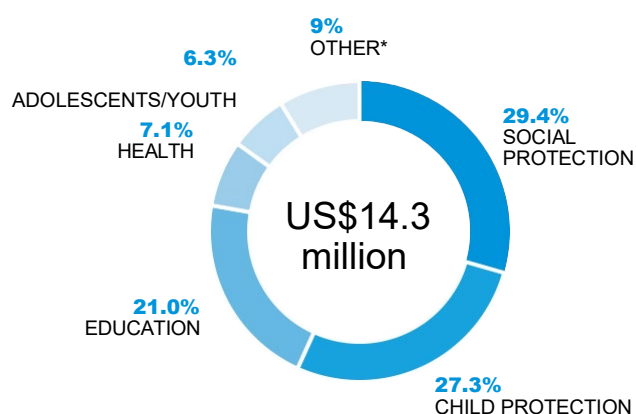


## FUNDING REQUIREMENTS IN 2024

UNICEF is appealing for US\$14.3 million to reach 100,000 people (including 41,000 children) with critical humanitarian assistance until the end of 2024. The initial multi-year HAC appeal covering October 2023 to March 2024 included an ask of \$12.6 million. Given the increase in the number of registered refugees in Armenia since October 2023, and the need to sustain and expand continuity of support, this revised ask covering the period until end of 2024 will enable UNICEF to deliver critical humanitarian assistance for refugee and host community children and families through provision of cash, essential services, and technical assistance to the Government.

Without sufficient and timely funding, UNICEF will be unable to deliver essential health and nutrition, child protection, education, and social protection services to 41,000 children in need.

Now more than ever, multi-year and flexible resources are crucial to allow sustain a timely, efficient and effective humanitarian response which remains critical to support of Armenia's refugee children and those who care for them.



Appeal sector	Revised 2024 HAC requirement (US\$)
Health	1,020,000
Nutrition	380,000
Child protection	3,900,000
Education	3,000,000
WASH	370,000
Social protection	4,200,000
Cross-sectoral	500,000
Adolescents/youth	900,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,270,000</b>

\*This includes costs from other sectors/interventions : Cross-sectoral (3.5%), Nutrition (2.7%), WASH (2.6%).

Appeal sector	Original 2024 HAC requirement (US\$)	Revised 2024 HAC requirement (US\$)	Funds available (US\$) <sup>18</sup>	Funding gap (US\$)	Funding gap (%)
Health	1,020,000	1,020,000	563,500	456,500	44.8%
Nutrition	610,000	380,000 <sup>19</sup>	281,750	98,250	25.9%
Child protection	2,650,000	3,900,000	2,803,738	1,096,262	28.1%
Education	3,150,000	3,000,000	1,812,591	1,187,409	39.6%
WASH	750,000	370,000 <sup>20</sup>	265,673	104,327	28.2%
Social protection	4,200,000	4,200,000	2,190,348	2,009,652	47.8%
Cross-sectoral	250,000	500,000	87,405	412,595	82.5%
Adolescents/youth	-	900,000	348,386	551,614	61.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,630,000</b>	<b>14,270,000</b>	<b>8,353,391</b>	<b>5,916,609</b>	<b>41.5%</b>

## ENDNOTES

1. According to data provided by Migration and Citizenship Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Armenia as of March 2024. Available at: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/107685>.
2. [https://www.unhcr.org/am/wp-content/uploads/sites/123/2022/09/IARP-Report\\_FINAL\\_Digital.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/am/wp-content/uploads/sites/123/2022/09/IARP-Report_FINAL_Digital.pdf)
3. UNICEF Armenia's HAC Appeal issued in October 2023 covers the funding requirements for the period of October 2023–March 2024. This revision of HAC Appeal intends to ensure continuity of services and address the needs of a larger number of population in need until the end of 2024.
4. The multi-year HAC appeal covering October 2023 to March 2024 included an ask of \$12.6 million (\$7.1 million in 2023 and \$7.2 million in 2024).
5. This number includes 115,243 refugees that were newly registered in 2023/2024, and about 26,700 refugees, registered since 2020, amounting to a total of 141,943 refugees, along with 95,000 host community individuals in need, as targeted in the Armenia Refugee Response Plan October 2023–March 2024. Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/news/press-releases/un-and-partners-appeal-us-97-million-respond-urgent-needs-refugees-and-their>
6. Based on an estimation of 31 percent of the refugee population (44,000), per the Armenia Refugee Response Plan, along with 24 percent of the national population (22,800).
7. This figure was calculated based on the total number of people to be reached with UNICEF services. UNICEF's target considers existing needs and the existing capacity and coverage of partners.
8. Ibid.
9. According to data provided by Migration and Citizenship Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Armenia as of March 2024. Available at: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/107685>
10. Armenia Refugee Response Plan October 2023–March 2024. Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/news/press-releases/un-and-partners-appeal-us-97-million-respond-urgent-needs-refugees-and-their>
11. Armenia Inter Agency Response Plan, Final Report, December 2021. Available at: [https://www.unhcr.org/am/wp-content/uploads/sites/123/2022/09/IARP-Report\\_FINAL\\_Digital.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/am/wp-content/uploads/sites/123/2022/09/IARP-Report_FINAL_Digital.pdf)
12. Reforms and programmes implemented in the Ministry of Internal Affairs of 2023 presented at the NA Standing Committee on Defense and Security, March 25, 2024. Available at: [http://www.parliament.am/news.php?cat\\_id=2&NewsID=20314&year=2024&month=03&day=25&lang=arm](http://www.parliament.am/news.php?cat_id=2&NewsID=20314&year=2024&month=03&day=25&lang=arm)
13. Complementary to this humanitarian response, and under the framework of the Armenia–UNICEF country programme 2021–2025, UNICEF will continue to support national efforts to address systemic and specific bottlenecks and support refugee children who have been in Armenia since 2020, as well as other vulnerable children in Armenia. In addition, this humanitarian response will also be closely coordinated with the ongoing consultations around the transition from the RRP into the UNSDCF.
14. Consultations are ongoing to define next steps following the conclusion of the RRP, including the schedule for working group meetings.
15. This includes WASH services provided to Early Childhood Development (ECD) facilities.
16. The target for UNICEF-funded humanitarian cash transfers has been revised to provide one-time winterization vouchers to households with children. This complements government-led cash programs and is based on needs, without increasing the funding request.
17. Interventions for WASH were necessitated during the acute phase of the emergency response (provision of mobile WASH facilities, WASH rehabilitation in child-friendly spaces). In 2024 no major WASH interventions are planned as part of humanitarian response, therefore the funding request is reduced.
18. The funds available have already been allocated/utilized to cover humanitarian needs in the first 6 months of emergency response (October 2023– March 2024), while the revised funding requirements are intended to address, sustain and expand continued humanitarian needs until the end of 2024.
19. Access to primary health care facilities among refugees has improved and outreach mobile pediatric teams will be transitioned to specialists to identify and provide health and nutrition services for children with chronic diseases and disabilities. UNICEF will prioritize IYCF intervention and capacity building of health professionals, especially at primary health care level hence the funding ask for nutrition is reduced.
20. Interventions for WASH were necessitated during the acute phase of the emergency response (provision of mobile WASH facilities, WASH rehabilitation in child-friendly spaces). In 2024 no major WASH interventions are planned as part of humanitarian response, therefore the funding request is reduced.