

Alert note

Armenia Armed Conflict, September 2022

The **alert note** is intended to alert all ACT Alliance members to an emerging emergency situation. It provides basic information to inform decision making within the Alliance regarding possible response options and it also forms the 'immediate assessment' of the situation and needs in the affected areas. An alert note should be completed **as soon as it becomes obvious there is a humanitarian emergency**.

The information in the alert note should be kept **short and concise**. Where you do not have information to address a question identified below simply state that the information is not currently available. You will not be expected to have all the information detailed below in the early stages of an emergency.

The alert note should be completed by the forum and sent to the Regional Humanitarian Programme Officer for review and circulation, with a copy to the Regional Representative.

Completed by: Tsovinar Ghazaryan, Armenia Round Table Foundation (ART)

Date completed: 11 October 2022

Forum: ACT Armenia Forum

Type of emergency: Military Attack

Date of emergency (if rapid onset): September 13-15, 2022

Note: Please write your inputs below each section heading. Text in red guides you on the information required under each heading.

1. The nature of the emergency

In the early hours of September 13, 2022, the Azerbaijani military forces launched a large-scale coordinated attack against the sovereign territory of the Republic of Armenia targeting the peaceful borderline communities in the regions of Gegharkunik, Vayots Dzor and Syunik of Armenia. The Azerbaijani armed forces used different types of weapons including heavy artillery, mortars of different calibers, UAVs, large-caliber guns.

2. The impact and scale of the emergency (please include your source of information)

Please type your response here

- i) The emergency is small scale, however, there is a concern for a large-scale offensive.
- ii) The primary geographical focus of the attack is 3 regions of Armenia (Gegharkunik, Vayots Dzor and Syunik) including cities and villages of Kapan, Goris, Jermuk, Vardenis, Sotk, Norabak, Kut, Geghamasar and other borderline communities. According to the Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia, by the beginning of 2020 year population in these 3 regions are as follows: Gegharkunik region - total 222.7 thousand persons (66.6 urban and 161.1 rural), Vayots Dzor region - total 48.5 thousand persons (48.5 urban and 31.4 rural), Syunik region - total 137.3 thousand persons (93.2 urban and 44.1 rural).
- iii) According to ad hoc report by Human Rights Defender Office 7,600 persons were displaced from Gegharkunik, Syunik and Vayots Dzor regions from September 13 to 15. The majority of them were women, children, elderly people, and persons with disabilities, among them 1,437 children and 99 persons with disabilities.
- iv) According to Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia ad hoc report on the consequences of attack (Ad Hoc public report on consequences of Azerbaijani military attack on the Republic of Armenia, September 13-15, 2022 https://www.ombuds.am/images/files/fc7d77e1dcd3e0573173dfa7314e6c46.pdf?fbclid=IwAR00ricw8U5djll01XKComg5MLLMVBI8f40aOAHurMQ_WcAJHqV3pnWcpU), 7,600 people have

been displaced from their place of origin and have found refuge in nearby cities or in the capital Yerevan where majority are women, children, elderly and people with disabilities. About 1,437 children, 99 persons with disabilities, 1 civilian killed, 8 wounded, 6 civilian houses bombed and damaged in Verishen village (Syunik). Fifty civilian houses have been demolished in Sotk and four damaged in Kut villages (Gegharkunik). Also damaged were administrative buildings and school in (Sotk) while ambulance and journalist group have been targeted and shot. While civilian cars have been shelled and six hectares of forest area in the vicinity of Jermuk city (Vayots Dzor) was put in fire by constant shelling. Three fire-fighters were injured, due to constant targeting of the roads people were restricted in travel and access to services and ethnically hateful acts to the bodies of dead Armenian servicemen were filmed and disseminated by Azerbaijani military and bodies of Armenian female military personnel were extremely humiliated.

- v) The attack has adversely impacted public life in the regions and beyond. Displaced people find it difficult to overstay in relatives' houses or pay for rented apartments as their employment is interrupted, of course, not all of the displaced were employed, yet they did not have to pay house rent as they were living in their own houses before the attack. Educational institutions were closed and were granted leave, though education resumed in online mode now. Families with damaged houses must do repairs and prepare for winter, which is severe especially in Gegharkunik, thus adding to the vulnerability of locals. As the situation remains tense, women and children are kept away and many fear to return. The male population stays in the villages on the front line to safeguard houses and property. The displacement has considerably increased and stretched family budgets. There is another vulnerability among families with casualties, many of those killed were on contract base, the widows have now to take care of the children and in-laws. There is another trauma in families who escaped in a hurry, as the attack caught them at midnight and unprepared. As the war is not over people live in constant threat for their security and lives. Parish priests and social workers have been giving psychosocial support where needed.

3. Local and national capacity

- i) People self-organized and moved from the villages and cities under attack to relatively safer sites, they found refuge in relative's houses, or rented apartments. At the site village to Sotk (Gegharkunik region, October 4, 2022) people asked for support with winter heating, warm clothes, food supplies. Above all, people prioritized peace and human security.
- ii) ART was invited to consultations at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, which shared online tool for information collection on needs and damages, also asked about the resources that civil society and UN structures could contribute to emergency response. The Ministry has also provided list with contact details of people responsible for emergency response coordination and cooperation with CSOs. ART has contacted 3 regional offices by telephone and in writing asking for data and information on damages, 1 reply was received from Gegharkunik region and ART staff participated in food distribution in Sotk (one of the largest and most affected communities on front line) to war affected people, the aid was arranged and delivered by Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, Armenian Apostolic Church.
- iii) There is a Disaster risk management national strategy and action plan (<http://www.mes.am/en/arn-senda>) accessible on the site of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of RoA, report on the progress of its implementation is not found.
- iv) Armenia is in the state of emergency and under force major circumstances no plan has been introduced to civil society organizations by national structure or UN.
- v) ART used to be a part of UN protection group after 2020 September war, however, there is no organized forum or ART is not a part of any which is invited now to deal with the emergency response of 2022 September war.

4. Key needs and gaps

- i) To reduce further vulnerability of people and alleviate their suffering ACT Armenia Forum plans to support peaceful communities, the most affected on the front line, in Gegharkunik region and upon funding possibilities in Syunik with cash-based assistance. In view of approaching winter which is harsh in Gegharkunik and the need identified at the site visit of October 4 to Gegharkunik region, it is suggested to provide households with cash for winter heating. ART will pay home visits to identify the most affected (civilian houses with damages, families with killed servicemen,

missing or captive, single mothers with minors and in-laws left under women’s care) as primary recipients for cash for winter heating.

ii) The ad hoc report by Human Rights Defender Office is the main source of information on the consequences of September 2022 attack, other than that there is no official report or analysis available for civil society organizations, which leaves gaps in information on the type of support and needs of people of concern. To fill in the gap ART contacted regional offices of the Unified Social Service of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of RoA, parish priests and social workers of ART supported church related social centres, the Church related structures are most informative on the ongoing needs and situation in the war affected communities. The major information gap is also in the knowledge and coordination among other actors involved in aid delivery, if any.

Please indicate whether you are considering:

	Indicate your intention with an X below
Rapid Response Fund (<i>intended for small and medium scale emergencies</i>)	X
Appeal (<i>intended for large scale emergencies</i>)	

If you indicate an intention to launch an appeal, the secretariat will activate an Emergency Steering Committee meeting within two working days on receipt of this alert.

Capacity details of forum members with the intention to respond are given below.

ACT Member	Geographical focus	Sectors of expertise	Support required	Estimated Budget range
ACT Armenia Forum	Gegharkunik region of the Republic of Armenia	Protection	Funding	50,000 USD

5. Potential responses

i) ACT Armenia Forum member Armenia Round Table Foundation is operational in the worst affected area of Gegharkunik region. ART, UMCOR Armenia and ECLOF have experiences in emergency responses (cash, food, hygiene, shelter, psycho-social support).

ii) The initial plan is to respond with cash based assistance to 187 families for winter heating costs. The actual number of displaced families in Gegharkunik region is higher (according to non-official source there are 366 families). Given the requested fund in the amount of 50,000 USD, the intention is to provide a rounded lump sum of 100,000 AMD (about 250 USD) per family, this will be roughly enough to cover the heating costs for about 1.5- 2 months.

iii) ART and ACT Armenia Forum members staff will be engaged in identification of families for support, home visits, cash distribution (ART will make bank transfers to beneficiary account, ART has experience in administering cash based assistance emergency response project), monitoring and reporting, cooperation with local authorities, church and national agencies.

Funding in the amount of 50,000 USD is requested.