

IOM ARMENIA PROGRAMME UPDATE

9 FEBRUARY 2024



SITUATION AND NEEDS OVERVIEW

Secondary movements continue to occur for a statistically significant portion of the refugees in Armenia. The data of a recently presented assessment by People in Need (PIN. Refugee Crisis in Armenia Rapid Needs Assessment Report. December 2023) indicate that 9% of refugees displaced in autumn of 2023 have since changed their address for the primary reason of accessing available humanitarian assistance. When asked if they intend to move in the future, 16% of the respondents indicated that they were undecided, 16% intend to move within Armenia, and 4% plan to move internationally. As the Government of Armenia continues to lead the refugee registration process, it has been expressed that the ongoing secondary movements are introducing challenges to understanding the precise numbers and needs of refugees at the community level.

Four months have now passed since the displacement crisis. Despite the significant needs that still exist, there are noteworthy gains that have been made to support the refugees' integration into Armenian society. For example, the Ministry of Health reports that 70% of the newly displaced refugees are already entered in the national health system (ArMed). Since the issuance of [decree 1864-N of the Government of Armenia](#) on 26 October 2023, nearly 55,000 people (26,053 men and 28,895 women) have applied for the temporary protection status and received the refugee card. Similarly, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs reported that more than 10,000 of refugees have secured employment and PIN's rapid needs assessment indicated that 19% of the refugees have a salary to help meet their needs, although there is significant work to be done to reduce the 81% of respondents who rely on various forms of state support, many of which will be reduced or end in the near future.

IOM RESPONSE

In support of the Government of Armenia, the refugees, and the communities in which they now reside, IOM's response in the four months since the displacement crisis prioritized the following:

HEALTH AND MHPSS

In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the **mobile health clinics reached 7,305 refugees and vulnerable community members** providing direct services for general medicine, pediatrics, sonography, laboratory work, neurology, cardiology, and psychology; referrals for complex or more specialized assistance; and registration in ArMed. Of them, **2,063 were treated symptomatically** and **1,097 received psychological counselling**.



The mobile health clinic providing general medicine services, specialist care, and referrals through ArMed. Photo credit: IOM, January 2024.

These activities are generously supported by the United States Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration; by a global funding arrangement with the German Federal Foreign Office; by the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund; and by a global funding arrangement with the United States Agency for International Development.



IOM RESPONSE (continued)

In partnership with the Seda Ghazaryan Mental Health Foundation, an additional **1,176 refugees have been provided with group and individual psychological services.**

Moreover, IOM has used its existing health, MHPSS, and wellness social media to conduct an awareness raising and informational campaign to encourage people to care of their health, to help others, and to navigate the difficulties that displacement affected people are facing when integrating into their new community. The [Ասկեղծ ասած \(Frankly Said\) page on Facebook](#) has **7,600 followers.**

As the co-lead of the Health Sector, IOM continues to foster the coordination of **over 60 health partners.**

SHELTER AND NFIs

In Shirak, the coldest province of Armenia, IOM is working in two social centers that are used as shelters:

In Maralik, 22 flats were assessed, and safe and efficient heating systems such as gas boiler-heaters were installed to combat the cold temperatures. Additionally, proper ventilation was assured to prevent the buildup of indoor air pollutants, ensuring an adequate living environment for refugees during the winter months. Some flats were equipped with necessary household appliances. **70 beneficiaries**, mostly single elderly, persons living with a disability, and persons with chronic disease were targeted.

In Gyumri, a two-story hospital building was assessed and



Mattresses being distributed in Syunik. Credit: IOM, January 2024.

restructuring schemes produced to insure comfortable long-term living conditions of the refugees accommodated there. IOM is restoring the inhouse and underground sewage system of the building (around 120m); adding to the number of showers, toilets and washing rooms for the residents; and building a shared kitchen with the proper facilities for each floor. **90 beneficiaries**, mostly single elderly, persons living with a disability, and persons with chronic disease were targeted.

Lastly, **44 beds with mattresses** were handed over to a nursing home in Yerevan where older refugees are living and **22 beds with mattresses** were distributed in the border village of Togh community of Karashen, in Syunik province.

LABOR MARKET INTEGRATION

In close collaboration with the Ministry of Economy and IOM's humanitarian and development partners, the work on the **Labour Force Assessment among Forcibly Displaced Persons** is ongoing. The questionnaire was developed based on ILO's methodology and guidance from the Armenian Statistical Committee, and was tested in January. The data collection kicked off and will continue throughout February. The initial results are expected in March and will serve to inform the programming of the Government, IOM, and the broader aid community toward socioeconomic integration and self-reliance for refugees.

PREPAREDNESS

In coordination with the Rescue Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs IOM is working in **15 border communities to assess the existing early warning systems** and to address the needs through installation of the alarms systems and providing for software connectivity.

DATA ANALYSIS AND REFUGEE REGISTRATION

IOM's data processing capacities continue to support the Migration and Citizenship Services for the statistical analysis of the refugee registration data and presenting data through the GIS mapping.