

# Armenia

January – March 2023

Ms. Kavita Belani, the newly appointed Representative of UNHCR in Armenia, handed over the **letter of accreditation** to Mr. Vahe Gevorgyan, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. During the meeting, the country's priority issues concerning refugees, internally displaced persons, migration, and other related issues were discussed.

UNHCR invited UN Armenia Country Team members for a meeting on the **Global Compact on Refugees**. Prospects for collaboration within the UN Team were discussed, facilitated by Mr. Niels Scott, Resident Coordinator *a.i.* and Ms. Kavita Belani, UNHCR Representative.

The Government has embarked upon developing the **Human Rights Action Plan 2023-2025**. At a multi-partner meeting, UNHCR presented recommendations on strengthening reception conditions for asylum-seekers, capacity building for social workers and integration of displaced people.

## KEY INDICATORS

### 354 calls

from 176 individuals were received by **UNHCR Hotline** operated by a partner - KASA Foundation. The main topics of concern were related to UNHCR services, access to the asylum procedure, access to health care and assistance.

### 2,071 displaced people

were provided with **social protection and welfare services** by UNHCR's partner - Mission Armenia NGO.

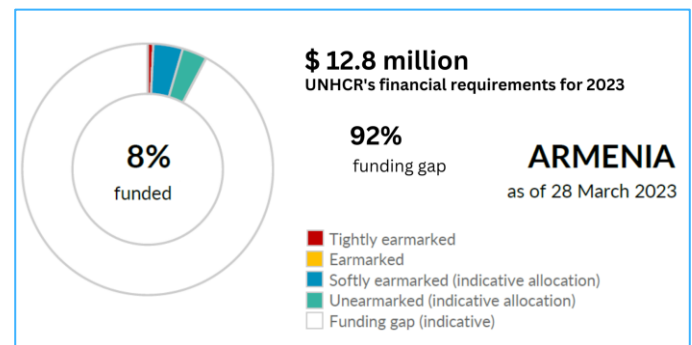
### 85 displaced people

were referred to specialized agencies and received **case management** support by UNHCR's partner - the Armenian Red Cross Society.



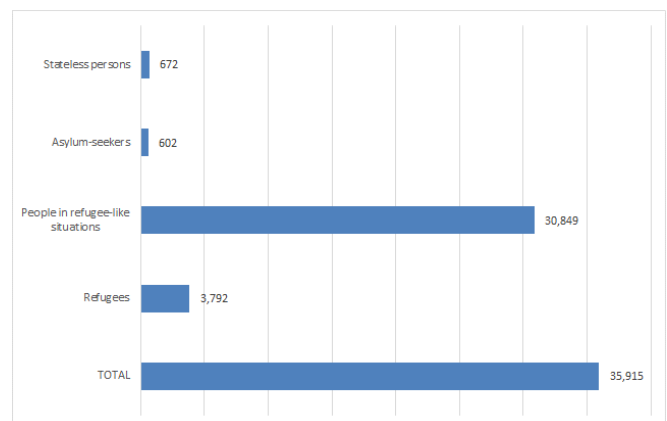
Ms. Maïda Chavak presents "Let's Walk" sketchbook to experts in the field, Women's Support Center, Yerevan, Armenia, 20 January 2023 © UNHCR/Anahit Hayrapetyan

## FUNDING (AS OF 28 MARCH 2023)



*\*The financial requirements for Armenia include requirements for UNHCR Armenia Operation's regular programme and the Ukraine Situation.*

## POPULATION OF CONCERN\* AS OF JULY 2022



*\* Includes persons in refugee-like situations. Source: UNHCR Refugee Data Finder.*

## Operational Context

As of late 2022, the total number of people UNHCR serves in the Republic of Armenia stood at around 36,000, including some 3,800 refugees, 600 asylum-seekers, 700 stateless people, as well as 31,000 people in a refugee-like situation (87% of the latter were displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh, and 13% - ethnic Armenians displaced from Syria).

The number of new asylum applications in 2022 (around 1,000) was the highest in the past 15 years, with asylum-seekers from Iran, Iraq, and Ukraine as major countries of origin. In September 2022, the country witnessed internal displacement of at least 7,600 individuals from three provinces of Armenia due to September 2022 hostilities at the Armenian-Azerbaijani state border. As a positive development, decrease of some 200 stateless persons was observed in 2022.

The legal framework and procedures of asylum, also regulations on the labour market access for displaced and stateless people are in line with international standards. With support of the European Union, the Migration and Citizenship Service of Armenia and UNHCR jointly conduct a comprehensive review of legislation on international protection. The Government reaffirms its ongoing commitment to collaborate with international partners, improve its asylum system and seek long-lasting solutions to refugee and statelessness issues.

### Key protection activities

- In February, UNHCR launched **Protection Monitoring 2023** by delivering a set of trainings for enumerators from Mission Armenia NGO. Protection monitoring is implemented throughout the country covering asylum-seekers, refugees and persons in a refugee-like situation displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh.
- In March, UNHCR held a **Statelessness Working Group (WG)** meeting in Yerevan. Representatives of key state agencies, including the Passport and Visa Department (PVD) which directly deals with cases of statelessness, the Human Rights Defender's Office UNHCR implementing partners, and independent experts attended the meeting. UNHCR thoroughly presented its 2023-2024 Action Plan for the campaign to end statelessness and updated on #IBELONG campaign.



Mr. Vahe Gevorgyan, Deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia, met with Ms. Kavita Belani, the newly appointed UNHCR Representative in Armenia. 17 March 2023, Yerevan, Armenia. © RA Ministry of Foreign Affairs

## Figures: January – March 2023



**178 displaced and stateless people** have received various types of vulnerability-based cash assistance, such as rental subsidies, multipurpose cash grants, school attendance subsidies, and transportation assistance.



**322 displaced and stateless people** have received health care services.



**145 displaced and stateless people** have received medical assistance.



**157 displaced and stateless people** have received legal counselling and assistance.



**17 displaced children and 14 survivors of gender-based violence** were provided with specialized case management.



**40 displaced elderly persons and persons with specific needs** were provided with specialized case management.



**81 displaced and stateless people** participated in psychological group events.



**74 displaced and stateless people** were provided with non-cash assistance, including household items, food and baby food, hygiene kits, and clothing.



### PROTECTION

- In February, UNHCR organized a session for the Government refugee status determination staff on the standards of application of the **internal flight/relocation concept**. Earlier this year, this concept was applied by the asylum authority to reject asylum applications submitted by several Iraqi nationals. Given the continuous increase in the number of new arrivals, an agreement was reached with the asylum authority to hold monthly professional development sessions on the most challenging aspects of the asylum practices for the staff who determines eligibility.
- During March, 150 households/668 individuals were **interviewed**, of which, 36 households/114 individuals were asylum-seekers, 69 households /389 individuals were persons in a refugee-like situation displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh, and 45 households /165 individuals were refugees; 95% of interviews were conducted in face-to-face modality, while 5% - by phone.
- **Post-distribution monitoring** of UNHCR cash-based interventions carried out in 2022 was conducted by UNHCR Armenia, in cooperation with its implementing partner, KASA Foundation, which is responsible for data collection. The results indicate that people of concern largely remain dependent on cash assistance to cover basic needs, including need for food, rental and utility costs, non-food items, clothing, and other needs.
- In February, UNHCR, together with Mission Armenia NGO and the Armenian Red Cross Society, organized a series of **consultations** in Yerevan and Goris cities with asylum-seekers and people displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh, Syria, Iran, Iraq, Ukraine and African countries (56 persons) to discuss their issues and evolving needs and brainstorm on possible solutions. UNHCR continues its efforts to safeguard **accountability** to the displaced people, to ensure their access to accurate and timely information and meaningful participation in consultations with UNHCR, partners, and service providers.

## Working in Partnership

- In January, UNHCR signed a partnership agreement with the [Women's Support Center](#) (WSC) NGO to uphold the rights of refugees, asylum-seekers, persons in a refugee-like situation and stateless persons through prevention, risk mitigation and response to gender-based violence. In addition, the parties agreed to collaborate for awareness raising and capacity-building targeting relevant groups of displaced populations, Government, and municipality authorities, as well as civil society representatives and youth.
- In January, as a member of the UN Armenia Communications Group (UNCG), UNHCR participated in an inaugural meeting among [key ministries' spokespersons](#), representatives of the Public Relations and Information Center state agency, the International Republican Institute and the UNCG, held at the UN House in Yerevan. The meeting aimed to advance cooperation and form a network among UN Armenia - Government communications specialists.
- In March, UNHCR Armenia's multi-functional team held meetings with UNHCR's operational partners - People in Need INGO and Armenian Progressive Youth NGO. The meeting aimed to discuss the ongoing and future projects targeting displaced families and host communities in Armenia, as well as emergency preparedness activities. UNHCR Armenia team presented its three-year strategic priorities in the humanitarian field, particularly in education and livelihood spheres, and envisaged projects in that regard.

## Financial Information

For 2023, UNHCR Armenia is seeking **USD 12.8 million** to respond to the needs of people in a refugee-like situation and to cover its regular annual programme.

**UNHCR Armenia is grateful to the European Union and the United States of America for supporting its programmes in Armenia in 2023.**

**UNHCR also thanks donors who provided over USD 10 million of unearmarked contributions\* to its 2023 global programme:**

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*\*Unearmarked contributions are funds without restrictions that allow UNHCR critical flexibility to reach populations of concern in the greatest need and at the greatest risk.*

For more information, please visit [UNHCR Operational Data Portal](#) and [UNHCR Armenia website](#), or contact **UNHCR Armenia**, Mr. Aramazd Ghalamkaryan, Assistant External Relations Officer, [ghalamka@unhcr.org](mailto:ghalamka@unhcr.org)