



Protection monitoring

ARMENIA

Annual Report

2021

Acknowledgements

UNHCR is grateful for the extensive involvement and support of UNHCR's partners, local authorities, civil society, and international organizations. Most importantly, UNHCR would like to acknowledge the resilience and strength of those forcibly displaced and otherwise affected by conflict, who continue to share with us their challenges, fears and hopes every day.

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Protection monitoring in Armenia is conducted through different data collection tools, including interviews with individual/household and key informant, as well as observations. It also accounts for information and needs coming from other communication points including the help line and self-referral through UNHCR operated hotline among others. For the individual/household interviews; the sample size for the reporting period provided 95% confidence interval, 5% margin of error.

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Operational Context



On 27 September 2020, fighting broke out along the former line of contact between Armenia and Azerbaijan and progressively expanded until a tripartite ceasefire statement was signed on 9 November 2020. As a result of the military operations, tens of thousands of affected people fled to Armenia.

According to the Migration Service of the Republic of Armenia, some 90,000 persons found themselves in a refugee-like situation in Armenia, as reported in December 2020, of whom 88% were women and children.

The host community in Armenia welcomed those who arrived, sharing accommodation, food, and other available resources. However, previously socio-economically stable households that hosted refugee-like families have been progressively facing challenges to pay rent, utilities and provide food for themselves and for those they hosted.

UNHCR has been conducting the protection monitoring of population in a refugee-like situation since November 2020 (see previous [Protection Monitoring reports](#)).

The Inter-Agency Response Plan has extensively used Protection Monitoring findings and adjusted interventions accordingly¹.

In its effort to address urgent needs of the affected population, the Government of Armenia rolled out several cash-based support programmes (from mid-November 2020 to December 2021).

¹ An Inter-Agency Response Plan (IARP), led by the UN Resident Coordinator's office and UNHCR, outlined a multi-agency comprehensive response strategy and related financial requirements, involving 36 IARP partners who supported the Government in providing humanitarian assistance and protection services to individuals in a refugee-like situation in Armenia from October 2020 to December 2021.

Executive summary



UNHCR mission heading to a remote village to reach vulnerable families living in isolation

Protection Monitoring activities implemented by UNHCR and its partners in 2021 were done through some **5,804 interviews**, covering **25,746 individuals**. Interviews were conducted both by phone and during in-person meetings held in communities with a high concentration of people in a refugee-like situation.

Throughout the monitoring cycles, UNHCR was able to identify a number of areas where the situation of the interviewed persons somehow changed.

Such is the case with regard to accommodation for instance, where the number of persons staying in collective centres decreased progressively in 2021. As most collective shelters and transitional centres have been closed down by the authorities, 95% of the respondents reported staying in rented accommodation/dwelling by the end of the year. Almost 20% of the interviewed persons are still sharing accommodation with host families, having access to utilities.

In terms of priority needs, cash and shelter remained important elements by the end of the year, as well as the continued need for food assistance, indicating that the interviewed individuals are still experiencing difficult socio-economic conditions. Sources of income originating from employment have nevertheless increased during the year, whereas humanitarian assistance as a source of income decreased in the same period. However, the employment programs offered to displaced population were very often of a temporary (seasonal) nature and the protection monitoring did not collect specific information about the nature of employments found by the interviewed persons, or the salary levels.

With regard to documentation, the interviewed population progressively improved its situation and individuals have been able to replace or be issued missing documentation thanks to the introduction of relevant procedures for restoration of missing documents in the Republic of Armenia. Documentation is an important pre-condition to access rights and other services in Armenia.

Access to school did not constitute a major concern for the interviewed persons, as a majority reported access to education for their children. Attendance of kindergarten did not however significantly improve during the reporting period. This nevertheless indicates a high degree of social cohesion between the refugee-like population and the host community, which is also reflected by the results of the monitoring. Similarly, access to medical treatment has not emerged as a concern during the protection monitoring and while information on Covid19 was largely accessible, vaccination is somehow still low among the interviewed population. The protection monitoring also revealed that a high proportion of the interviewed refugee-like population had still not made a firm decision regarding return to the former place of habitual residence.

The number of persons travelling back also decreased drastically over the year, which can be due to the fact that 82% of respondents were residing in areas which are now under control of Azerbaijan. Over the course of the year, details were also gathered on the reasons for travel to the places of former residence and are presented in the relevant section of the Protection Monitoring Report.

Protection monitoring proved to be a very effective tool, supporting identification of immediate needs, for which the concerned individuals were referred to the relevant duty-bearers and service providers for detailed assessment and support. Based on the comprehensive findings and data from Protection Monitoring reports, UNHCR has adjusted its operational delivery and projects, including those of implementing partners to the needs of people in a refugee-like situation displaced during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. It also helped identify longer term trends during the year, particularly areas of relative improvement in the situation of the interviewed individuals, as well as issues that still require attention and support by UNHCR and its partners.

Methodology²

Protection monitoring is defined as the systematic and regular collection, verification, and analysis of information over an extended period to identify violations of rights and/or protection risks/priorities/needs for populations of concern. The results of monitoring can be used to achieve coherent and evidence-based community focused response and advocacy. This Protection Monitoring



UNHCR Protection mission in a remote border village, Gegharkunik region, Armenia, July 2021.

Annual Report covers the period from **January to December 2021**³ and shows trends in the protection environment and challenges facing individuals in a refugee-like situation displaced as a result of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Protection Monitoring (PM) in Armenia has been conducted by UNHCR in a partnership with its implementing partners⁴ through different data collection tools, including interviews with individual/household, key informant, daily departure monitoring, as well as direct observations. It also accounts for information and needs coming from other communication channels including self-referral through the UNHCR hotline, among others. The principles of Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) were applied in the design of the Protection Monitoring methodology to ensure the exercise duly informs the delivery of

² Protection monitoring sits in the centre of the protection information and data ecosystem, with linkages to other information systems to achieve an effective response. Protection monitoring is shaped by UNHCR's points of communications with persons of concern (PoC), regardless of the medium and UNHCR presence within the community

³ Within the reporting period there were 6 reporting rounds: (January-February (1st), March-April (2nd), May-June (3rd), July-August (4th), September-October (5th), November-December (6th).

⁴ UNHCR conducted Protection Monitoring from November 2020. From May to June 2021, PM has been conducted with UNHCR's implementing partner World Vision. From July till the end of reporting period Armenian Red Cross Society became UNHCR Implementing Partner for the PM.



Photo © UNHCR/Ani Papayan
A displaced family in a collective shelter in Arshaluys village, Armavir Province.

specialized protection and solutions response focused on an individual's needs and capacities, as well as their opportunities and keeping in mind their vulnerabilities.

Protection Monitoring format included individual as well as household-level questions.

UNHCR conducted 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 in order to re-confirm findings of the PM.

Some findings were further validated through technical assessments and focus group discussions with communities to support the implementation of the community-based projects aimed at strengthening the community mobilization and promotion of peaceful coexistence.

Based on the comprehensive findings and data from Protection Monitoring reports, UNHCR has adjusted its operational delivery and projects, including those of implementing partners to the needs of people in a refugee-like situation displaced during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The feedback from interviewed Persons of Concern was used to inform UNHCR's advocacy and pi access to protection, assistance, information as well as the delivery of essential services.



Photo © UNHCR/Ani Papayan
People returning from Yerevan to Stepanakert/Khankendi. Departure Monitoring Activity, April 2021. Yerevan.

Departure monitoring in Yerevan was conducted through daily presence at the bus station in Yerevan of UNHCR, together with implementing partners.

Highlights

The **5,804 interviews** covering **25,746 individuals** during 2021 were conducted both by phone and in-person, in communities with a high concentration of people in a refugee-like situation. When needs for specific services, assistance or information were identified during interviews, the concerned persons (some 2100 individuals in total) were referred to relevant service providers for detailed assessment and support.



Data collected by the Protection Monitoring exercise revealed which non-food items (NFI) were needed and in which regions NFI distribution was organised based on Protection Monitoring findings. Thus, **more than 16,000 NFI (kitchen utensils, gas stoves, beddings, etc.)** have been provided.



14,000 vulnerable persons of concern in a refugee-like situation displaced during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict have received **multi-purpose cash assistance to complement Government programmes**.



19,410 hygiene kits have been provided (**4,228** recipient families).



3,644 most vulnerable displaced individuals identified during the protection monitoring interviews/site visits were provided with **assistance within the case management component of protection delivery**.



2,939 calls (out of which **2,190 calls** were from people in a refugee-like situation displaced during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict) have been received by UNHCR hotline and relevant **counselling** has been provided accordingly.



Around 1,100 households received **winterization cash-based assistance**.



664 bi-monthly Key Informants (KI) interviews have been conducted in collective shelters/transitional centers as well as host community members. Data collected during KI interviews has complemented the quantitative analysis of the household interviews.



365 daily monitoring of departures from Yerevan to return areas were undertaken and **709 interviews** conducted with individuals using the buses provided by the Mayor's office in Yerevan.



More than 109 displaced vulnerable households (389 residents of collective shelters) have been provided with **rental subsidy support**. The recipients of this assistance were those who agreed to relocate to private accommodation.



21 Protection Missions have been conducted by UNHCR to ensure the outreach to host communities with an aim to promote local integration, protection of displaced population, identify needs for assistance projects in the host communities, as well as to identify their capacity.



77 PCP / CSI / CBO⁵ assistance services/projects have been implemented by UNHCR partners in host communities with a high concentration of people in a refugee-like situation. Projects served to promote the integration and adaptation of displaced population in host communities as well as to improve the quality of services offered to UNHCR's persons of concern.



11 collective shelters have been renovated/upgraded based on identified needs during on-site visits and protection monitoring interviews with families living in collective shelters.

In addition, **29 collective shelters** have been provided with NFI assistance. It included – *inter alia* – provision of new power supply and lighting system, fire extinguisher boxes, windows, doors, wardrobes, gas stoves, washing machines, refrigerators, tables, sofas and chairs, electric water boilers, kitchen sinks, etc.

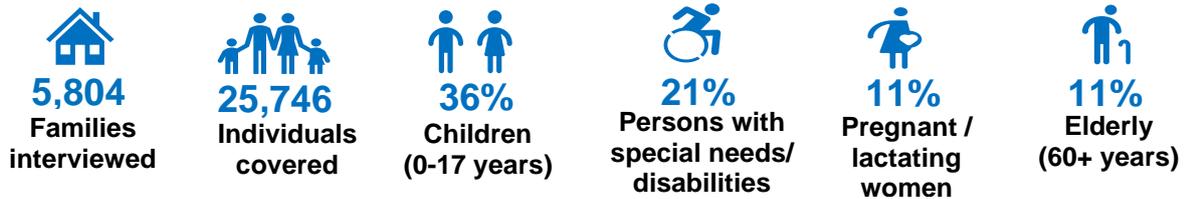


UNHCR's colleague conducting protection monitoring interview in transitional centre, March 2021, Armavir region.

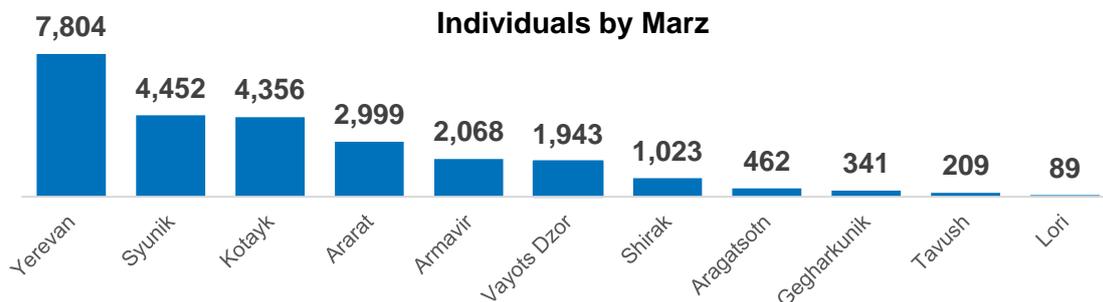
⁵ CSI - Community Support Initiatives, PCP - Peaceful Coexistence Projects, CBO - Support of Local Community-Based Organizations

Demographics

During the reporting period UNHCR and its implementing partners, World Vision Armenia (May-June) and Armenian Red Cross Society (July-December), conducted **5,804 Protection Monitoring interviews with households** totalling over **25,746 individuals**⁶. The interviews were conducted by phone and in-person in the communities, where high proportion of people in a refugee-like situation displaced during the conflict were concentrated.



Adults between 18-59 represented **45%** of those covered by Protection Monitoring (**11,536**), with **36%** children under 18 years old (**9,212**) and **11%** persons over 60 years old (**2,856**). The gender composition was balanced, with **53%** of persons who self-identified as females and **47%** as males.



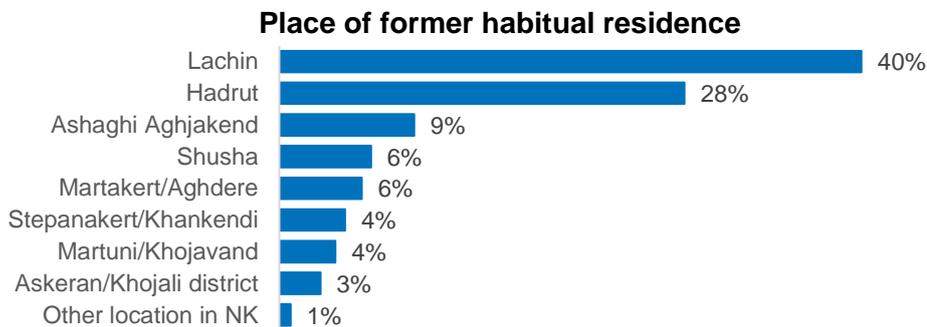
From January to December 2021 the interviews were conducted mostly in the city of Yerevan (**30%**) and provinces of Syunik (**17%**), Kotayk (**17%**), Ararat (**12%**) and Armavir (**8%**), since the majority of people in a refugee-like situation were residing in those regions. Based on the triangulation of data by UNHCR, there were between 28,719 to 31,547 people in a refugee-like situation displaced during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict⁷.

⁶ Average family size is 4.44

⁷ Known to UNHCR, disaggregation by marzes: Shirak - 711, Lori - 1,130, Tavush - 571, Aragatsotn - 1,014, Kotayk - 5,355, Yerevan - 11,808, Armavir - 2,245, Ararat - 2,776, Gegharkunik - 1,252, Vayots Dzor - 1,316, Syunik - 3,370.

Profile of interviewed households

As stated by interviewed individuals, prior to the displacement to Armenia, most of them (during the January-December Protection Monitoring exercise) were formerly residing in Lachin (**40%**), Hadrut (**28%**), Ashaghi Aghjakend (**9%**), Shusha (**6%**), and Martakert/Aghdere (**6%**). It is worth noting that prior to displacement, **82%** of respondent households were living in areas that are now under the control of Azerbaijan.



Regarding the education level among all interviewed, **46%** confirmed having secondary education, **30%** tertiary/university and postgraduate education, **24%** vocational and technical training, followed by **1%** with primary school education level and only **less than 1%** having no education. Respondents were also asked about their occupation prior to displacement, and **19%** reported that they used to work in the education/health system, **13%** were farmworkers, **10%** were busy with housekeeping/childcare, **13%** were formally employed in other spheres, and **11%** were unemployed.



A UNHCR colleague interacting with a little girl displaced from NK during the house visit to her family. November 2021. Sisian, Syunik province.

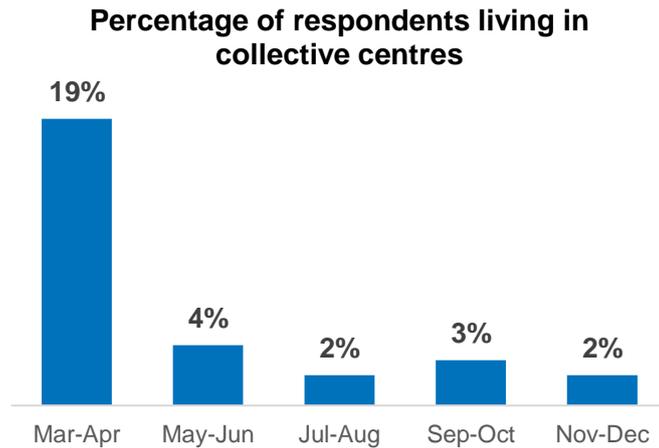
Living Conditions

From November to December 2021, **66%** of respondents were living in rented apartments or houses, **19%** were hosted by local families, and **2%** reported residing in collective accommodation (transit site or reception centre).

A total **95%** of respondents interviewed from November to December mentioned that they were paying rent for their accommodation, yet only **34%** of interviewed households received cash assistance for rent.

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

The number of respondents residing in collective accommodation has been decreasing. From **19%** in the beginning of the year, the number dropped to **4%** in May-April and reached **2%** by the end of the year. The corresponding column chart illustrates the fluctuations throughout 2021. UNHCR upgraded/conducted renovation works in **11 collective shelters**⁸ during 2021.



UNHCR also provided rental subsidy support to **more than 109 households (389 individuals)** who were residing in collective shelters / transitional centers and voluntarily agreed to relocate to private accommodation. In its efforts to further support households who agreed to leave the collective shelters voluntarily, UNHCR partner Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS) provided income generation tools to **100** such households, in addition to essential NFI (beddings, hygiene items, winterization supplies and kitchen utensils) distributed by UNHCR partner Mission Armenia NGO.

⁸ The term collective shelter is used for government-owned communal accommodation, whereas transit centres are communal accommodation generously provided by private entities.

The number of displaced households benefiting from hosting arrangements has also been slightly fluctuating throughout 2021. At the end of the reporting period from November to December, **66%** of households renting their accommodation reported sharing it with hosting families, yet for the remaining **34%** accommodation was provided for free and they were living on their own.



Photo ©UNHCR/Ani Papyan

Displaced child in a collective shelter in Armavir region, Armenia.

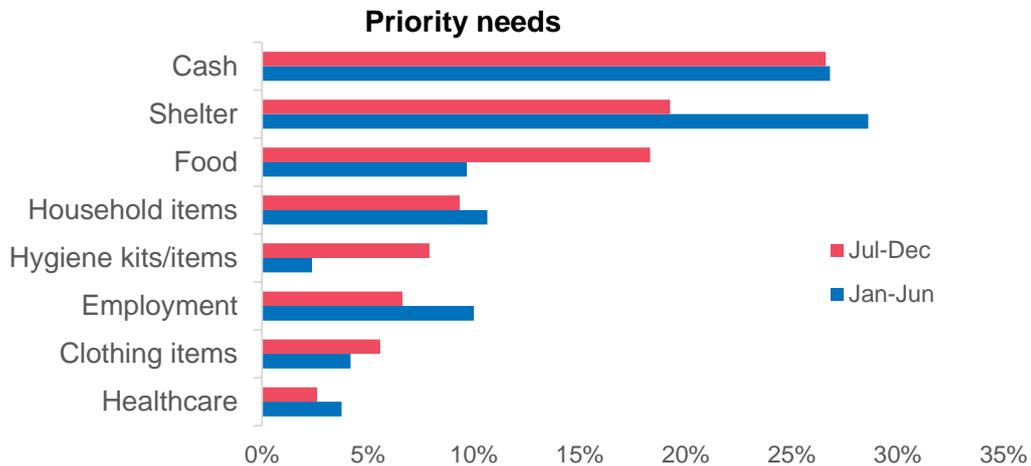
At the end of the reporting period, **77%** of interviewed households had plans to stay in their current accommodation, **19%** did not know and the remaining **4%** planned to leave their current accommodation. It is important to note that access to services (electricity, gas, water, etc.) is not provided free of charge and the affected population requires financial support to pay for utilities.

On average, for the whole reporting period in 2021, **99%** of respondent households confirmed having access to electricity in their accommodations, **94%** had access to water inside their dwellings, and **82%** had private toilets.

Priority needs

Over the course of the year, the most frequently reported priority needs slightly varied. From the beginning of the year until **August** the most frequently reported priority needs by individuals interviewed were **shelter, cash, household items, and employment**. From September **until the end of the year** **cash** had become the most frequently reported priority need followed by **shelter and food**, respectively.

At the end of the reporting period, the most frequently reported priority needs were **cash (27%)**, **shelter (19%)**, **food (18%)**, **household items (9%)**, **hygiene kits/items (8%)**, and **employment (7%)**.



During November-December 2021, cash-based assistance for winterization was provided to **1,100** households. Based on the analysis of Protection Monitoring data on priority



needs, throughout 2021 UNHCR has provided multi-purpose cash assistance to more than **14,000** vulnerable persons of concern, and rental subsidy support to **109** displaced households (**389 individuals**) from collective shelters/transitional centres who agreed to relocate to private accommodation. The purpose of the rental subsidy support was to cover families' relocation costs from shelters and/or the cost of renting an accommodation, which was provided directly to the families by UNHCR through its NGO partner, Mission Armenia. Moreover, more than **16,000 NFI** have been provided, including essential household items, such as kitchen utensils, gas stoves, bedding sets, etc.

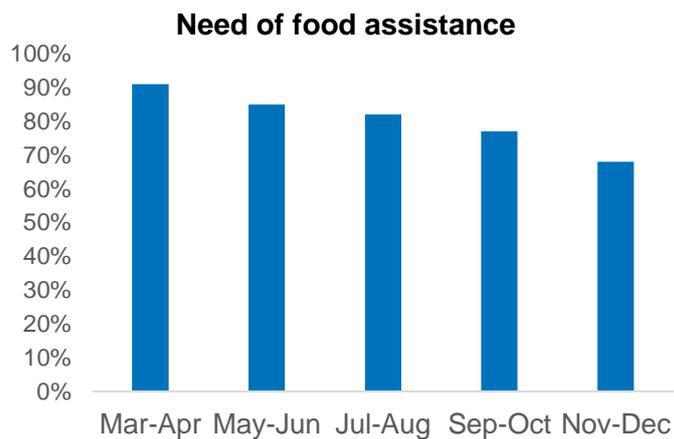


A displaced child living in a rented apartment in a remote district in Jermuk, Vayots Dzor region, March 2021.

At the end of the reporting period, **68%** of interviewed households reported that they still needed food assistance.

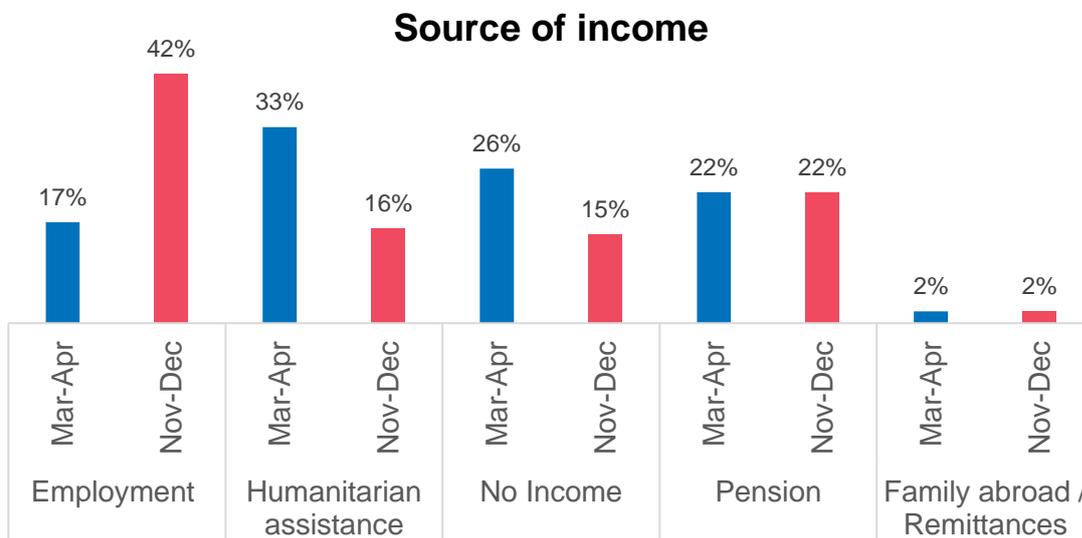
A slight decrease was observed throughout 2021, as during March-April the number was **91%**, followed by **85%** in May-June, **82%** in July-August, and **77%** in September-October.

At the end of the reporting period, **75%** reported receiving food assistance after displacement, **64%** of whom reported receiving assistance a few months ago, **17%** percent received it only once after displacement, and only **16%** reported receiving food assistance in the previous month.



Respondents were also asked about their main source of income. Employment, humanitarian assistance, pension, remittances, and support from family abroad as well as no income options were offered as a choice of main sources of income.

The corresponding chart below illustrates comparison between March-April and November-December 2021 reports' findings.



The observation shows a **25%** rise of “employment” as a source of income between March-April (**17%**) and November-December (**42%**), while a **17%** decrease in humanitarian assistance as a source of income between March-April (**33%**) and November-December (**16%**) has been observed. The percentage of interviewed households mentioning pension (**22%**) and remittances/family abroad (**2%**) as a main source of income remained the same for both March-April and November-December. There is also slight decrease in the number of households reporting having no income at all – from **26%** in March-April to **15%** in the November-December.



A family portrait of a young mother and her children displaced from Nagorno Karabakh. Hrazdan. Kotayk region. April 2021.



Photo ©UNHCR/Anahit Hayrapetyan

A displaced child living in a rented apartment in a remote district in Jermuk, Vayots Dzor region, March 2021

The findings in five regions with the highest concentration of people in a refugee-like situation, i.e., Yerevan, Syunik, Kotayk, Ararat and Armavir, often varied significantly. In all five regions, except for Ararat province, an increase in reporting of employment as the main source of income between March-April and November-December was observed.

Between March-April and November-December the number increased from **22%** to **48%** in Yerevan, from **26%** to **54%** in Syunik, from **13%** to **36%** in Kotayk from **8%** to **56%** in Armavir, yet in Ararat province the number dropped from **17%** in March-April to **5%** in November-December.

Between March-April and November-December the number increased from **22%** to **48%** in

During the same two reporting periods, the number of people reporting “humanitarian assistance as the main source of income dropped from **26%** to **4%** in Yerevan, from **20%** to **6%** in Syunik, and from **36%** to **27%** in Kotayk. However, there was an increase from **25%** in March-April to **64%** in November-December in Ararat while in the case of Armavir the increase was only by **1%** (from **25%** in March-April to **26%** in November-December).

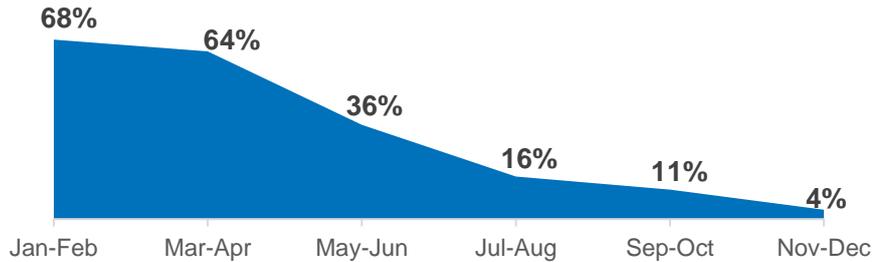
As for families reporting having no income at all, there was a decrease in all five regions between March-April and November-December. The percentages decreased from **28%** to **23%** in Yerevan, from **43%** to **14%** in Syunik from **19%** to **7%** in Kotayk, from **40%** to **4%** in Ararat, and from **49%** to **14%** in Armavir province.

Documentation

During the Protection Monitoring exercise, all interviewed households were asked questions about the availability of the following documents: ID documents, property

ownership document, marriage/divorce certificates, school diploma, driving license, and birth/death certificates.

Respondents reporting missing identification documents



According to UNHCR Protection Monitoring data collected throughout 2021, interviewed people in a refugee-like situation were able to restore their missing documentation in the course of the year. During the first reporting period from January to February, **68%** reported missing any of above-mentioned documents, while in May-June the number decreased to **36%** and in November-December it further decreased to **4%**. The issue was resolved by creating necessary conditions and by introduction of relevant procedures for restoration of missing documents in the Republic of Armenia.



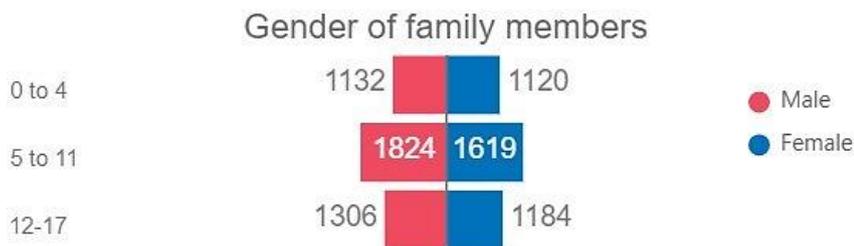
UNHCR conducting protection monitoring with a displaced woman at the distribution point near Sevan Municipality. February 2021. Sevan, Gegharkunik province.

This substantial change observed during the year is of crucial importance for consideration, as the availability of ID documentation among the displaced population directly ensures their access to health and social services.

Among the respondents reporting missing any of the above-mentioned documentation, lack of information about location of relevant authorities and lack of resources to cover expenses were reported as the main reasons for not having approached authorities for restoration of missing documents.

Child Protection

Children (under 18 years old) constitute **36%** (8,185 individuals) of all respondents covered during the year. Children aged 0 to 4 constituted **9%** (2,252 individuals), 5 to 11 years old **13%** (3,443 individuals), and 12 to 17 years old **10%** (2,490 individuals) accordingly.



During the year, only 4 children were identified as being without birth certificates.

At the end of the year, **97%** of interviewed households confirmed that their children aged 6-17 are attending school. In March-April the number of children aged 6-17 attending school was **88%** and the number kept gradually increasing over the course of 2021 (reaching **97%** at the end of the year). There has been a quadruple decrease in the number of children not attending school between March-April (**12%**) and November-December (**3%**).

From January to June 2021, **68%** of respondents reported that their children were not attending kindergarten. This number decreased to **63%** in the second half of the year.



Photo ©UNHCR/Anahit Hayrapetyan
Two kids playing hide-and-seek at the reception centre, Yerevan. November 2020.

Respondents were also asked about the impact of displacement on the mental wellbeing of their children. The number of interviewed households noticing signs of stress in their children, including changes in their routine behaviour decreased from **55%** in the first half of the year to **47%** at the end of the year.

Social Cohesion

During November-December **84%** of interviewed households reported that they are feeling safe in their current place of residence. It is worth noting that the situation has not changed compared to the first half of the year. Respondents were also asked about any incidents related to social cohesion.

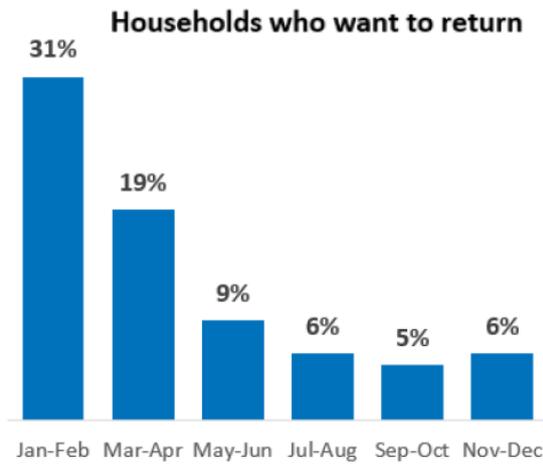
A total of **99%** of households surveyed in November-December reported not having any incidents with the host community, while **73%** mentioned that host communities were very welcoming, and **19%** said that host communities were somewhat welcoming.



Displaced and local children enjoying newly opened playground constructed with the support of UNHCR . October 2021 . Goris, Syunik.

Movement and Return intentions

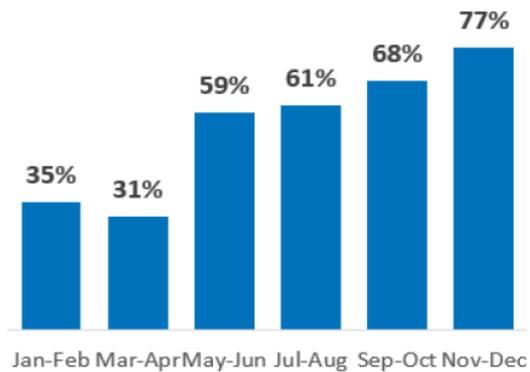
From January to December 2021, **44%** of respondent households mentioned that they had moved several times (including changing accommodation) since the first displacement, and **29%** of interviewed households wanted to relocate within Armenia when asked about their movement/return intentions.



At the end of the reporting period, **6%** of the interviewed households reported that they wanted to return, **77%** did not know, and **17%** were planning to relocate within Armenia. It is also worth noting that at the beginning of the year the percentage of those who reported that they wanted to return was **31%** and it gradually kept decreasing throughout the first half of the year. At the end of the year the percentage of those wanting to return was **6%**.

At the same time, the percentage of households uncertain about their movement intentions and not knowing whether they wanted to return remained high. Over the course of 2021 this figure has been steadily increasing and at the end of the year, it reached **77%** (increase by **9%** compared to September-October findings and **16%** increase compared to July-August findings).

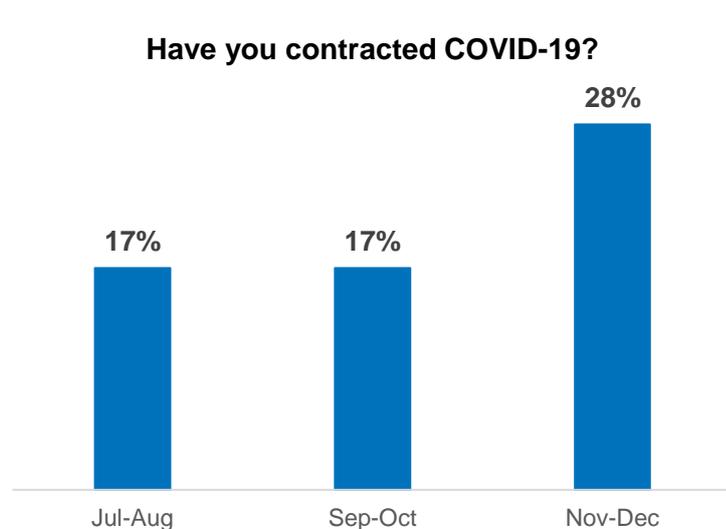
Do you want to return? -Don't know



Respondent households were also asked about the perceived risks upon return. At the end of the reporting period, the following concerns were shared amongst others: security risks (**38%**), no access to the area of origin/former habitual residence (**20%**), land mines (**12%**), lack of access to livelihood (**10%**), lack of access to food (**8%**), damaged property (**7%**) and lack of access to basic services (**6%**). The percentage of respondents who mentioned security risks increased from **26%** at the beginning of 2021 to **38%** at the end of the year.

Access to healthcare and COVID-19 related findings

A total of **21%** of individuals interviewed during the year reported facing some medical issue (critical or chronic medical condition). About **84%** of those confirming having a medical issue reported that they were seeking medical assistance. **93%** of respondents who applied for medical assistance, reported receiving the required medical assistance.



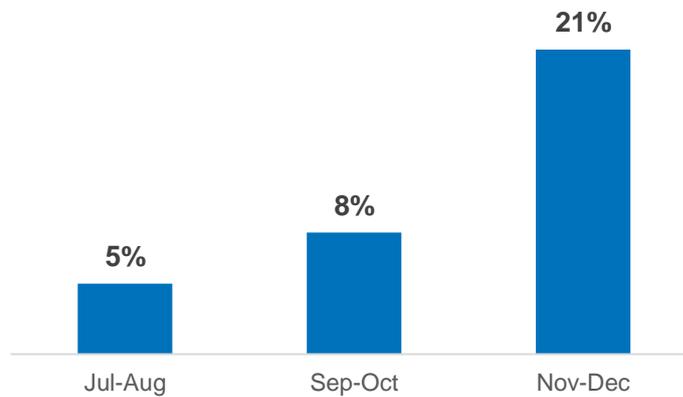
From the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, UNHCR and its implementing partners have used their communication channels to share COVID-19 related information. All precautions and COVID-19 protective measures were put in place and strictly observed during all UNHCR/ARCS activities and visits. It should be noted that the displaced population in a refugee-like situation has

full access – and faces no barriers – to free COVID-19 vaccination in the Republic of Armenia.

Over the course of 2021, UNHCR has been following the situation in regard to the COVID-19 pandemic and its potential impact on the displaced population, as well as monitoring the extent to which UNHCR persons of concern are included in, and have proper access to, the national COVID-19 vaccine distribution plans.

In July 2021 the protection monitoring questions were expanded to include additional questions on COVID-19 with a view to understand the extent to which people in a refugee-like situation have been exposed to COVID-19, their vaccination rates, as well as their intention to get vaccinated.

Have you been vaccinated against COVID-19?



A total of **91%** of interviewed households reported that they knew how to protect themselves from COVID-19. Yet **7%** of respondents mentioned that protection from COVID-19 was not a priority for them and **2%** were not aware of protective measures at all. Over the course of 2021, UNHCR observed gradual increase in both numbers of respondents reporting having contracted COVID-19 and of those who have been vaccinated.

As shown in the chart above, as of end of the year, **28%** of families interviewed had already been infected with COVID-19, and **21%** of respondents reported being vaccinated against COVID-19. UNHCR used the finding of Protection Monitoring related to COVID-19 to guide its communication efforts in addressing vaccine hesitancy among UNHCR’s persons of concern.

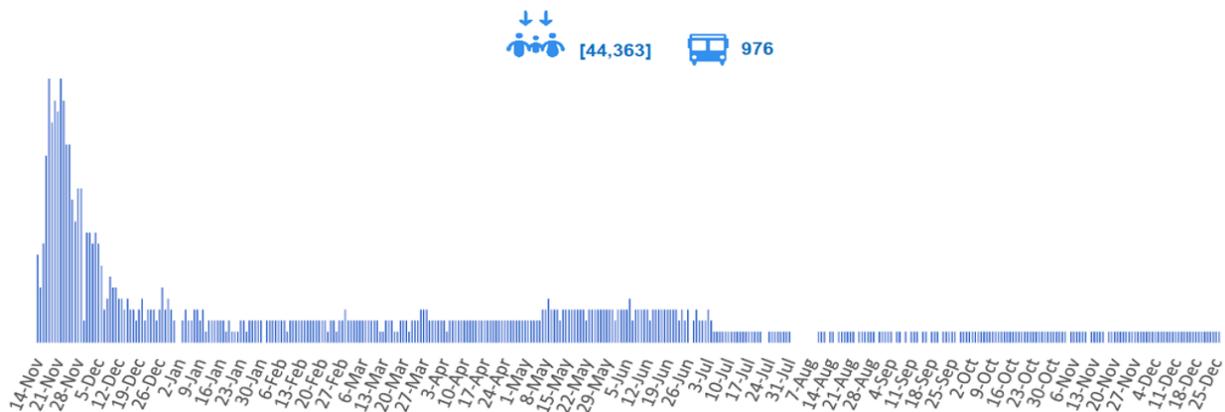


Visit to the sewing workshop of the Sisian Adult Centre NGO equipped with the support of UNHCR, October 2021.

Departures Monitoring

UNHCR Armenia together with its partners continues to monitor daily departures of buses from Yerevan "Kilikia" bus station to Stepanakert/Khankendi, organized by Yerevan Municipality since 14 November 2020. The daily departure monitoring is focused on the organization of departures, the observation of the profile of returnees, including their possible specific needs, and the respect for COVID-19 preventive measures.

UNHCR departure monitoring of buses provided by the Mayor's Office in Yerevan



Since the beginning of 2021 there was a sharp decrease in the number of people using this free bus service. In the first half of the year the number of daily departures was **94⁹** people on average per day. In the second half of the year the figure decreased to **46** people on average per day.

In the framework of the departure monitoring activity, UNHCR and partners questioned passengers on the reasons for their travels. Interviewed individuals indicated that they often returned temporarily to the places of former residence for the following reasons:

- To obtain/re-register property documents;
- To process pension and/or benefit payments;
- To find work and housing that is accessible to displaced people;
- To visit relatives;
- To visit graves of relatives or friends;
- To trade in goods;

⁹ During the November-December 2020 the number of people daily leaving for Stepanakert/Khankendi using this bus service was 404.

- Among young people, the main reason for traveling was to continue their education in the educational facilities where they had studied prior to their displacement.



People returning from Yerevan to Stepanakert/Khankendi. Departure Monitoring Activity, June 2021. Yerevan.



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