



**MAA70005** Appeal number

**180,000** Swiss francs funding requirement

**120,000** People to be reached

**3,000** Volunteers country-wide

# ARMENIA

IFRC Country Office

2020

## BACKGROUND

### Country Profile

Almost 30 years after Armenia became an independent state, the country remains a strategically sensitive area in the South Caucasus region. The long-term cost of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on Armenia is high, and the country still has two of its four land borders, with Azerbaijan and Turkey, closed. The conflict in Syria had an impact, as the country took in tens of thousands of Syrian Armenian refugees.

Armenia is located in a high-risk zone in terms of natural disasters and is exposed to a range of complex hazards. Risks associated with geophysical hazards are significant, as Armenia lies in one of the most seismically active regions of the world. Armenia is listed in the top 60 countries exposed to multiple hazards by World Bank data. Armenia is especially vulnerable to health risks during emergencies, such as vector-borne and waterborne diseases, acute respiratory infections, diarrheal disease, breakdown in hygiene practices, interrupted health services, inadequate safe water and sanitation options, and malnutrition. Non-communicable

diseases are the main cause of mortality and constitute 75 per cent of all deaths in the country. Armenia is among the most vulnerable countries as far as road safety is concerned, with half of all casualties in Armenia being caused by traffic accidents which become lethal for over 300 people each year.

Consultation with the National Society since 2016 clearly identified the need for the IFRC to return to the region on a new paradigm: to help build a new momentum in the National Society's operating capacity. This plan reflects the support IFRC will provide to the National Society in agreed upon areas. The focus for 2020 will be to strengthen the National Society in key areas such as disaster risk reduction, climate change, Forecast-based Financing, financial sustainability through the resource mobilization development programme, and on delivering a programme to reduce the health impacts of emergencies on vulnerable communities.

## National Society Profile

Over the past twenty years the Armenia Red Cross has developed significantly through IFRC engagement and access to the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement's global network. The National Society now has a country-wide network of 11 regional, one territorial and 52 community branches, some 60 experienced committed staff and over 3,000 volunteers, an improved infrastructure, and stronger links with governmental agencies, local and international organizations. The Armenia Red Cross' governance and management have improved, and branches have been empowered to be better partners for their communities. More and more young people and volunteers are taking an active role in Red Cross services. Through implementation of disaster risk reduction projects in recent years Armenia Red Cross has formed strong disaster management capabilities and has experienced and equipped five Disaster Response teams at headquarters and branch level.

Despite these achievements, the National Society faces a number of challenges, in particular its reliance on external funding. Although intensive efforts have been made in the last three years to assist the National Society to develop marketing skills, forge new partnerships and identify new sources of funding, a large proportion of programmes are still funded by international partners. Moreover, the core structure of the Armenia Red Cross is heavily dependent on external sources, highlighting the need to become a self-sustainable National Society that can implement programmes based on domestically generated and predictable funding.

## Role of the Country Cluster Office

The IFRC Country Cluster Office which supports Armenia Red Cross is based in Tbilisi, Georgia, and covers the three countries of the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. The Country Cluster Office for South Caucasus was established in October 2017, and IFRC operates in Armenia on the basis of the Status Agreement with the government.

The Country Cluster Office in close cooperation with host National Societies and Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners works towards positioning National Societies as reliable and sustainable actors in health, disaster management and social care, in alignment with key agendas at global, regional and country levels. This includes continued reinforcement of the position of the National Societies as implementing partners of choice in their role as auxiliary to public authorities in the humanitarian field and support to National Societies to advocate effectively on key humanitarian issues, including recognition of the role of volunteers in building resilience. The Country Cluster Office will establish regular exchange and thematic briefings with key networks and stakeholders in the region to build representation, humanitarian diplomacy and relationship management. IFRC closely with all Movement components will contribute to the shelter cluster element of UN Country Team contingency plans for natural disasters and will build National Societies' capacities to lead shelter cluster coordination together with IFRC. The Country Cluster Office will work closely with host National Societies and Movement partners to identify opportunities for programmatic scale up and to develop regional large-scale proposals. The objective of the Country Cluster office is to provide a platform for coordination of Movement partners and activities, including fostering relations between National Society sector experts and IFRC thematic leads, as well as strongly promoting financial sustainability of National Societies, and supporting the development and enhancement of Movement Contingency Plans.

It is expected that the structure of the South Caucasus Country Cluster Office will grow to reflect the 2020 plans. Personnel support and funding will be required to properly operationalize the vision and work presented in this plan through the recruitment of Cluster Fundraising Development Officer, Health in Emergencies Officer, First Aid Programme Development Delegate, and Disaster Management Delegate.



## Movement Footprint

Partner National Societies Swiss Red Cross, German Red Cross and Austrian Red Cross are present in Armenia and ICRC has a Country Delegation. Danish Red Cross provides technical support and guidance to Armenia Red Cross from its headquarters and frequent visits to the country. Monaco Red Cross provides its support via the Swiss Red Cross. All Movement partners in South Caucasus have agreed to work together in the spirit and mindset of the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) agreement, with the Council of Delegates Resolution (CD/17/R1, Antalya 2017) as a core guiding document. In 2020 and beyond, this commitment will be transferred into developing Movement Country Plans based on the strategic priorities of the South Caucasus National Societies.

ICRC has strong presence in Armenia due to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and there are currently around 50 ICRC staff members based in Yerevan. ICRC supports the National Society in its institutional and organizational development, mainly strengthening the capacities of the regional and community branches in four regions, implemented with the Danish Red Cross. ICRC also supports first aid activities, access to education, weapon contamination/safe behaviour, tracing service, dissemination of humanitarian principles and values, disaster risk reduction and makes a financial contribution towards resource mobilization development process which is led by the Armenian Red Cross with strong technical and coordination support from the IFRC. As part of the Movement Contingency Plan, it also provides direct support to Armenia Red Cross for its overall safety and security management.



## AREA OF FOCUS

# DISASTER RISK REDUCTION & STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Armenia is regularly affected by disasters, including earthquakes, rock-falls, mudslides, hailstorms, early spring freezing, forest fires, storms and floods. The effects of climate change are expected to make the situation worse, leading to even greater damages and losses. Heatwaves are becoming more frequent with adverse health consequences. There is a need in a scaled-up risk management that addresses risk across the short term (weather), the medium (seasons) and long term (climate change) continuum, to better anticipate disasters and act in advance. In 2020, IFRC and partners will support the National Society to work with the government and key decision-makers to ensure mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into public planning and to promote community engagement.

Armenian Red Cross with support from the IFRC will identify community early warning systems informed by a Forecast-based Financing feasibility study and review gaps in disaster risk reduction to develop a strong programme with community involvement. Forecast-based Financing is a programme that enables access to humanitarian funding for early action based on in-depth forecast information and risk analysis. The goal of Forecast-based Financing is to anticipate disasters, prevent their impact, if possible, and reduce human suffering and losses. IFRC will conduct a tailor-made training for the Armenia Red Cross in Forecast-based Financing and develop a plan of action. In close collaboration with the Climate Change Reference Centre, IFRC will conduct a feasibility study including intensive in-country consultations with stakeholders and develop early action protocols. Early Action Protocol will describe early actions which are feasible given the particular circumstances, time available and capacity for implementation to help reduce the prioritized risks. The Armenian Red Cross seeks support in building good understanding of the impact of heatwaves, especially on hidden populations - older people, people with disabilities, displaced people, people living in hardship conditions - and required response strategies. In close cooperation with key stakeholders IFRC will support the National Society to develop a heatwave preparedness plan and the Red Cross' contribution to the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan. Armenian Red Cross will be actively involved in the work of the thematic group on Climate Change in the country's DRR National Platform.

**NUMBER OF PEOPLE REACHED THROUGH DRR, COMMUNITY  
RESILIENCE AND CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION PROGRAMMES**

**60,000**

**OUTCOME**

**COMMUNITY CONTINGENCY PLANS AND EARLY WARNING  
MECHANISMS ARE DEVELOPED AND LINKED WITH  
METEOROLOGICAL SYSTEMS IN COUNTRY**

**OUTCOME**

**COMMUNITIES AND THE NATIONAL SOCIETY ARE BETTER  
PREPARED TO RESPOND TO DISASTERS**



## AREA OF FOCUS

**HEALTH**

Armenia Red Cross is actively involved in healthcare activities, mainly in promotion of healthy lifestyles and prevention of non-communicable diseases, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis (TB). Non-communicable diseases are a growing concern in Armenia with over 168,000 people living with diabetes. In 2020, IFRC will support Armenia Red Cross to grow the coverage and scale of its non-communicable disease programmes through seeking supporters and providing required expertise and technical support.

Globally, road traffic injuries are the eighth leading cause of death for all age groups. Armenia is among the most vulnerable countries as far as road safety is concerned and traffic accidents are on the rise. 35 per cent of road deaths in Armenia are pedestrians and 30 per cent are passengers. The main causes of traffic accidents are violation of rules and a lack of safe behaviour on the roads. Armenia Red Cross will implement activities that aim to reduce the rate of accidents, injury and death associated with traffic and road safety and address key behaviour risk factors such as speed, drink driving, the use of motorcycle helmets, seat belts and child restraints. IFRC will support the National Society to scale up its response to the road safety and to seek supporters for these life-saving actions.

Disasters, crises and other emergencies result in significant impacts on people's health, including loss of lives, injuries, diseases, disability and psychosocial issues. At present, the health element in disaster preparedness and disaster management planning represents a glaring gap, leaving communities vulnerable.



In 2020, Armenian Red Cross will implement a project with strong technical support from IFRC to strengthen the resilience of local communities to health-related consequences of emergencies and crises. Through the project communities living in remote and disaster-prone areas, which are often hard to reach, will be prepared to help themselves and protect their lives and livelihoods until external help arrives; a community based surveillance system will be established complementary to the existing systems of the Ministry of Health; and essential medical stocks, sanitary and hygiene items will be pre-positioned to enable an immediate health response during disasters. Local health authorities will be supported to implement International Health Regulations and other relevant public health laws and regulations in emergencies. Intersectoral coordination mechanisms will be enhanced between the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, UN agencies and international non-governmental organizations.

#### Key activities:

-  Conduct trainings for Armenia Red Cross staff and volunteers to strengthen health response in emergencies
-  Conduct cascade community-based capacity building actions, interventions, and awareness sessions
-  Improve Armenia Red Cross capacity in disease surveillance at a community level
-  Establish health in emergencies stocks
-  Develop new and adapt existing plans, protocols and procedures for preparedness and response to health emergencies
-  Conduct policy level and advocacy actions
-  Deliver training in first aid, psychological first aid and response to mass casualty events

**NUMBER OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS REACHED WITH INFORMATION ABOUT HEALTH-RELATED CONSEQUENCES OF DISASTERS AND CRISES**

**80,000**

#### OUTCOME

**VULNERABLE PEOPLE'S HEALTH AND DIGNITY ARE IMPROVED THROUGH ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE HEALTH SERVICES**

#### OUTCOME

**COMMUNITIES ARE SUPPORTED BY THE ARMENIAN RED CROSS TO EFFECTIVELY DETECT AND RESPOND TO INFECTIOUS DISEASE OUTBREAKS AND TO HEALTH AND PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS DURING EMERGENCIES**

STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

# STRENGTHEN NATIONAL SOCIETY CAPACITIES & INFLUENCE OTHERS AS LEADING STRATEGIC PARTNER

Armenia Red Cross conducted the Organizational Capacity Assessment and Certification (OCAC) self-assessment exercise at the end of 2014 and adopted a five-year development plan for 2015 to 2019. The two main priorities were to strengthen the branches to deliver better services to vulnerable people and to strengthen its local resource mobilization capacities for financial sustainability, continuity and scale of its services. Armenia Red Cross has made substantial progress in both these areas, including enhanced capacities of branches in planning, budgeting and communication and securing funds from the National Society Investment Alliance (NSIA) to research and plan generation of unearmarked funding. However, more development is needed and IFRC will support the National Society to secure resources to continue to build on these areas.

A Movement Contingency Planning (MCP) process started in 2018 with support of partners, and through this Armenia Red Cross identified a need to diversify its response options beyond the traditional distribution of assistance in-kind. In 2020, the IFRC will support Armenian Red Cross to analyse the required logistics capacities and to establish a logistics development plan as one of the priority areas identified by the Preparedness for Effective Response process (PER). Armenian Red Cross with support from the Danish Red Cross and IFRC will continue to develop its cash transfer programming mechanism and will incorporate cash into its standard operating procedures, toolkits and policies.



With technical support from IFRC and partners, Armenia Red Cross has been actively growing its domestic income generation and fundraising capacities through hiring and training of staff, conducting a market study, developing a resource mobilization strategy, setting up a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, relaunching its online giving mechanism and establishing partnerships with the corporate sector. In 2020, with support and guidance from IFRC, expertise from partner National Societies, and funding (49,500 Swiss francs) from the National Society Investment Alliance (NSIA), Armenia Red Cross will adjust its fundraising strategy based on trials and research, conduct a feasibility study and market assessments on various income generation opportunities, fully configure the CRM and train staff, implement volunteer-driven and community-based fundraising activities and re-launch its corporate fundraising programme. IFRC will recruit a Cluster Fundraising Development Officer who will provide consistent advice, expertise and accompaniment to South Caucasus National Societies in close cooperation with the Regional Office for Europe.

Volunteers are at the forefront of every major shock and stress, responding to problems big and small within their communities. By developing a strong volunteering approach and network, Armenian Red Cross is tackling an issue that is critical to achieving the sustainable development goals—resilience. The Armenian Red Cross seeks support to continue to implement its volunteer development programme that aims to: build a system of effective collaboration with volunteers, enable collective strategies for managing risks through involving volunteers in community resilience and risk reduction initiatives, and provide access to formal volunteering opportunities. This approach will allow to develop skills, create new connections and access resources through a series of well-developed and focused training courses, including psychosocial support, disaster risk reduction, first aid, communications, working in teams. The outcome would be a contribution to the creation of an enabling environment for volunteerism in Armenia.

Furthermore, IFRC will support Armenia Red Cross with revision and development of its post-2020 Strategy as well as with updating its Statutes.

## **OUTCOME**

**THE NATIONAL SOCIETY HAS THE SYSTEMS, STRUCTURES AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY TO EFFECTIVELY SUPPORT VULNERABLE PEOPLE**

## **OUTCOME**

**ARMENIAN RED CROSS HAS EFFECTIVE AND MOTIVATED VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE SUPPORTED, TRAINED AND PROTECTED**

## **OUTCOME**

**CAPACITIES OF ARMENIAN RED CROSS TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY BASED DRR, RESPONSE AND PREPAREDNESS ARE FURTHER ENHANCED**



**Contact information** of the IFRC Country office, for partners who wish to find out more

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