

ARMENIA

OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

JANUARY-JUNE 2025



The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral, and independent organization ensuring humanitarian protection and assistance for victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence. Since 1992, the ICRC has been carrying out humanitarian work in the region to assist people affected by the conflict, promote the dissemination and implementation of the international humanitarian law (IHL), and act as a neutral intermediary between the conflict sides.

Through our delegation in Yerevan and subdelegation in Goris, we continued to support those affected by the conflict escalations in 2020–2023. We sustained our efforts in facilitating resilience-building programs in communities situated along the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan. We continued to provide direct support to the families of those missing from the 2020–2023 conflict escalations across Armenia in the form of dedicated thematic sessions, commemoration-focused events, individual follow-up, and referrals in the framework of the Accompaniment Project. Responding to the families' requests for better coordination and unification of all existing groups, a dedicated Communication Platform was launched with ICRC support and facilitation for the most active leaders and heads of small-scale NGOs and associations.

In addition, we kept providing technical and material support, including forensic expertise, to public authorities and forensic facilities to enhance preparedness and response for preventing disappearances and maximizing identification of the dead in emergencies. We also worked on supporting access to emergency healthcare in border community areas by strengthening the knowledge of medical personnel and enhancing the material capacity of health centers.

We kept visiting Armenians in Azerbaijan, detained in connection with the conflict escalations, whose detention had been confirmed by the respective authorities. During our visits, we assessed the treatment of the detainees and the conditions of their detention, as well as facilitated the exchange of news with their families. With the consent of the detaining authorities, the family contact was maintained by means of Red Cross messages, phone calls, oral greetings, and/or pre-recorded video messages.

MISSING, DETAINED AND THE DEAD

445 calls and individual **visits** were received at the ICRC delegation in Yerevan and subdelegation in Goris concerning the conflict-related family separation.

426 Armenian citizens and ethnic Armenians from Karabakh (including 51 cases of precarious burials, for which the families requested ICRC facilitation in the transfer of human remains from Karabakh to Armenia) are still missing in relation to the escalations in 2020–2023, as per individual requests received by the ICRC from affected families. The ICRC continues to work with the concerned authorities to facilitate the process of search and identification to help them provide answers to the respective families.

140 oral, video and written Red Cross messages were exchanged between families and their relatives detained in relation to the conflict escalations. Furthermore, the ICRC continued regular visits to individuals detained in relation to the armed conflict, to monitor the conditions of detention and treatment as well as help them maintain contact with their relatives.

14 sessions (introductory, right to know/legal, forensic-related) were held for families of the missing in Ararat and Gegharkunik regions, in the scope of the Accompaniment Program.

5 preparation sessions for awareness raising/commemoration events were organized for the families of Ararat, Kotayk, Vayots Dzor and Syunik regions.

2 social/cultural and one commemoration/awareness-raising event were organized for the families of Ararat, Kotayk, Vayots Dzor, and Syunik regions.

20 family members of missing persons attended a four-day Workshop on Constructive Communication between the Families and the Authorities.

3 SPCFM DNA experts participated in the study visit to the ISO/IEC 17025-accredited DNA Laboratory of the National Forensic Bureau (NFB) in Tbilisi, Georgia, aimed at enabling firsthand learning and exposure to accredited forensic laboratory practices.

3 DNA experts from the SPCFM DNA Laboratory participated in the training "DNA Analysis and Interpretation of Challenging Bone Samples", held at the ICRC's Forensic Genetic Centre in Tbilisi, Georgia, aimed at strengthening the DNA laboratory's capacity to process and interpret complex DNA profiles, particularly from skeletal remains.

100 body bags, **three** mortuary autopsy kits, **five** autopsy saws, and **100** saw blades were donated to the Scientific-Practical Center of Forensic Medicine (SPCFM).

1 Dremel tool and accessories were donated to the DNA Laboratory of SPCFM for the preparation of bone samples for DNA analysis.

The **3rd Practical Forensic Pathology Workshop** was organized for SPCFM experts on the Standardization of Casework Documentation – aimed at supporting forensic doctors in applying a structured and standardized approach to death scene processing, autopsy practices, and chain of custody procedures.

11 participants, including experts from SPCFM (pathologists, DNA experts) and investigators from the Investigative Committee, attended an exercise aimed at reviewing the strategy to detect more DNA matches, re-evaluating DNA samples and profiles related to the caseload of persons missing in relation to the 2020 escalation, identifying obstacles to identification, and proposing solutions.



Theatrical performance, initiated by the families of missing, staged in Yerevan with ICRC support.

MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

2,936 persons benefited from direct mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS).

2,110 people, including those who moved to Armenia from Karabakh and those living in border communities, attended group sessions organized by the ICRC and the Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS) focused on promoting mental health and psychosocial wellbeing.

81 family members of missing persons participated in MHPSS activities, which included individual and group psychological support sessions, home visits, and information sessions.

66 MHPSS group and individual sessions were organized in various regions of Armenia for **38 family members** of missing persons.

21 persons previously detained in relation to the conflict benefited from 34 individual and group MHPSS sessions.

18 health workers from Goris Hospital who participated in the Help-the-Helper cycle in 2024, took part in four supervision and support sessions.

20 mental health professionals from local NGOs, public authorities, and from ARCS, working with released conflict-related detainees and individuals affected by violence and conflict more broadly, participated in a five-day training course jointly organized by the ICRC and the Swedish Red Cross.



HEALTH CARE

59 healthcare workers, including 22 physicians and specialists from five hospitals, and 37 nurses (31 of them community nurses) were trained in the WHO-ICRC Basic Emergency Care course across four border regions.

Staff of the "St. Gregory the Illuminator" Medical Center of the Ministry of Health in Yerevan participated in the Mass Casualty Incident Management course.

3 medical educational institutions, Nursing College of Yerevan State Medical University, Yerevan Basic Medical College, and the Armenian Emergency & Disaster Medicine International Training Center at Erebouni MC, were provided with educational equipment.

Goris Department of the Yeolyan Hematology and Oncology Center (under the Ministry of Health) was supported with relocation and supplied with essential furniture and equipment.

2 new health posts built by ICRC in 2024 in Shatvan village (Vardenis Community, Gegharkunik) and Aravus village (Tegh Community, Syunik) were fully furnished and equipped to begin service in newly constructed facilities.

Kapan Medical Center received support for the repair of its central suction system.



WATER AND HABITAT

5 solar PV systems were installed at two medical centers, one polyclinic, and two primary health centers in Vayots Dzor and Gegharkunik regions.



WEAPON CONTAMINATION

284 residents from 16 border communities of Gegharkunik and Syunik regions were involved in the Weapon Contamination assessment aimed at identifying current needs and gaps related to WEC and offering recommendations to address them.



Engaging children in an informal discussion on WeC-related risks in Kakhakn village, Gegharkunik region.



PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

30 servicemen of the Armenian Armed Forces preparing for deployment in the scope of NATO-led KFOR mission (Kosovo), were briefed on the basics of Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) at the Peace Support Training Center in Abovyan.

13 service members of the National Security Service Border Guards in Shirak region were briefed on the history, mandate, role of the ICRC, as well as the basics of Human Rights Law and IHL.

ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

496 households from six communities of the Gegharkunik region and eight communities of the Syunik region were provided with hygienic kits.

19 households with special protection considerations, including vulnerable families of the missing, conflict-related detainees, and released detainees, were assisted with small-scale productive grants to start income-generating activities across Armenia.

103 households (450 individuals) benefited from the land rehabilitation project in Khachik village, Vayots Dzor region, which supported the improvement of **100 ha** of unused land.

18,5 tons of emmer and 1,65 tons of yellow pea seeds were provided to the beneficiaries of Khachik village to sow the rehabilitated land.

4 households with protection considerations benefited from multi-purpose cash assistance to cover their basic needs.

20 ARCS volunteers from the Vayots Dzor region participated in Economic Security Basics training aimed at enhancing their capacity and knowledge in economic security.

50 households moved to Armenia from Karabakh benefited from the Beekeeping project implemented in cooperation with Himnatavush. They received **200 beehives** with colonies, **50 sets of tools and uniforms**, and attended beekeeping trainings in 12 border communities.



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We help people around the world affected by armed conflict and other violence, doing everything we can to protect their lives and dignity and to relieve their suffering, often with our Red Cross and Red Crescent partners. We also seek to prevent hardship by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and championing universal humanitarian principles.

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