

PROTECTION MONITORING ARMENIA SNAPSHOT

UNHCR's Protection Monitoring (PM) exercise is conducted on an ongoing basis to analyse trends in the protection environment and risks facing individuals in a refugee-like situation displaced during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. It uses standard questionnaire to gain information on their protection situation, needs, and coping mechanisms.

Starting from July 2021, UNHCR implements protection monitoring in partnership with the Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS). In addition, UNHCR Protection Unit conducts systematic protection missions to locations with high concentration of people in a refugee-like situation displaced during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to meet with various stakeholders, displaced families and to complement the quantitative analysis from the household interviews. All precautions and COVID protective measures were put in place and strictly observed during all UNHCR visits.

Key numbers September to October 2021



984
Families interviewed



4,497
Individuals covered



4,57
Average family size



18%
Persons with disabilities/special needs

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2021

Highlights

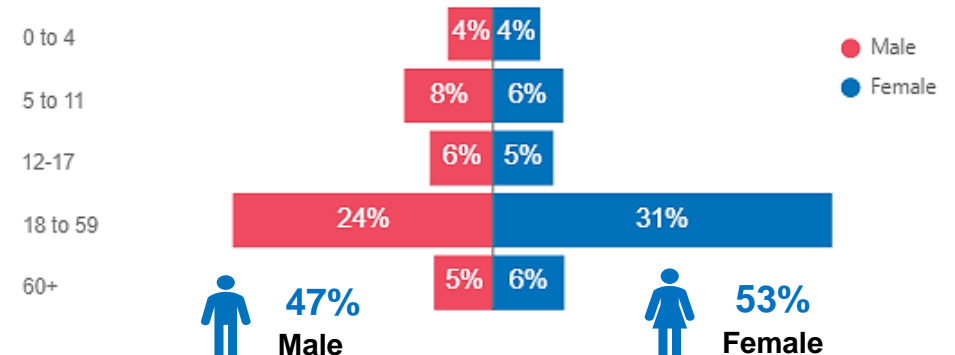
The intention to return amongst people in a refugee-like situation interviewed during the reporting period dropped to 5% compared to 9% in May/June and 6% in July/August.

3% of interviewed households were residing in collective accommodation (Collective Shelters or Transitional Centers¹). UNHCR has provided through its implementing partner Mission Armenia a two months' cash assistance for September and October to 79 households residing in collective accommodations to assist with relocation costs from shelters to houses and/or to cover rental costs.

Among concerns related to return: security risks (29%), no access to the area of origin/former habitual residence (27%), lack of access to livelihood (13%), presence of mines (10%), lack of access to basic services (7%), damaged property (7%) and lack of access to food (5%) were reported.

During the latest Protection Monitoring exercise, 127 households were identified as the most vulnerable and were referred to relevant partners who provided them with the required assistance.

Gender of family members



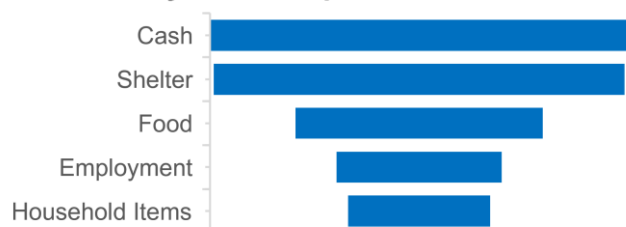
¹ The term collective shelter is used for government-owned communal accommodation, whereas transit centres are communal accommodation generously provided by private entities.

Protection Monitoring Findings: ARMENIA – September-October 2021

The interviews covering **4,497** individuals during reporting period of September-October were conducted by ARCS social workers, both by phone and in-person in communities where there is a high concentration of people in a refugee-like situation. When needs for specific services, assistance or information are identified during PM interviews, UNHCR's and ARCS's PM teams refer the individuals concerned to relevant service providers.

In the framework of case management, assistance was provided to the **127** most vulnerable displaced families/individuals identified by ARCS during the protection monitoring interviews/site visits. Through the provision of more in-depth and specialized support UNHCR assists in identification of viable solutions in the displacement situation.

Priority Needs September-October

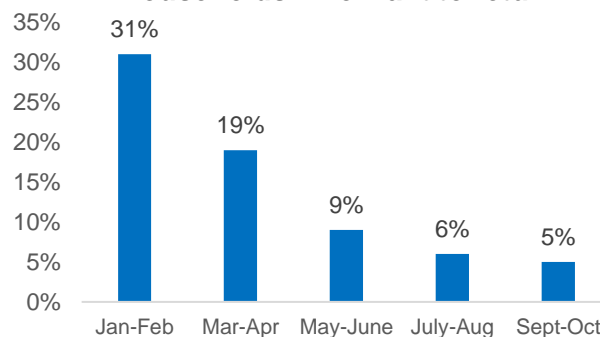


Individuals interviewed expressed five priority needs: cash, shelter, food, employment and household items.

The RA Government decision on provision of financial assistance to families displaced during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict expired in September 2021, and the new decision on extension of financial assistance for the period of 4 months (September-December) has been made only in the second half of October. No assistance was provided for September, and the beneficiaries are to receive assistance for September retroactively. This might explain the change in priority needs compared to previous reporting period with cash reported as the highest priority by respondents.

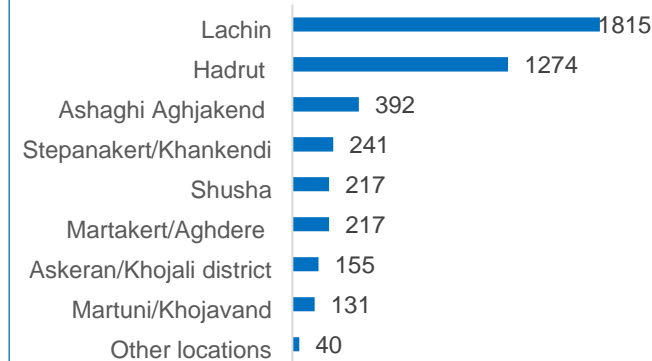
Over the course of the reporting period since January 2021, there has been a significant drop in the number of people in a refugee-like situation considering return. From **31%** in January this number has dropped to **5%** for this reporting period. At the same time, the number of interviewed households who were uncertain about their return intentions or did not know has been steadily rising reaching **68%** during this reporting period. It should be noted that only **1%** reported wishing to go to a third country

Households who want to return



Most of the interviewed individuals during September-October were formerly residing in Lachin (**40%**), Hadrut (**28%**), Ashaghi Aghjakend (**9%**), Stepanakert / Khankendi, Shusha, Martakert/ Aghdere (5%) accordingly.

Place of former habitual residence



Most of the interviewed individuals during September-October are currently residing in Yerevan (38%), Kotayk (19%), Armavir (15%), Syunik (14%), Ararat (9%) and Vayots Dzor (4%) accordingly.

Protection Monitoring Findings: ARMENIA – September-October 2021

94%
Pays rent for accommodation

Very often families living in rental accommodations report lack of basic household items (cooking sets, stoves, etc.).

60% of interviewed households reported not receiving cash assistance for rent.

38% moved several times within Armenia
26% planning to relocate within Armenia

During this reporting period **79** households residing in collective shelters/transitional centres, who voluntarily agreed to relocate to private accommodation, have received cash assistance for September-October funded by UNHCR and distributed by the implementing partner Mission Armenia NGO. The purpose of cash assistance was to cover family's relocation costs from shelters to houses and/or the cost of renting an apartment, which has been provided directly to the families by UNHCR and implementing partner Mission Armenia NGO.

During the reporting period, **77%** of interviewed individuals reported that they needed food assistance².

71% Received food assistance a few months ago
17% Received food assistance last month
7% Received food assistance this month

45% of respondents indicated employment as their main source of income. Compared to previous reporting period there is a rise in the number of respondents mentioning pension as the main source of income (from **16%** during the last reporting period to **25%**) while the number of those reporting having absolutely no income to rely on increased from **7%** to **10%**. At the same time, there is a dramatic drop in the number of respondents reporting humanitarian assistance as their main source of income (from **37%** to **18%**). These significant changes in sources of income might be explained by the temporary delay of the provision of the Governmental financial assistance during this reporting period.

² Decrease by 5% compared to the findings of July-August 2021 and 10% compares to the finding of May-June 2021 PM reporting periods accordingly.

The respondents were also asked questions about the availability of the following documents: property ownership documents, marriage/ divorce certificates, diplomas, driving license, birth/death certificates and residency card, etc.

89% Reported missing no documentation

The **40%** (**8%** less than during the previous reporting period) of interviewed population who was missing some documents reported not having approached authorities because of lack of information about location of the relevant authorities while another **40%** (**23%** more than during previous reporting period) reported lack of resources to cover expenses.

4% of interviewed households reported their children not attending school (triple decrease (from **12%**) over the course of 8 months)

Nine percent (9%) of respondents were elderly (60+ years old), **89%** of whom reported having extensive medical needs (**4%** less than during previous reporting period).

81% of interviewed households reported feeling safe at their current location in Armenia.

UNHCR is grateful for critical financial support provided by donors who have contributed to the operation in Armenia in 2021, as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programs with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds. These include:

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