

ARMENIA:

Need to monitor progress towards durable solutions

A profile of the internal displacement situation

23 February, 2010

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The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, established in 1998 by the Norwegian Refugee Council, is the leading international body monitoring conflict-induced internal displacement worldwide.

Through its work, the Centre contributes to improving national and international capacities to protect and assist the millions of people around the globe who have been displaced within their own country as a result of conflicts or human rights violations.

At the request of the United Nations, the Geneva-based Centre runs an online database providing comprehensive information and analysis on internal displacement in some 50 countries.

Based on its monitoring and data collection activities, the Centre advocates for durable solutions to the plight of the internally displaced in line with international standards.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre also carries out training activities to enhance the capacity of local actors to respond to the needs of internally displaced people. In its work, the Centre cooperates with and provides support to local and national civil society initiatives.

For more information, visit the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre website and the database at www.internal-displacement.org.

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

Norwegian Refugee Council
Chemin de Balexert 7-9
1219 Geneva, Switzerland
Tel.: +41 22 799 07 00
idmc@nrc.ch
www.internal-displacement.org

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OVERVIEW

Need to monitor progress towards durable solutions

Some 20 years after the beginning of Armenia's war with Azerbaijan and related violence, information on the remaining 8,400 people internally displaced is scarce. People internally displaced by the conflict have received hardly any government attention because other larger refugee and internally displaced groups have made competing demands on the state budget in a time of economic transition and crisis. International organisations have also largely neglected their plight. The low public profile and lack of registration and monitoring of these internally displaced people (IDPs) and returnees have made it difficult to estimate how many have achieved durable solutions.

IDPs and returnees face some of the same challenges as their non-displaced neighbours, and some face additional particular hardships including the loss of or damage to property, the unavailability of property restitution or compensation mechanisms, the inability to visit former homes and the continuing insecurity in border areas. Some suffered psychological trauma during the war, depend on welfare and are only minimally engaged in economic activities.

The remaining IDPs and returnees will not achieve durable solutions until their specific needs are identified and addressed, reconciliation initiatives established and, above all, a peace agreement is realised. There is a need to support IDPs who have chosen to integrate in their place of displacement, accelerate recovery in border areas, create non-agricultural work for returnees and adopt a national housing strategy giving special consideration to IDPs whose housing was damaged or destroyed.

Background

The origins of the Nagorno-Karabakh territorial dispute go back centuries. The current conflict is based on the 1923 Soviet decision to allocate the *oblast* (region) of Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijan, although most of its population were Armenian. When in 1988 the Nagorno-Karabakh authorities voted to unite with Armenia, fighting erupted between Armenians and Azerbaijanis in Nagorno-Karabakh which soon sparked ethnic conflict elsewhere in Azerbaijan. By 1992 this had escalated to full-scale conflict between Azerbaijan, Armenia and Armenian-supported secessionists. By the time a ceasefire agreement was signed in 1994, Azerbaijan had lost effective control of Nagorno-Karabakh and several adjacent regions, some 30,000 people had been killed and over a million people were displaced within and from Armenia and Azerbaijan (Cohen and Deng, 1998). The leaders of Nagorno-Karabakh declared independence in 1992, following a local referendum, but neither Armenia nor any other state has recognised it. The Nagorno-Karabakh authorities have de facto control over the territory, while Armenia assists it militarily and financially (ICHD, September 2009).

A sustainable negotiated solution to the conflict appears remote. Talks within the framework of the Minsk Group convened by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe continue between Armenia and Azerbaijan without significant progress. Comprised of mediators from France, Russia and the United States, the Minsk Group must reconcile the opposing principles of self-determination and territorial integrity. Armenia refuses to relinquish control over the areas it occupies until mechanisms for determining Nagorno-Karabakh's future status are put in place, while Azerbaijan insists on the non-violability of its internationally recognised frontiers. Meanwhile, both countries are increasing their military budgets and rhetoric (ICHD, September

2009; ICG, 31 January 2008). Some observers believe the 2009 improvement in relations between Armenia and Turkey could presage a solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute, as Turkish officials have suggested that they will ratify the agreement with Armenia only when there is a breakthrough in its negotiations with Azerbaijan (RFE/RL, 1 December 2009).

IDP figures and patterns

Internal displacement in Armenia has largely been the result of armed conflict and natural disasters. The conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh forced about 65,000 people to flee their homes and the 1988 earthquake in the Spitak region rendered some 500,000 people homeless. In 2000 the Armenian government estimated that 100,000 people were still displaced by the 1988 earthquake and about 20,000 by other natural and man-made disasters (UNCHR, 6 November 2000).

A 2004 survey of internally displaced people (IDPs) conducted by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) concluded that there were some 8,400 conflict-induced IDPs remaining, with the rest having returned to their villages, settled elsewhere or emigrated (NRC, 1 March 2005). More recent figures on IDPs are not available.

IDPs who fled the conflict were displaced mainly from areas bordering Azerbaijan. In descending order these included the provinces of Syunik, Tavush, Gegharkunik, Vayots Dzor and Ararat. Armenians living in Artsvashen, an outlying district of the Armenian province of Gegharkunik completely surrounded by Azerbaijani territory, were also displaced. Many villages were totally evacuated, some more than once. Separation of families was common, as women, children and the elderly were usually the first to leave their villages to live in summer pasture areas, while men stayed behind (Cohen and Deng, 1998; IDMC, November 2009). As the conflict continued, men joined their families and then moved to more central locations while some went abroad. By 2004 almost 90 per cent of the remaining 8,400 IDPs were living in Syunik, Tavush and Gegharkunik provinces (NRC, 1 March 2005).

Durable settlement option for IDPs

There are conflicting figures on the number of IDPs who have returned to their homes. In 1998, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) believed most IDPs had returned (Cohen and Deng, 1998), while in 2000 the government reported that 28,000 had done so (UNCHR, 6 November 2000). In 2006, NRC reported that more than half had returned (NRC, 2006). However, in 2009 the US State Department reported that most of the original 65,000 IDPs had returned or settled elsewhere, but that about 43,000 could not return due to socio-economic constraints, fear of landmines or because their villages were surrounded by Azerbaijani territory (USDoS, 25 February 2009).

Current information on IDPs who have integrated in the place of displacement or settled elsewhere is not available. In 2004 an NRC survey concluded that 11 per cent of IDPs were living outside of their original villages. There have been no major barriers to integration, but there have also not been any programmes in place to facilitate it (IDMC, November 2009). Some have managed to buy houses, while others rent or look after homes of Armenian labour migrants working abroad. With little prospect of return to Azerbaijani-controlled territory the 3,000 IDPs from Artsvashen have opted for local integration.

Protection issues facing conflict-induced IDPs

Physical security in border areas

Returnees in some border areas are not fully safe. Skirmishes have reportedly continued between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces along the 120-kilometre frontline, which is not supervised by international peacekeepers (ICHD, September 2009). Some returnees have reported that they regularly hear gunfire and explosions extremely close to their villages (IDMC, November 2009). A 2005 landmine impact survey reported that 60 communities in five border provinces were still affected by mines or unexploded ordnance (ICBL, 2009). It is not known whether the Ministry of Defense is currently conducting demining activities (ICBL, 2009). The Armenian government contends that mines along the border with Azerbaijan are essential to its defense and will not be removed until peace is established. The presence of landmines and unexploded ordnance has clearly affected returnees' farming livelihoods (IDMC, November 2009; IWPR, 5 July 2007).

Housing situation of IDPs and returnees

Some IDPs and returnees reported in 2009 that their lack of permanent housing was what primarily distinguishes them from their non-displaced neighbours (IDMC, November 2009). Following their displacement, IDPs initially lodged with family or friends or managed to secure temporary accommodation in apartments or public buildings as the government did not offer them housing assistance (Cohen and Deng, 1998). By 2009, most were living in rented accommodation or with relatives and friends. Some had only oral tenancy agreements, earned little and were dependent on landlords. Only a small number had managed to buy homes; banks were reportedly particularly reluctant to lend to IDPs, even those with stable incomes (IDMC, November 2009).

In 2007 the Armenian NGO Legal Guide sent over 200 applications to the European Court of Human Rights on behalf of applicants who fled Artsvashen. The applicants argued that the government of Azerbaijan had violated their right to enjoy their property, among other rights. The Court has yet to decide on the admissibility or merits of these cases.

After the conflict ended, some returnees had to contend with significant damage to their homes. Over 25 per cent of houses in the border regions were damaged and three per cent were destroyed (NRC, 1 March 2005). Many schools, health posts, roads, and water and irrigation systems were also in need of reconstruction and repair. Returnees reported that there had been no secondary occupation of their homes and they were able to repossess them without interference (IDMC, November 2009). They mainly rebuilt houses on their own, but some enjoyed offers of accommodation and labour from relatives.

Local governments provided some limited assistance for reconstruction in 1994, and some IDPs from Artsvashen also received housing assistance. Recognising that this group had minimal prospects of return, in 2007 NRC repaired homes for them in the town of Chambarak (NRC, 30 January 2008). Some IDPs from Artsvashen were also reportedly given \$400 in 1992 to buy houses from members of the Molokan community who were emigrating.

Many IDPs who fled their homes as a result of the 1988 earthquake experience ongoing housing difficulties. Thousands have lived in settlements of *domiks* (shipping containers) for over two decades, although they were intended to be temporary housing. While they all have electricity, containers lack insulation, making them unbearably hot in the summer and cold in the winter. Some residents have interior plumbing while others depend on outdoor taps. Some have renovated their containers and now own them, while others rent and contend with vermin and leaking roofs. Recently, some residents have been forcibly resettled to another *domik* settlement as the government has sold the land without consulting or giving notice to residents. The last such eviction was in September 2009. Private houses and buildings have been constructed in the place of some removed containers.

Unstable incomes of IDPs and returnees

There is limited specific information on the employment or income status of IDPs and returnees. In 2004 about 70 per cent of IDPs considered themselves economically self-sufficient (NRC, 1 March 2005). While some IDPs and returnees employed by the state have fixed salaries, many still lack stable employment and regular income (IDMC, November 2009). Those who have chosen to integrate in their area of displacement have had to adapt to an urban labour environment. Agriculture is the main source of income in return areas, followed by temporary jobs, old age pensions and family welfare payments.

Conflict and the subsequent internal displacement crisis occurred just as the difficult transition to a market economy and new political system marked a steep decline in living standards across Armenia. The economic crisis was exacerbated by the closure of borders with Turkey and Azerbaijan. Enterprises manufacturing textiles, shoes, processed foods and cigarettes in border areas closed and have not reopened. IDPs and others in border areas were hard hit. In 2009 Syunik and Tavush provinces had the highest unemployment rates among return areas, 11.8 per cent and 9.0 per cent respectively, compared to 6.3 per cent in Yerevan, the Armenian capital (Government of Armenia, December 2009).

Market reforms and the privatisation of farms have transformed the farming sector on which most IDPs were primarily dependent prior to the conflict. Meanwhile, much cultivable land in border areas lies unused due to shortages of modern agricultural equipment, expertise, seeds and labour. Irrigation systems are still damaged and landmines pose risks for farmers (IOM, January 1999; UNCHR, 6 November 2000; ACF 2009). Poor roads and high transportation costs prevent farmers from taking products to market. Armenia is dependent on imports for 60 per cent of the wheat it consumes (UN FAO, 15 December 2008). In 2006, the government adopted the Agricultural Sustainable Development Strategy to assist the agricultural sector (Government of Armenia, 2006), but the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation has since urged it to focus more on agriculture (UN FAO, 15 December 2008).

Poverty alleviation programmes have not addressed IDPs' particular vulnerabilities. The state welfare system (known as PAROS) makes special provision for the additional vulnerability of being a refugee, but does not give similar weighting to internal displacement. As the PAROS system does not specifically identify IDPs it is impossible to assess the number who receive social benefits. IDPs have reported that assessment of their socio-economic status is often dependent on the whims of government inspectors (IDMC, November 2009). In theory they should revisit the homes of recipients every three months to confirm their circumstances, but some are bribed not to do so (IDMC, November 2009).

Education in conflict-affected villages

Returnees report that children generally go to school, study hard and are increasingly pursuing higher education (IDMC, November 2009). While some parents, usually the poorest and most socially disadvantaged, have been unable to register the birth of children, potentially depriving them of essential social services, this does not seem to have prevented their access to education: in Armenia 98 per cent of school-age children are enrolled (USDoS, 25 February 2009; World Bank, 2007).

The main shortcoming in education in conflict-affected areas is quality. The number of schools, teachers and supplies are adequate to meet students' needs but many schools need to be renovated and some teachers need additional training. Many educational facilities are underfunded, though major renovations have been initiated in some areas with government and foreign funding. Lack of funds for heating fuel means some schools have extended winter breaks (USDoS, 25 February 2009). Some parents report teachers use outdated teaching methods and

the curriculum does not prepare their children for the university entrance exam. As a result, parents turn to private tutoring to improve their children's prospects of tertiary education (IDMC, November 2009). Some teachers have solicited bribes for good grades (USDoS, 25 February 2009).

Some households depend on income from children. A 2007 study showed that about six per cent of households had at least one child involved in paid work. Most were boys between the ages of 14 and 18, working in agriculture, trade and construction. A third of them were below the legal working age of 16. About 60 per cent combined work and school, while 30 per cent had dropped out of school because of costs and lack of interest (Harmonic Society, 2007). Post-primary dropout rates are high, especially among poor students (USDoS, 25 February 2009).

Health of IDPs and returnees

Primary health care is free of charge and people are free to choose their provider. However, officials often require overt or concealed payment for services and medicines (USDoS, 25 February 2009). These payments can comprise two thirds of total health care costs and some may not receive the treatment they require as a result (Oxfam, 2004). The government has recently cracked down on this corruption and as one such measure issues expectant mothers a voucher for prenatal care and delivery (IDMC, November 2009). Despite subsidies, many poor people cannot afford drugs on the government's essential medicines list.

There is no available health information relating specifically to IDPs and returnees. Most IDPs and returnees report having a health post in their village, but larger "polyclinics" are usually over 20 kilometres away (IDMC, November 2009). The already low uptake of primary health care services fell substantially after independence and is now well below levels in the European Union (WHO, 2009). This is despite a state-funded programme to ensure vulnerable groups have priority access to public health services. Cost and poor quality of care are the main reasons for low usage (NHDS, 2003).

The government estimated that 62 medical clinics were damaged in border regions during the conflict (UNCHR, 6 November 2000). A 1999 IOM study of the border provinces showed that 60 per cent of researched villages had medical offices, but that only 20 per cent were fully staffed. While village health posts now have nurses, some have no water supplies and many nurses lack updated skills (IDMC, November 2009). The number of nurses has decreased since independence and is now substantially below that in other ex-Soviet states and the European Union (WHO, 2009). There is insufficient emphasis on preventive care, reproductive health and gender-based violence (IDMC, November 2009). The number of dentists has remained nearly unchanged since independence but there has been a sharp decline in the number of pharmacists. Health professionals lack prestige and are poorly paid.

Community health insurance schemes established by Oxfam have increased the access of vulnerable groups in selected areas to appropriate health care services. Households pay a quarterly insurance premium, which entitles them to basic drugs and services offered at health posts. The programme has helped rehabilitate health posts, provide them with drugs and equipment and improve training of nurses. The schemes are now important providers of health care in rural communities, ensuring that vulnerable populations of women, older persons and the poor have equal access to services (Polonsky et al., 22 February 2009).

Government response remains limited

While the Armenian government has called conflict-induced IDPs "the forsaken people" their plight has been overshadowed by the needs of the greater number of refugees from Azerbaijan and earthquake-induced IDPs. Government support to this group has been and remains limited,

and most assistance has come through generalised poverty alleviation and welfare programmes, which do not acknowledge internal displacement among entitlement criteria.

There has been no specific national or international focus on IDPs and little information on their numbers, whereabouts and needs (UNCHR, 6 November 2000). The 2000 visit of Francis Deng, the Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons (the RSG), prompted the government to pay greater attention to conflict-induced IDPs, but this happened over a decade after their displacement and has not resulted in any significant improvement in their situation. The ongoing lack of official acknowledgement that displacement has contributed to IDPs' special circumstances is reflected in the lack of prioritization of initiatives to help them achieve durable solutions and that IDPs have not been consulted regarding decisions that affect them.

Unlike other governments in the region, Armenia has not adopted a national legal framework to uphold the rights of conflict-induced IDPs. The Law on Protection of Population in Emergency Situations covers only natural or human-made disasters and excludes displacement as a result of conflict, human rights violations and generalised violence. The government views conflict-induced IDPs as normal citizens who enjoy the same constitutionally-guaranteed rights as other Armenians. The national human rights institution has also not taken an interest in addressing internal displacement.

Nevertheless, the government has taken some relevant measures. The State Migration Service in the Ministry of Territorial Administration became the national focal point for all those affected by forced displacement in 2010. Its predecessors, the Department of Migration and Refugees and later the State Migration Agency, first collected data on the number and conditions of IDPs only ten years after their displacement and then only due to encouragement and funding from abroad. The government translated the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement into Armenian with the support of the UN Development Programme (UNDP), but agency staff have not been trained on the rights of IDPs.

Following the RSG's visit in 2000, the government proposed several programmes to help conflict-induced IDPs and others in return areas, but none has been implemented due to financial constraints. The most recent, outlined in 2008, aimed to help 626 internally displaced families return to their homes, to integrate returnees and conflict-affected households and to rebuild infrastructure in return areas (Government of Armenia, 25 September 2008). Foreign donors have been reluctant to contribute to these programmes in the absence of resources allocated by the government.

However, in some border communities the government has improved access to drinking water, renovated houses and repaired irrigation systems. Some IDPs living in temporary shelters have been included in a scheme to offer residential land title there (Government of Armenia, 5 November 2004).

International response

The international response to conflict-induced displacement in Armenia has been piecemeal. The main engaged international organisations have been NRC, the Danish Refugee Council and the UN Development Programme (UNDP). Given the protracted nature of the conflict, many donors and organisations have long shifted their attention elsewhere and no longer assist conflict-induced IDPs. However, some earthquake-displaced IDPs still receive assistance from the International Committee of the Red Cross (IDMC, November 2009). Currently Armenia's main donors are France, Germany, Sweden, Greece, Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the European Commission. The World Bank has also provided significant aid. This external support

has not specifically targeted them, but IDPs and returnees have benefited from the funding of health, education, water, agriculture and energy programmes.

A project entitled Sustainable Livelihoods for Socially Vulnerable Refugees, Internally Displaced and Local Families in Armenia is being implemented by UNHCR, UNDP, the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and the UN Children's Agency (UNICEF). Its goals are to reduce poverty, improve access to services, help vulnerable groups develop sustainable livelihoods and build the capacity of beneficiaries and government officials. The project has provisions to include a small number of vulnerable IDP families with units in a building being converted into social housing. This will be similar to long-completed social housing projects facilitated by UNHCR and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation for refugees from Azerbaijan and for other vulnerable groups.

European institutions have promoted the rights of IDPs and pushed for settlement of the conflict with Azerbaijan. The Council of Europe has deplored ceasefire violations (CoE, 13 April 2006) and urged the government to push for a peaceful resolution to the conflict (CoE, 23 January 2007; CoE, 13 April 2006), to become a member of the Council of Europe Development Bank (which could open new funding channels for IDP-related programmes) (CoE, 8 June 2009) and to pay special attention to the needs of displaced women (CoE, 16 March 2007). Following his mission to Armenia in 2007, the Council's Commissioner for Human Rights called on the government to ensure that all refugees and IDPs who fled as a result of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict are adequately housed (CoE, 30 April 2008).

The EU's European Neighbourhood Plan calls on Armenia to commit to a peaceful resolution of conflict, to provide assistance to IDPs, to encourage people-to-people contacts and to promote the active involvement of civil society. Analysts have suggested, however, that the EU should take a firmer approach to promoting resolution of the conflict (ICHD, September 2009). The EU has put only limited pressure on the Armenian government to forge people-to-people contacts and engage civil society. However, in recent years the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus has become more active, for instance by presenting confidence-building measures. The EU should now enhance the mandate to enable the Special Representative to visit Nagorno-Karabakh.

Необходим мониторинг прогресса на пути к долговременным решениям

Около 20 лет после начала войны между Арменией и Азербайджаном и сопровождающего ее насилия, имеется лишь скудная информация о все еще остающихся 8400 внутренне перемещенными лицами. Люди, оказавшиеся внутренне перемещенными в результате этого конфликта, практически лишены внимания правительства в силу того, что другие более крупные группы беженцев и внутренне перемещенных лиц претендуют на государственный бюджет в период экономических перемен и кризиса. Международные организации также в основном игнорируют их затруднительное положение. Недостаточное внимание со стороны общественности и отсутствие регистрации и мониторинга этой группы внутренне перемещенных лиц (ВПЛ) и лиц, возвратившихся к месту своего проживания, не позволяют оценить, для какого числа из них были достигнуты долговременные решения.

ВПЛ и возвратившиеся лица сталкиваются с теми же проблемами, что их неперемещенные соседи, а некоторые из них, помимо этого, оказываются перед лицом дополнительных особых трудностей, включая утрату или ущерб имуществу, отсутствие механизмов реституции или возмещения убытков, отсутствие возможности посещения своих бывших мест проживания и продолжающееся

отсутствие безопасности в приграничных районах. Некоторым из них пришлось пережить психологическую травму во время войны и они находятся на социальном обеспечении и лишь минимально заняты в экономической деятельности.

Остающиеся ВПЛ и возвратившиеся лица не могут добиться долгосрочных решений до тех пор, пока не будут определены и удовлетворены их конкретные потребности, предприняты инициативы по урегулированию разногласий и, прежде всего, пока не будет реализовано мирное соглашение. Необходимо оказывать поддержку тем ВПЛ, которые приняли решения интегрироваться на новом месте, ускорить восстановление приграничных районов, создавать рабочие места для возвратившихся лиц вне сельскохозяйственного сектора и принять государственную политику обеспечения жильем, которая учитывала бы особым образом нужды ВПЛ, чьи жилища были повреждены или разрушены.

Историческая справка

История нагорно-карабахского конфликта насчитывает века. Истоки нынешнего конфликта уходят в 1923 год, когда советское правительство приняло решение отнести Нагорно-Карабахскую область к Азербайджану, несмотря на то, что большинство ее населения – армяне. Когда в 1988 году власти Нагорного Карабаха проголосовали за воссоединение с Арменией, в Нагорном Карабахе начались столкновения между армянским и азербайджанским населением, которые вскоре привели к этническим конфликтам на всей территории Азербайджана. К 1992 году их эскалация привела к полномасштабному конфликту между Азербайджаном, Арменией и поддерживаемыми Арменией сепаратистами. К тому времени, когда в 1994 году было подписано соглашение о прекращении огня, Азербайджан фактически утратил контроль над Нагорным Карабахом и несколькими прилегающими районами, 30 тысяч человек погибли, а более миллиона человек оказались перемещенными внутри Армении и Азербайджана и за их пределами (Cohen and Deng, 1998). В 1992 году власти Нагорного Карабаха по результатам местного референдума объявили о его независимости, которую не признали ни Армения, ни одно другое государство. Власти Нагорного Карабаха *де факто* осуществляют контроль над его территорией, в то время как Армения оказывает военную и финансовую помощь (ICHD, сентябрь 2009).

Устойчивое, достигнутое в результате договоренностей решение этого конфликта представляется делом будущего. Переговоры между Арменией и Азербайджаном в рамках Минской группы, созванной Организацией по безопасности и сотрудничеству в Европе, продолжаются без значимых результатов. Состоящая из представителей стран-посредников – Франции, России и Соединенных Штатов – Минская группа должна примирить противоположные принципы самоопределения и территориальной целостности. Армения отказывается уступить контроль над оккупированными ей районами до тех пор, пока не будут приведены в действие механизмы для определения будущего статуса Нагорного Карабаха, в то время как Азербайджан настаивает на неприкосновенности своих международно признанных границ. Тем временем, обе страны наращивают свои военные бюджеты и риторику (ICHD, сентябрь 2009; ICG, 31 января 2008). Некоторые наблюдатели считают, что улучшение отношений между Арменией и Турцией в 2009 году может стать предвестником решения нагорно-карабахского спора, поскольку турецкие официальные лица заявили о том, что ратифицируют соглашение с Арменией только тогда, когда наступит прорыв в ее переговорах с Азербайджаном (RFE/RL, 1 декабря 2009).

ВПЛ – цифры и примеры

Внутреннее перемещение в Нагорном Карабахе в основном происходило в результате вооруженных конфликтов и стихийных бедствий. Нагорно-карабахский конфликт заставил 65000 человек покинуть свои жилища, а землетрясение в районе Спитака в 1988 году лишило крова около 500000 человек. По оценкам правительства Армении, проведенным в 2000 году, 100000 человек оставались в положении перемещенных лиц в результате землетрясения 1988 года, а около 20000 – в результате других стихийных бедствий и антропогенных катастроф. (UNCHR, 6 ноября 2000).

Проведенное в 2004 году Норвежским советом по делам беженцев (NRC) обследование внутренне перемещенных лиц (ВПЛ) привело к выводу, что там по-прежнему проживает около 8400 оказавшихся перемещенными в результате конфликта ВПЛ, в то время как остальные ВПЛ вернулись в свои села, поселились в других местах либо эмигрировали (NRC, 1 марта 2005). Более свежих данных по ВПЛ не имеется.

Спасаясь от конфликта ВПЛ в основном перемещались из районов, граничащих с Азербайджаном. По мере убывания к ним относятся провинции Сюник, Тавуш, Гегаркуник, Воец Дзор и Арарат. Армяне, проживающие в анклавном селе Арцвашен в провинции Гегаркуник, полностью окруженного азербайджанской территорией, также оказались перемещенными. Многие деревни были полностью эвакуированы, некоторые по несколько раз. Широко распространено разделение семей, поскольку женщины, дети и старики обычно первыми покидали свои села, и селились на летних пастбищах, в то время как мужчины оставались (Cohen and Deng, 1998; IDMC, ноябрь 2009). По мере развития конфликта мужчины воссоединялись со своими семьями и затем переезжали в более центральные районы, а некоторые уезжали за границу. К 2004 году почти 90 % из 8400 ВПЛ проживали в провинциях Сюник, Тавуш и Гегаркуник (NRC, 1 марта 2005).

Долгосрочные варианты урегулирования для ВПЛ

Существуют противоречивые данные о числе ВПЛ, вернувшихся в свои дома. В 1998 году Управление Верховного Комиссара ООН по делам беженцев (УВКБ ООН) считало, что большинство ВПЛ возвратились к местам своего проживания (Cohen and Deng, 1998), в то время как в 2000 году правительство сообщало, что их число составляло 28000 (UNCHR, 6 ноября 2000). В 2006 году NRC сообщил, что возвратились более половины из них (NRC, 2006). Тем не менее, в 2009 году Госдепартамент США сообщил, что большинство из первоначального числа ВПЛ (65000) возвратились или поселились в других местах, но при этом около 43000 не могли вернуться в силу социально-экономической напряженности, из-за боязни наземных мин или по причине того, что их села окружены азербайджанской территорией (USDoS, 25 февраля 2009).

Более свежей информации о ВПЛ, интегрировавшихся на месте перемещения или поселившихся в других местах, не имеется. По результатам обследования NRC 2004 года, 11 % ВПЛ проживали за пределами своих родных сел. Не отмечено особых препятствий на пути интеграции, но нет и программ, которые бы ей содействовали (IDMC, ноябрь 2009). Некоторым ВПЛ удалось приобрести свои дома, в то время как другие арендуют жилплощадь либо присматривают за домами армянских трудовых мигрантов, работающих за границей. Не имея особых перспектив возвращения на контролируемую Азербайджаном территорию, 3000 ВПЛ из Арцвашена выбрали путь интеграции на новом месте.

Вопросы защиты ВПЛ, оказавшихся перемещенными в результате конфликта

Физическая безопасность в приграничных районах

В некоторых приграничных районах возвратившиеся лица не находятся в полной безопасности. Поступают сообщения о вооруженных столкновениях между армянскими и азербайджанскими подразделениями вдоль 120-километровой прифронтовой зоны, не контролируемой международными силами по поддержанию мира (ICHD, сентябрь 2009). Некоторые возвратившиеся лица сообщают, что регулярно слышат стрельбу и взрывы в непосредственной близости от своих деревень (IDMC, ноябрь 2009). По результатам проведенного в 2005 году обзора воздействия наземных мин, 60 общин в пяти приграничных провинциях все еще находятся под угрозой мин или невзорвавшихся боеприпасов (ICBL, 2009). Нет данных о том, проводит ли Министерство обороны в настоящее время мероприятия по разминированию (ICBL, 2009). Правительство Армении утверждает, что мины вдоль границы с Азербайджаном необходимы для ее защиты и не будут удалены до тех пор, пока не будет достигнуто мирное урегулирование. Присутствие наземных мин и невзорвавшихся боеприпасов явно препятствует усилиям возвратившихся лиц заработать себе на жизнь фермерским трудом. (IDMC, ноябрь 2009; IWPR, 5 июля 2007).

Жилищное положение ВПЛ и возвратившихся лиц

Некоторые ВПЛ и возвратившиеся лица сообщали в 2009 г., что их основное отличие от перемещенных соседей – отсутствие жилья (IDMC, ноябрь 2009 г.). После перемещения ВПЛ первоначально проживали в семьях, а также у друзей, или им удавалось найти временное жилье в квартирах или в общественно-административных зданиях, поскольку правительство не предложило им помощь в размещении (Cohen and Deng, 1998). К 2009 г. большинство из них проживали в съемных квартирах или с родственниками и друзьями. У некоторых была только устная договоренность на аренду, они мало зарабатывали и зависели от хозяев жилья. Лишь немногие смогли купить собственное жилье, а банки, как сообщают, особенно неохотно выдают кредит ВПЛ – даже тем, кто имеет постоянный заработок (IDMC, ноябрь 2009 г.).

В 2007 г. армянская НПО *Legal Guide* направила около 200 заявлений в Европейский суд по правам человека от имени просителей, которые бежали из Арцвашена. Просители утверждают, что правительство Азербайджана нарушило их права на владение своей собственностью, помимо других прав. Суд еще не принял решение относительно приемлемости или существования данных дел.

После окончания конфликта некоторым возвратившимся лицам пришлось столкнуться со значительным ущербом, нанесенным их домам. Около 25 процентов домов в приграничных районах были повреждены, а три процента – полностью разрушены (NRC, 1 марта 2005 г.). Многие школы, медпункты, дороги, а также системы водоснабжения и ирригации нуждались в восстановлении и ремонте. Возвратившиеся лица сообщали об отсутствии повторного заселения их домов, в результате чего они смогли без помех снова вступить во владение (IDMC, ноябрь 2009 г.). В основном они сами восстанавливали дома, но некоторые воспользовались предложениями от родственников относительно размещения и рабочей силы.

Местные власти предоставили ВПЛ ограниченную помощь при восстановлении в 1994 г., а некоторые ВПЛ из Арцвашена получили также поддержку в получении жилья. Признавая, что данная группа имеет минимальные перспективы на возвращение, в 2007 г. NRC отремонтировал для них дома в городе Чамбарак (NRC, 30 января 2008 г.). По сообщениям, некоторые ВПЛ из Арцвашена получили также по 400 долларов США в 1992 г. на покупку домов у эмигрирующих членов общины молокан.

Многие ВПЛ, покинувшие свои дома в результате землетрясения 1998 года продолжают сталкиваться с проблемой жилья. Тысячи проживают в поселках, состоящих из домиков

(грузовых контейнеров) в течение двух десятилетий, хотя они предназначались для временного проживания. Хотя все они снабжены электричеством, у контейнеров отсутствует изоляция, делая их невероятно жаркими летом и холодными зимой. Некоторые жильцы имеют внутренний водопровод, а другие зависят от кранов на открытом воздухе. Некоторые реконструировали свои контейнеры и сейчас являются их владельцами, другие арендуют их и борются с вредителями и протекающими крышами. Недавно некоторые жильцы были насильно переселены в другой поселок щитовых домиков, поскольку правительство продало землю без консультаций и предупреждений жильцам. Последнее подобное выселение было в сентябре 2009 г. На месте снесенных контейнеров были построены частные дома и здания.

Нестабильные доходы ВПЛ и возвратившихся лиц

Конкретная информация о занятости или доходах ВПЛ и возвратившихся лиц ограничена. В 2004 г. около 70 процентов ВПЛ считали себя экономически самостоятельными (NRC, 1 марта 2005 г.). В то время как некоторые ВПЛ и возвратившиеся лица, работающие в государственном секторе, имеют постоянные зарплаты, многим по-прежнему не хватает стабильной работы и постоянного дохода (IDMC, ноябрь 2009 г.). Те, кто решил интегрироваться в месте своего перемещения, должны были адаптироваться к городским условиям работы. Сельское хозяйство является основным источником дохода в местах возвращения, за ним следует временная работа, пенсии по старости и социальные выплаты семьям.

Конфликт и последующий кризис внутреннего перемещения произошли как раз в то время, когда тяжелый переход к рыночной экономике и новой политической системе предопределили резкое снижение жизненного уровня по всей Армении. Экономический кризис обострился в результате закрытия границ с Турцией и Азербайджаном. Предприятия, выпускающие текстиль, обувь, продукты питания и сигареты в приграничных районах закрылись и не открыты до сих пор. Это сильно ударило по ВПЛ и другим лицам в приграничных районах. В 2009 г. районы Сюник и Тавуш имели самый высокий уровень безработицы среди районов возвращения, а именно 11,8 и 9,0 процентов соответственно по сравнению с 6,3 процента в Ереване, столице Армении (Правительство Армении, декабрь 2009 г.).

Рыночные реформы и приватизация ферм трансформировали фермерский сектор, от которого большинство ВПЛ в основном зависели до конфликта. Тем временем большая часть культивируемой земли остается неиспользованной в связи с нехваткой современного сельскохозяйственного оборудования, опыта, семян и рабочей силы. Ирригационные системы все еще повреждены, а наземные мины представляют опасность для фермеров (IOM, январь 1999 г.; UNCHR, 6 ноября 2000 г.; ACF 2009). Плохие дороги и высокая стоимость перевозок не позволяют фермерам поставлять продукты на рынок. Армения на 60 процентов зависит от импорта потребляемой ею пшеницы (UN FAO, 15 декабря 2008 г.). В 2006 г. правительство приняло Стратегию устойчивого развития сельского хозяйства для оказания помощи сельскохозяйственному сектору (Правительство Армении, 2006 год), однако Продовольственная и сельскохозяйственная организация Объединенных наций продолжает призывать уделять больше внимания сельскому хозяйству (UN FAO, 15 декабря 2008 г.).

Программы смягчения бедности не направлены на решение конкретных проблем ВПЛ. Государственная система социального обеспечения (известная как Парос) предусматривает специальное обеспечение за дополнительную уязвимость беженцев, но не представляет подобные надбавки за внутреннее перемещение. Так как система Парос специально не выделяет ВПЛ, то не представляется возможным определить количество тех из них, кто получает социальные пособия. ВПЛ сообщают, что оценка их социально-

экономического статуса часто зависит от прихотей правительственных инспекторов (IDMC, ноябрь 2009 г.). Теоретически они должны делать повторные визиты в дома получателей каждые три месяца, но некоторые после получения взятки не делают этого (IDMC, ноябрь 2009 г.).

Образование в затронутых конфликтом деревнях

Возвратившиеся лица сообщают, что дети, в основном, ходят в школы, усердно занимаются и стремятся получить высшее образование (IDMC, ноябрь 2009 г.). Некоторые родители, обычно самые бедные и наиболее неблагополучные в социальном отношении не смогли зарегистрировать рождение детей, потенциально лишая их основного социального обеспечения, однако это не лишило их доступа к образованию: в Армении 98 процентов детей школьного возраста ходят в школу (USDoS, 25 февраля 2009 г.; Всемирный банк, 2007 г.).

Основным недостатком образования в затронутых конфликтом районах является качество. Количество школ, учителей и оборудования достаточно для нужд учащихся, но многие школы нуждаются в реконструкции, а некоторые учителя – в дополнительной подготовке. Многие образовательные учреждения недофинансируются, несмотря на то, что крупные работы по реконструкции были начаты в некоторых районах с помощью правительственного и иностранного финансирования. Нехватка финансов на отопительное топливо означает для некоторых школ продление зимних каникул (USDoS, 25 февраля 2009 г.). Некоторые родители сообщают о том, что учителя пользуются устаревшей школьной методикой, а учебный план не готовит их детей к сдаче вступительного экзамена в университет. В результате родители обращаются к частным репетиторам с целью улучшить перспективы своих детей на получение высшего образования (IDMC, ноябрь 2009 г.). Некоторые учителя вымогают взятки за хорошие оценки (USDoS, 25 февраля 2009 г.).

Некоторые домашние хозяйства зависят от заработков детей. Проведенное в 2007 г. исследование показало, что шесть процентов домашних хозяйств имели, по крайней мере, одного ребенка, вовлеченного в оплачиваемую работу. Большинство из них – мальчики в возрасте от 14 до 18 лет, работавшие в сельском хозяйстве, торговле и строительстве. Треть из них была ниже легального трудоспособного возраста 16 лет. Около 60 процентов совмещали работу и учебу, а 30 процентов бросили школу по причине расходов и отсутствия интереса (UNICEF, 2007). Большая часть учащихся, особенно малоимущих, бросает школу после получения начального обучения (USDoS, 25 февраля 2009 г.).

Здоровье ВПЛ и возвратившихся лиц

Первая медицинская помощь бесплатна и люди свободны в выборе своего провайдера медицинских услуг. Однако должностные лица часто явно или скрыто требуют плату за услуги или лекарства (USDoS, 25 февраля 2009 г.). Такие выплаты могут составлять две трети общих расходов на лечение, и некоторые люди в результате могут не получить необходимое лечение (Oxfam, 2004). Правительство в последнее время нанесло удар по этому виду коррупции и в качестве одной из мер обеспечивает будущих матерей ваучером на предродовой уход и роды (IDMC, ноябрь 2009 г.). Несмотря на дотации, многие малоимущие не могут позволить себе лекарства из правительственного списка основных лекарственных препаратов.

Информация, касающаяся здоровья именно ВПЛ и возвратившихся лиц, отсутствует. Большинство ВПЛ и возвратившихся лиц сообщают о наличии медпункта в их деревне, но крупные поликлиники обычно находятся в 20 километрах от них (IDMC, ноябрь 2009 г.). Уже существовавший низкий уровень обращаемости за первой медицинской помощи

значительно упал после получения независимости, и в настоящее время намного ниже уровня Европейского союза (WHO, 2009). И это несмотря на финансируемую государством программу по обеспечению уязвимых групп приоритетным доступом к услугам общественного здравоохранения. Основными причинами редкого обращения за услугами являются их стоимость и низкое качество (NHDS, 2003).

По подсчетам правительства, во время конфликта в пограничных районах были повреждены 62 медицинских учреждения (UNCHR, 6 ноября 2000 г.). Исследование пограничных районов, проведенное МОМ в 1999 г. показало, что 60 процентов обследованных деревень имели медицинские пункты, но только 20 процентов были полностью укомплектованы персоналом. Несмотря на то, что в деревенских медпунктах сейчас есть медсестры, в некоторых из них отсутствует водоснабжение, а многие медсестры нуждаются в повышении квалификации (IDMC, ноябрь 2009 г.). Количество медсестер уменьшилось после получения независимости и сейчас значительно ниже, чем в других государствах бывшего Советского союза и в Европейском союзе (WHO, 2009). Недостаточное внимание уделяется профилактике заболеваемости, репродуктивному здоровью и гендерному насилию (IDMC, ноябрь 2009 г.). Количество дантистов после независимости осталось почти без изменения, но резко сократилось количество фармацевтов. Специалисты в области здравоохранения не пользуются авторитетом и получают низкую зарплату.

Программы медицинского страхования в общинах, созданные организацией “Оксфам”, расширили в отдельных районах доступ уязвимых групп к соответствующим медицинским услугам. Семьи выплачивают поквартальные страховые взносы, которые дают им право на основные лекарства и услуги, предоставляемые в медпункте. Эта программа помогла восстановлению медпунктов, обеспечению их лекарствами и оборудованием, улучшила подготовку медсестер. Сейчас эти программы являются важными провайдерами медицинских услуг в сельских общинах, обеспечивая для уязвимых групп женщин, пожилых людей и неимущих равный доступ к услугам (Polonsky et al., 22 февраля 2009 г.).

Реагирование правительства остается ограниченным

В то время как армянское правительство назвало оказавшихся внутренне перемещенными в результате конфликта ВПЛ “брошенными людьми”, их положение оказалось в тени нужд еще большего количества беженцев из Азербайджана и лиц, внутренне перемещенных в результате землетрясения. Правительственная поддержка этой группы была и остается ограниченной, а большая часть помощи пришла через программы смягчения бедности и социального обеспечения более общего назначения, которые не признают внутреннее перемещение в качестве критерия для получения помощи.

ВПЛ не уделяется особое внимание на национальном или международном уровне, и немного известно об их количестве, местонахождении и нуждах (UNCHR, 6 ноября 2000 г.). Визит в 2000 г. Фрэнсиса Денга, представителя Генерального секретаря ООН (ПГС) по вопросам внутренне перемещенных лиц, подтолкнул правительство обратить больше внимания на лиц, внутренне перемещенных в результате конфликта, но это произошло более десяти лет после их перемещения и в результате не принесло значительного улучшения их ситуации. Продолжающееся отсутствие официального признания того, что перемещение содействовало особым обстоятельствам ВПЛ, выражается в отсутствии первостепенного внимания к достижению долговременного решения, и в том что с ВПЛ не проводятся консультации относительно затрагивающих их решений.

В отличие от других правительств региона, Армения не приняла национальные законодательные основы по защите прав лиц, внутренне перемещенных в результате конфликта. Закон о защите населения в чрезвычайных ситуациях затрагивает только

стихийные бедствия или антропогенные катастрофы и исключает перемещения в результате конфликта, нарушения прав человека и генерализованного насилия. Правительство рассматривает внутренне перемещенных в результате конфликта лиц как обычных граждан, которые пользуются теми же гарантированными конституцией правами наравне с другими армянами. Национальная организация по правам человека также не проявила интереса к решению проблем внутреннего перемещения.

Тем не менее правительство приняло некоторые соответствующие меры. Государственное миграционная служба Министерства территориального управления в 2010 г. стала национальным центром для всех, кто пострадал в результате вынужденного переселения. Ее предшественники – Управление по делам миграции и беженцев и затем Государственное миграционное агенство впервые собрали сведения о количестве и положении ВПЛ через десять лет после их перемещения - и только благодаря поддержке и финансированию из-за границы. Правительство перевело Руководящие принципы по вопросу о перемещении внутри страны на армянский язык при поддержке Программы развития ООН (ПРООН), но персонал агенства не проходил обучение по правам ВПЛ.

Вслед за визитом ПГС в 2000 г. правительство предложило несколько программ с целью помочь лицам, внутренне перемещенным в результате конфликта и другим лицам в местах возвращения, но ни одна из них не была осуществлена по причине финансовых ограничений. Самая последняя из них, подготовленная в общих чертах в 2008 г., имела целью помочь 626 внутренне перемещенным семьям вернуться в свои дома, интегрировать возвратившихся лиц и пострадавшие в результате конфликта домашние хозяйства, а также восстановить инфраструктуру в местах возвращения (правительство Армении, 25 сентября 2008 г.). Иностранные доноры не желают вносить вклад в данные программы на фоне отсутствия ресурсов, выделяемых правительством страны.

Тем не менее, в некоторых приграничных общинах правительство улучшило доступ к питьевой воде, восстановило дома и отремонтировало ирригационные системы. Некоторые ВПЛ, живущие во временных прибежищах, были включены в программу, предполагающую право на владение землей для постройки дома в этом месте (Правительство Армении, 5 ноября 2004 г.).

Международная реакция

Международная реакция на вызванное конфликтом перемещение в Армении была фрагментарной. Основными заинтересованными организациями были NRC, Датский совет по делам беженцев и Программа развития ООН (ПРООН). Учитывая затяжной характер конфликта, многие доноры и организации давно переключили свое внимание на другие направления и больше не помогают лицам, внутренне перемещенным в результате конфликта. Однако некоторые лица, внутренне перемещенные в результате землетрясения, все еще получают помощь от Международного комитета Красного Креста (IDMC, ноябрь 2009 г.). В настоящее время основными донорами Армении являются Франция, Германия, Швеция, Греция, Нидерланды, Соединенное Королевство и Европейская комиссия. Значительную помощь оказал и Всемирный банк. И хотя эта внешняя поддержка не была нацелена специально на них, ВПЛ и другие возвратившиеся лица извлекли пользу из финансирования программ здравоохранения, образования, водоснабжения, сельского хозяйства и энергетики.

Проект под названием “Устойчивые средства к жизни для социально уязвимых беженцев, внутренне перемещенных и местных семей в Армении” осуществляется с помощью УВКБ ООН, ПРООН, Организации ООН по промышленному развитию (ЮНИДО), Фонда ООН в области народонаселения (ЮНФПА), и Детского фонда ООН (ЮНИСЕФ). Его цели - снизить бедность, улучшить доступ к различным услугам, помочь уязвимым группам в

получении стабильных источников дохода и расширить возможности бенефициариев и официальных должностных лиц. Проект предусматривает предоставление для небольшого количества уязвимых семей ВПЛ квартир в здании, переделываемом под социальное жилье. Он будет подобен давно завершенным социальным жилым проектам, осуществленным с помощью УВКБ ООН и швейцарского агентства по развитию и кооперации для беженцев из Азербайджана и других уязвимых групп.

Европейские организации поддерживают права ВПЛ и настаивают на урегулировании конфликта с Азербайджаном. Совет Европы выражал сожаление по поводу нарушений прекращения огня (СоЕ, 13 апреля 2006 г.) и призывал правительство к мирному решению конфликта (СоЕ, 23 января 2007 г.; СоЕ, 13 апреля 2006 г.), а также к членству в Банке развития Совета Европы (что могло бы открыть новые каналы финансирования для программ, связанных с ВПЛ) (СоЕ, 8 июня 2009 г.), и к тому, чтобы обратить особое внимание на нужды перемещенных женщин (СоЕ, 16 марта 2007 г.). Вслед за своим визитом в Армению в 2007 г. комиссар по правам человека Совета Европы призвал правительство обеспечить всех беженцев и ВПЛ, бежавших в результате нагорно-карабахского конфликта, подходящим жильем (СоЕ, 30 апреля 2008 г.).

Европейский план соседства, принятый ЕС, призывает Армению выполнить обязательство по мирному разрешению конфликта, предоставить помощь ВПЛ, способствовать контактам между людьми и развивать активное участие гражданского общества. Аналитики, однако, считают, что ЕС должен принять более решительный подход к продвижению резолюции, касающейся конфликта (ICHD, сентябрь 2009 г.). ЕС оказал лишь ограниченное давление на правительство Армении в вопросе продвижения контактов между людьми и участия гражданского общества. В последние годы специальный представитель ЕС активизировал свою деятельность, представив, например, меры по укреплению доверия. Теперь ЕС должен усилить мандат, который позволит специальному представителю по Южному Кавказу посещать Нагорный Карабах.

CAUSES AND BACKGROUND

The conflict with Azerbaijan

Roots of the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh (1992-1994)

- Secession of the Nagorno-Karabakh republic from Azerbaijan triggered a war between Azerbaijan and Armenians of Nagorno Karabakh (1992-1994)
- A cease-fire agreement signed in May 1994 has more or less observed since this date
- Primary cause of internal displacement has been the shelling of border villages during the conflict

CRI, September 2009:

"In the opinion of Armenian experts, the policy of the central authorities of the former Soviet Union and the corrupt administration of the Soviet Republics were two factors which account for the roots of the conflict. Another is the timing and sequence of events preceding the conflict and Moscow's response to these events, which according to some experts have led to the eruption of the conflict. The role of Moscow in fuelling the conflict is pointed out in Yerevan - the role of the Soviet military and the selling of equipment to both sides, the Kremlin's inability to respond quickly and rapidly to the pogroms in Sumgait, Ganja, Baku and its inability to cope with increasing tension in the area."

COE, Political Affairs Committee, 23 May 2000, paras. 45-52:

"Situated at the intersection of the Ottoman, Persian and Russian Empires, the Nagorno-Karabakh region has seen very many changes over the centuries, in terms of both its legal status and the make-up of its population.

Nagorno-Karabakh was ceded by the Persian Empire to Russia under the Treaty of Golestan in [1813], when it became part of the 'Guberniya' (an administrative unit, or province, of the Russian Empire) of Yelizavetopol. In 1923 the Soviet Union conferred on Nagorno-Karabakh the status of an autonomous republic within the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan.

According to the 1989 census, Nagorno-Karabakh had a population of 188 000, of whom 145 000 were Armenians, 40 000 Azerbaijanis and 3 000 Russians. It had a total area of 4 400 km². The current population is estimated at between 100 000 and 160 000, all of whom are Armenian (with minimal exceptions).

The current conflict began in February 1988 when the Regional Soviet (Assembly) of Nagorno-Karabakh submitted an official request to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for incorporation into Armenia. This request, which was rejected by the Soviet of Azerbaijan but supported by the Soviet of Armenia, was turned down by the Supreme Soviet in accordance with the principle that the territory of a republic cannot be modified without its consent.

In December 1989, citing many violations of the rights of the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh, the Soviet of Armenia adopted a resolution requesting the reunification of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. Azerbaijan declared independence on 30 August 1991, and four days later the Soviet of Nagorno-Karabakh declared the independence of the 'Republic of Nagorno-

Karabakh', confirmed by referendum in December 1991. Subsequently, in January 1992, it organised 'parliamentary elections' and requested international recognition.

In the ensuing war from 1992 to 1994 between Azerbaijan and the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh, some 20 000 persons were killed, including many civilians. Between 1988 and 1993, 300 000 to 350 000 Armenians fled Azerbaijan and some 150 000 Azerbaijanis left Armenia.

After the fighting the Armenian forces were left in control of most of the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh within the Soviet administrative boundaries, as well as the whole of six Azerbaijani regions and part of two others.

A cease-fire agreement was concluded in May 1994. The cease-fire has held ever since, despite the sporadic clashes along the front line. The Azeri-Armenian and Turco-Armenian borders are closed."

UNHCR, August 1995:

"The primary cause of internal displacement has been shelling of border villages in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. A lasting cease-fire or peace agreement is a prerequisite for displaced persons to return home but the conclusion of such an agreement depends on the political will of both Armenia and Azerbaijan and on the skills of the main mediators (OSCE and the Russian Federation). Current measures undertaken by humanitarian agencies, including State agencies, may contribute to alleviate the burden of displacement, but cannot solve the problem at its roots."

Efforts to resolve the conflict (1993-2009)

- Efforts to negotiate a peaceful settlement are being conducted by the OSCE 'Minsk Group' co-chaired by the United States, France and Russia
- Only a small circle of elites from Armenia and Azerbaijan are involved in conflict resolution efforts
- Nagorno-Karabakh representatives are not involved in the negotiations
- Largest stumbling block remains official status of Nagorno Karabakh: Azerbaijan insists it should remain part of its territory, while Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh authorities insist residents have the right to determine its status
- There is little public debate on conflict resolution and the public is not prepared for an agreement

ICG, 7 October 2009:

"A preliminary breakthrough in the two-decades-old Nagorno-Karabakh conflict – a framework agreement on basic principles – may be within reach. Armenia and Azerbaijan are in substantial accord on principles first outlined by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group in 2005. A basic principles agreement, while only a foundation to build on, is crucial to maintain momentum for a peace deal. Important differences remain on specifics of a subsequent final deal. Movement toward Armenia-Turkey rapprochement after a century of hostility has brought opportunity also for ending the Nagorno-Karabakh stalemate. Sustainable regional peace requires compromises on all the quarrels, but there is backlash danger, especially in Armenia, where public discontent could derail the Nagorno-Karabakh framework agreement. Presidents Sarkisian (Armenia) and Aliyev (Azerbaijan) need to do more to prepare their publics. The U.S., Russia and France, Minsk Group co-chairs, have stepped up collective efforts, but more is needed to emphasise dangers in clinging to an untenable status quo...

The presidents are believed to have broadly agreed on the need for an eventual pullout of ethnic Armenian forces from districts of Azerbaijan outside of Nagorno-Karabakh they currently control. Azerbaijan has also given indications that it is not opposed to a corridor linking Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia. There have been differences on a timetable for the return of ethnic Azeri refugees to Nagorno-Karabakh. The most contentious issue, however, is the region's final status. There has been some movement towards defining an "interim status" for Nagorno-Karabakh, but Azerbaijan still insists that it must always remain legally part of its territory, while Armenia (and the de facto Nagorno-Karabakh authorities) insist that residents of the region have the right to determine their own status, be it as part of Armenia or as an independent state."

CRI, September 2009:

"Conflict resolution is a priority area in the Armenian ENP Action Plan. In fact, the European Union calls for both Armenia and Azerbaijan to increase diplomatic efforts and political dialogue (through the European Union Special Representative, support for the OSCE Minsk Group and dialogue with the states and parties involved), to encourage people-to-people contacts, to support humanitarian and de-mining initiatives, to provide assistance to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees and to promote an active involvement of civil society...

The most important aspect of the Armenian ENP Action Plan is the fact that it commits the state to a peaceful resolution of the conflict. So far, however, the EU has failed to define for all parties involved a clear and common line of engagement with regard to the stimulation of people-to-people contacts and the involvement of civil society. There has been very limited pressure from the EU upon the Armenian Government in forging people-to-people contacts and engaging civil society...

The official negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan take place under the aegis of the OSCE Minsk Process which is being facilitated by Russia, the US and France as co-chairs. So far, the co-chairs have presented different proposals, consisting of step-by-step solutions or package deals, but have unfortunately not been able to reconcile the positions and the interests of the parties. Armenia considers the security of Nagorno Karabakh of paramount importance and will only feel it is ensured if a clear criterion for defining the final status of the region is agreed upon from the beginning. This includes the guaranteed security of the corridors linking Nagorno Karabakh and Armenia via Berdzor and Karvachar regions (Lachin and Kelbajar)...

The Minsk Group has been criticised by all parties for "not leading so much to peace but, rather, following the conflict sides, lacking impartiality and neutrality (with Russia and France perceived by Azerbaijan as being pro-Armenian) and not having any real (or ready to use) incentives or sanctions at its disposal for facilitating compromise...Most of the experts on both sides agree that the status quo is presently much more preferable for Russia...o

In both Azerbaijan and Armenia, conflict resolution is considered to be a 'restricted' area of policy making, which is only limited to a certain circle of people. For example, President Ter-Petrosyan declared that only six people are competent actors that could deal with the complexity of the Nagorno Karabakh problem. Less than a dozen officials in both countries (Armenia and Azerbaijan) are involved in the process on a full-time basis, while experts in the region are kept at a distance and there is little debate within society. The lack of democratic development has also meant that the policy of the government remains publicly unchallenged...

The public debate in Armenia on the issues related to Nagorno Karabakh is limited. Whilst it publicly acknowledges that the conflict could be resolved peacefully only through compromise, there is little internal agreement on what this compromise could be...The stumbling block in negotiations remains the official status of Nagorno Karabakh and the fact that its de facto authorities are not involved in the negotiations...The lack of agreement on issues at the core of the conflict...has also led to ambiguities with regards to the official status of parties to the conflict and their participation in the negotiation format.

Windows of opportunities were perceived by mediators and observers in 1997, 1998, 2001 and 2006, when it seemed as though the sides were close to a comprehensive settlement. The optimism shown by mediators, however, seemed unjustified. There was often no agreement on the more difficult issues (status and security guarantees), or the formula agreed upon was considered only from the position of further strengthening the bargaining position. After 1998, the negotiation process largely stagnated and the impetus of 1994-1996 was lost as the perception of a "hurting stalemate" diminished, due to the economic growth in Armenia and Azerbaijan. At present, the negotiations still require a serious move from managing the consequences of the war (IDPs, occupied territories, closure of borders) to the real issues (Nagorno Karabakhi status and security guarantees)...There is no common agreement on the question which parties there are to the conflict: are those parties Nagorno Karabakh and Azerbaijan, or Armenia and Azerbaijan?

The Minsk Group seemed to have exhausted the possible options for a conflict resolution (package deal, step-by-step, swap of territories, intermediary status). Azerbaijan is increasingly looking for alternative options to reconfirm its position, especially in light of Kosovo's independence in 2008."

COE Political Affairs Committee, 23 May 2000, paras. 53-57:

"The conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh has been debated several times by the United Nations Security Council, which in 1993 adopted Resolutions 822, 853, 874 and 884 on this subject. These resolutions reaffirm the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and the other States in the region, demand the withdrawal of occupying forces from territories 'recently occupied' in Azerbaijan and appeal to Armenia to use its influence to ensure that the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh comply with these resolutions.

The efforts to negotiate a peaceful settlement of this conflict are currently being conducted by the co-presidents of the OSCE 'Minsk Group' (comprising the United States, France and Russia) set up in 1992. Armenia has accepted the latest plan to resolve the conflict drawn up by the Minsk Group, based on the concept of a 'common State' shared by Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh as a basis for talks. Azerbaijan has so far rejected this proposal.

Nevertheless, it must be remembered that it was Armenia which rejected the previous stage-by-stage settlement plan, accepted by the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan at the second Council of Europe Summit in October 1997. As a consequence of this rejection, Mr Ter Petrossian resigned. Similarly, Armenia rejected the principles proposed around the same time by the then President of OSCE, Mr Flavio Cotti, Swiss Minister of Foreign Affairs, as a basis for settling the conflict. These principles had been approved by the participants at the OSCE Summit in Lisbon in December 1996.

The Presidents of the two countries have been meeting more and more regularly (they have met six times this year, including once at the Azeri-Armenian border). The Final Declaration of the Istanbul Summit held in November 1999 welcomed these contacts as opportunities for securing a lasting, comprehensive solution to the conflict and encouraging dialogue. The Declaration also confirmed that OSCE and the Minsk Group provided the optimum framework in which to settle the conflict."

Reconciliation efforts (2009)

CRI, September 2009:

"Reconciliation capacities on the local level in three societies are weak and largely under-used due to the blockages at the political level by ruling elites. The economic and transport blockade is aggravated by the lack of political will from Azerbaijani leadership to initiate any kind of cooperation. As a direct consequence, mutual problems affecting all parties involved in the conflict (Nagorno Karabakh, Azerbaijan and Armenia), such as water pollution and natural disasters, are not being dealt with efficiently...

At the society level, attempts have been made to establish contact between people, both at the grassroots level and the middle level of the population. Media and civil society are the key resources for reconciliation at the society level (small and medium business are under-developed, especially in Azerbaijan, and do not have the leverage for influencing the political level of the conflict, as they are not able to become a strong middle class and influence elections at any level)...

Due to the fact that authorities control what goes on in the media, especially at the level of electronic media, and journalists often exercise self-censorship, there is very limited public space for the discussion of issues related to conflict resolution which contradict the government's official position. Some experts state that many of the media campaigns asking for radical measures, uncompromising positions and portraying people who have direct contacts with Armenians as enemies or spies of the government, are conducted at the express request of authorities in Azerbaijan. As illustrated, through monitoring media in Armenia and Azerbaijan in 2004 and 2005, media acts more as a channel for reinforcing negative stereotypes than as a resource for reconciliation."

IWPR, 15 November 2007:

"In 1988, a dispute over Nagorno Karabakh broke out in the Caucasus, with most ethnic Azerbaijanis leaving Armenia and vice versa. As the conflict grew, monuments were destroyed in both countries - especially graveyards. In the once Azerbaijani-populated village of Saral, which was renamed Nor Khachakal, its two Azerbaijani cemeteries are abandoned, and many of the headstones broken.

Last year, the Armenian culture ministry was allocated two million drams (about six thousand US dollars) of government money to collect information about Azerbaijani cemeteries and cultural monuments in Armenia. This study identified a total of 69 cemeteries in Armenia and another 52 in Nagorno Karabakh and the seven Armenian-controlled territories outside Karabakh.

The study concluded that more of the cemeteries had been preserved than had been destroyed. The government then chose not to allocate money for their restoration after deciding that the graveyards had no intrinsic cultural value. However, the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly did a study of the Azerbaijani cemeteries in the region last year, which showed they were in a ruinous state, and decided to use grant money to restore them.

I wanted to see the places that used to be home to Azerbaijanis now perceived as "the enemy", to see the state of the graves and tell the former Azerbaijani residents of Armenia about the fate of their dear ones' resting places.

The urge to write became even stronger, when I saw Azerbaijan, who'd come to Armenia at the invitation of the organisation implementing the rehabilitation works, praying at the old cemetery in Nor Khachakal. There they conducted a special worship ritual, asking God to give rest to the souls of those buried there, and thanking the Armenians for trying to restore the graves.

On that day, the cemetery was strewn with white carnations - the first flowers laid there for 18 years. Seeing those graves now restored and covered with flowers, one could not help thinking once again how wrong it was to bear a grudge against the dead, how wrong were those who,

embittered by the conflict, took their anger out on the graves. Armenia's Azerbaijani cemeteries should be written about, I thought, for the sake of peace and greater tolerance between the two societies.

Less than a year later, I went to Nor Khachakal again only to be disappointed: I had hardly entered the cemetery, when I noticed that the plate giving details of the renovation of the graves was already broken. Conversations with the villagers proved discouraging. I, who wanted to write about how humane it was on part of the Armenians to repair the cemetery in Nor Khachakal, now had to listen to stories about Armenian cemeteries razed to the ground after the war.

The picture was even gloomier in the village of Arjut, several kilometres away from Nor Khachakal. Some graves had disappeared altogether. I felt a pain that one feels when seeing something that is left to the mercy of fate, even if it belongs to a different culture, and it strengthened my belief that it was wrong to keep silent about it.

And patriotism has nothing to do with it. It's not unpatriotic to speak about the shoddy treatment of graves, even if they belong to the other side."

Natural disasters

Earthquake displaced more than 500,000 people (1988)

- A 1988 earthquake in northwestern Armenia destroyed one sixth of the country's housing and killed 25,000 people
- More than 500,000 people were left homeless by the earthquake
- 100,000 persons remain displaced as the result of the 1988 earthquake according to the government

IWPR, 19 February 2010:

"The earthquake, which struck Armenia on December 7, 1988, shattered houses across the whole north of the then-Soviet republic, destroying 17 per cent of all the living space in the country. In Leninakan – now called Gyumri – more than 20,000 flats were destroyed, along with 11,000 private houses and 120 administrative buildings.

More than half a million people were left homeless, of whom 7,000 still lack accommodation after more than two decades but the government has promised that all will have homes by 2013. Of the total, 4,200 are in Gyumri and whole chunks of the city are still made up of domiks - old shipping containers turned into temporary accommodation that has become permanent."

IWPR, 9 December 2009:

"When the earthquake struck Gyumri, Armenia's second largest city, on December 7, 1988, more than 85 per cent of its nine-storey buildings and 80 per cent of its five-storey structures collapsed.

The destruction was so swift and catastrophic that people thought their city had been bombed. The Cold War was still going on, and Armenia and Azerbaijan had just begun a bloody dispute over Nagorny Karabakh. Cases were reported of people surrendering to rescuers with their hands up.

"We imagined that this could only be something man-made," said Flora Sargsyan, homecare project manager at Armenian Caritas, a non-governmental organisation. "We didn't think it was something God would do."

Everybody in the area has their own earthquake story, and many recount the death of at least one family member. Out of a population of 200,000, Gyumri lost 17,000 people, or one out of every 12 inhabitants. Outside the city, 58 towns and villages were destroyed, with the loss of 25,000 men, women and children. While the earthquake, which measured 6.9 on the Richter scale, was strong, the amount of destruction and death was disproportionate to its strength."

UNDP, 1995, box 2.9:

"Armenia is situated on earthquake-prone geological formations which have recently caused several disastrous earthquakes. Historical accounts describe the complete destruction, due to earthquakes, of the ancient cities Erznka, Erzroom, Basen where thousands perished. A huge earthquake destroyed Dvin and ruined the temples of Garni and Zvartnots.

On December 7, 1988 a powerful earthquake again shook Armenia. Within a few seconds, the cities of Giumri, Vanadzor, Spitak and a number of villages were destroyed, leaving over half a million people homeless. Seventy percent of residential houses, many large industrial enterprises, cultural, scientific and educational institutions and schools were ruined. Armenia was the focus of international attention.

One hundred and eleven countries and many international organizations, as well as Soviet republics sent humanitarian aid to Armenia. Over 45 thousand people were removed from under the rubble, 25 thousand of whom had not survived."

WFP, 21 September 1999, para. 2:

"The 1988 earthquake destroyed one sixth of the country's housing and 40 percent of its production capacity."

UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative, 7 June 2000:

The government indicates that approximately 100,000 persons are still internally displaced as a result of the earthquake in 1988. Around 20,000 persons are internally displaced because of other natural disasters, according to the government.

POPULATION FIGURES AND PROFILE

Global figures

8,400 IDPs in Armenia; 10,000 IDPs in Nagorno Karabakh (2005)

- Profiling exercise showed that 65,000 families were displaced at least once during the conflict
- The majority of these families had returned by 2005
- Remaining IDPs were mainly women
- Internally displaced youth mostly opted to integrate in their area of displacement, while elderly opted to return
- There are 10,000 IDPs in Nagorno Karabakh

NRC, 1 March 2005:

"Approximately 65,000 families were identified as having been displaced at least once during the conflict. Today only 11 percent of these families are still living outside their original villages.

At present there are 8399 IDPs remaining in Armenia. Of this number, 2615 are from the enclave of Artsvashen, and have no realistic opportunity of returning to their former place of residence in the near future (see *Artsvashen*, page 8).

The remainder of IDPs identified includes those surveyed who are willing to return to their former place of residence as well as those who do not wish to return, those who did not indicate a clear preference on the subject of returning, and 1127 children, whose desire to return was not recorded (see *Desire to Return*, page 10).

A further 2484 people are potential IDPs, although it is most likely that only a portion of this group would fit the definition. This category is composed of those who were displaced from their former place of residence during the conflict, but whose current status and whereabouts are unknown...

53 percent of IDPs are females, while 47 percent are males.

Women tend to dominate all age groups, except the youngest (under 18). Females are especially dominant in the 18-30 age group (over 58 percent), confirming that many men of working age have emigrated from the country.

The gender distribution among IDPs does not differ significantly from that of the population of Armenia in general. The exception is among women between the ages of 46 and 60 in the provinces of Tavush and Syunik, where they disproportionately outnumber men. Males in these provinces have tended to emigrate outside the country in larger numbers, leaving a large number of women without their spouses...

Seventy percent of IDPs are under the age of 46 (see Figure 4). This can be explained by the tendency of younger persons to seek employment in the communities they have resettled in, while older IDPs were more likely to return to their original homes during lulls in the conflict, and more permanently once the ceasefire took effect.

As seen in Figure 5, over one-third of households were composed of a single person. This is due to the large number of men who have left the country, as well as the longer life expectancy of women. The largest family interviewed consisted of 15 persons."

CRI, September 2009:

"Though Armenian refugees from Azerbaijan have been subject to integration from the beginning, the UNHCR reports that approximately 8,399 IDPs continue to live in Armenia and have not been able to return to their villages (in the conflict areas) or are not interested in going back due to socio-economic hardships or the fear of land mines. There are approximately 10,000 IDPs in Nagorno Karabakh as well."

Government estimates peak number of 72,000 IDPs from conflict and 100,000 IDPs from earthquake (2009)

- The government estimated 72,000 persons were displaced by conflict and 100,000 displaced by earthquake
- The conflict caused displacement from the border regions as well as demographic unbalance
- The government's figure may include refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh who were initially settled in the border areas inside Armenia and then became displaced again
- Independent estimates vary between 50,000 and 65,000 persons displaced because of the conflict

Голос Армений, 29 октября 2009г.:

"Касательно внутренне-перемещенных лиц (ВПЛ), И. Давтян отметила, что 72 тыс. Армян стали ВПЛ в результате карабахского конфликта 1992-94гг., еще порядка 100 тысяч человек – в результате Спитакского землетрясения 1988 года. В целом за последние 20 лет территорию Армении покинуло порядка 1 млн человек, сообщила чиновник."

UNCHR, 6 November 2000:

"According to government figures, there are 192,000 internally displaced persons in Armenia. This figure covers displacement due to a variety of causes. An estimated 72,000 persons were displaced as a result of military operations in areas bordering Azerbaijan due to the decade-old conflict regarding Nagorno-Karabakh. Though a 1994 ceasefire remains in effect, the conflict remains without a political solution and there have been recurrent skirmishes and instances of shelling in border areas. The remainder of the internally displaced were uprooted as a result of natural or human-made disasters: an estimated 100,000 persons continue to be displaced as a result of the devastating earthquake of 1988 which resulted in the death of over 25,000 people and rendered some 500,000 persons homeless; 10,000 persons have been displaced as a result of more recent natural disasters, in particular mudslides; and a further 10,000 persons have been internally displaced as a result of human-made disasters.

[...]

It should be noted that independent estimates of the number of internally displaced persons are lower than the figure of 72,000 cited by the Government. The U.S. Committee for Refugees, for instance, cites a figure of roughly 60,000. The discrepancy in figures can, at least in part, be explained by the fact that the figure of 72,000 conflict-induced internally displaced persons cited by the Government includes several thousand persons displaced into Armenia from Nagorno-Karabakh who would thus be refugees, rather than internally displaced persons. Indeed, the Government acknowledged that among the 72,000 conflict-induced internally displaced 'a great number' are refugees who came to the Republic during 1988-1992, who were initially settled in

the border areas inside Armenia and then became displaced again, within Armenia, due to insecurity in those areas."

USCR, 2002:

"Although the Armenian government estimates that about 72,000 persons are internally displaced because of the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh - which is located in Azerbaijan, but controlled by Armenia . USCE believes that number to be closer to 50,000."

USCR, 2001:

"Some 60,000 Armenians displaced from villages bordering Azerbaijan since 1993 had integrated locally and were not receiving UNHCR or government assistance at year's end."

IOM, 1999:

"Of the refugees and displaced persons, 55.9 per cent are women, 21 per cent are children up to 16 years of age, 29.5 percent are people over 60, and 3.9 per cent are disabled. Few of them are highly skilled workers (only 5% have completed higher education). The majority has already acquired permanent housing but about one in seven remain in temporary accommodation and only one in five are employed. About one half have received benefits and other financial assistance and UNHCR has provided some form of assistance to 150,000 refugees..."

The conflict on the border has not only directly influenced the emigration process, but has also prepared conditions for future emigration. It brings about the deformity of the demographic structure in the regions. In the family unit it has caused disproportion of the marriageable aged population, destruction of a generation and a large increase in the share of people of non-employment age."

Greene, 1998:

"Displacement within Armenia is relatively small. Armenia has an IDP population of approximately 72,000, according to government of Armenia sources, and somewhat fewer according to UNHCR, which believes that many of the IDPs have returned to their homes. The figure of 72,000 was first used in 1992. Sixty-five thousand is probably a closer estimate of the number of IDPs. The IDPs in Armenia were evacuated from villages adjacent to the border with Azerbaijan. They are from the mountainous area northwest of Kelbajar, the part of Azerbaijan to the west of Nagorno-Karabakh taken by Armenian forces in the spring of 1993. The border villages have been subjected to intermittent rocket and artillery barrages by Azerbaijani forces, in spite of the cease-fire."

Geographical distribution

Tavoush was disproportionately affected by internal displacement as a result of the conflict (2000)

UNHCHR, 6 November 2000, para. 18:

"Focusing on the conflict-induced internally displaced, the mission undertook a field visit to the region of Tavoush, where considerable displacement occurred as a result of insecurity stemming from the conflict. This region constitutes roughly 10 per cent of the territory of Armenia but, given its location along 350 kilometres of border with Azerbaijan, it has been disproportionately affected by the problem of conflict-induced displacement. At the same time, it has also suffered internal displacement due to natural disasters, in particular mudslides. The Governor of Tavoush informed the Representative that there were 28,000 internally displaced persons in the region, of whom 16,000 had already returned to their homes."

See also "[The internally displaced moved from their villages incrementally \(2000\)](#)" *[Internal link]*

PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT

General

IDPs moved from their villages incrementally (2005)

- Internally displaced persons left the villages for the summer pasture land where they lived in temporary dwellings
- Separation of families was common
- Most the displaced then moved to safer location in the province (or "marz")
- Those who could - usually the wealthier among them - then moved on into the central parts of Armenia and even, ultimately, emigrated
- Consequently the internally displaced have not settled as compact, easily identifiable groups
- One major exception, to this settlement pattern is the population displaced from the exclave of Artzvashen

NRC, 1 March 2005:

"During the conflict, many of the 186 villages along the border with Azerbaijan were totally evacuated—many of them more than once. Few entire villages were permanently evacuated, however, and the vast majority of those displaced returned shortly after evacuation orders were lifted. Of those that did not return, many chose to stay and integrate into their newly adopted communities. A significant number of people also left their villages after the ceasefire went into effect in 1994. It is difficult to determine whether post-war departure is due to residual effects of the conflict or to economic circumstances, as these motives are not mutually exclusive."

UNCHR, 6 November 2000, paras. 13-15:

"Within Armenia proper, internal displacement as a result of the conflict was concentrated in the marzes or districts along the border with Azerbaijan, namely Tavoush, Sjunik, Vajots Dzor, Ararat and Gegharkounik. A comprehensive survey in these regions undertaken in 1998 by the Refugees and Displaced Persons Working Group provides important information about the characteristics of the displacement crisis. Initially, 50-60 per cent of the population, mainly women, children and the elderly, left the villages for the summer pasture lands, where they lived in temporary dwellings. Though in some cases, usually during continuous military actions, residents moved as complete family units, the separation of families was common: half of the displaced households in Tavoush, Vajots Dzor and Gegharkounik marzes constitute families of only one or two members. The other half consists mostly of young families which have remained intact but have been separated from relatives.

Though some of the displaced remained in the pasture lands for almost two years, for the most part, the displaced were regularly on the move. They tended to move from the border villages incrementally, first leaving for the summer pasture lands, then to safer locations within the marz. Later, those who could - usually the wealthier among them - moved on into the central parts of Armenia and even, ultimately, emigrated. Consequently, the internally displaced are dispersed throughout the country rather than settled as compact, easily identifiable groups. Indeed, both the Government and the international agencies working in the country reported having difficulties in knowing precisely where the internally displaced were located.

One major exception to this settlement pattern is the population displaced from Artzvashen. Persons displaced from this exclave largely settled as communities in the predominantly ethnically Azeri towns located between the border and the northern shore of Lake Sevan which were abandoned by ethnic Azeri refugees who fled from Armenia to Azerbaijan. In some cases, they are occupying the homes abandoned by the Azeri refugees."

IOM, January 1999:

"The movement of the population of the frontier villages involved in military actions is characterised by two phases. The first phase includes the intensive displacement during continuous military actions. The major flow of the population from the frontier villages (about 50-60%, mainly women, elderly and children) has taken place at this phase. This procedure went on for 5 to 6 years. Within that period flows in both directions took place. The population was constantly moving. During the military actions (e.g. the result of shelling was that 80% of the houses were ruined in Nerkin Karmiraghbjur village of Tavoush Marz) first of all the elderly, women and children were evacuated to temporary dwellings in the summer pasture. In the event of continuous military action the residents of the villages left with complete families and only soldiers stayed behind...According to the research of the selected villages, 22% of the population of Armenia were displaced during the military conflict of which one third did not return to their villages...

The first direction of migration is within the Marz. It makes up 10% of the migration flow...The second direction is movement within Armenia but outside the boundaries of the Marz. It involves not only frontier regions, but also the residents of the whole Marz...The third migration flow involves movement outside the boundaries of Armenia. It comprises 50-60% of the migration flow, one third of which are seasonal migrants...Currently the displaced persons are localised in the following order: more than half have left the Republic whilst those remaining are centralised either in the areas close to Yerevan or in the administrative centres of the Marzes."

Greene, 1998, p. 271:

"The Armenian IDPs are a homogeneous lot. Virtually all of them are ethnic Armenian farmers and villagers from the frontier area. Some have returned home to cultivate their orchards and vineyards, while others have been unable to return to the frontier area because of the shelling. The IDPs are for the most part lodged with friends and relatives in nearby towns and in public buildings. Many of the border villages are populated by day by Armenian farmers, who retreat to nearby towns and cities at night. The governor of Taush in northeastern Armenia, one of the districts where there has been some displacement, has talked with the mayor of Kazakh in nearby Azerbaijan in an effort to get on with life in the border area."

PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Physical safety

Persisting insecurity along border with Azerbaijan (2009)

- Some 300,000 square metres of land are mined in Armenia, which affect 69,000 people in 60 villages
- Farming land is inaccessible due to landmines
- Violations of ceasefire continue

ICBL, 2009:

"Armenia is affected by landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), primarily as a result of the conflict with Azerbaijan in 1988–1994. In 2005, the Armenia Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) identified 60 communities impacted by a total of 102 suspected hazardous areas. The areas were in five districts bordering Azerbaijan. It was estimated that 321.7km² were contaminated by mines and ERW, but this total is likely to be significantly reduced by subsequent technical survey. According to the United States Department of State, some 40,000 internally displaced persons have still to return, in part due to fear of landmines. It is not known whether Armenia's borders with Georgia and Turkey are also contaminated. In addition to the recorded dangerous areas, there are also believed to be ammunition stockpiles and depots left over from when Armenia was under Soviet control. There is believed to be significant mine and ERW contamination, including cluster munition remnants, on territory that was seized from Azerbaijan during the 1998–1994 conflict and which remains under the control of Armenia."

CRI, September 2009:

"The number of violations of the cease-fire has recently increased with one of the most important escalations taking place on 4-5 March 2008, both sides blaming the other...It is true, however, that collegial mutual contacts between soldiers on both sides of the conflict exist, although physical confrontations and shootings still occur. There has been no independent investigation of the violation by the international community, including the OSCE."

IWPR, 1 March 2007:

"The village of Aygehovit on Armenia's north-eastern border with Azerbaijan is home to 3,400 people and blessed with wheat fields, green pastures and orchards. The trouble is that because of mines sowed in the Karabakh conflict that ended in 1994, many of them are inaccessible.

"I have a pear orchard of seven thousand square metres on the border," said local farmer Vachagan Simonian. "Every year this orchard could bring in a crop of around seven thousand tonnes and I could sell it for around two thousand dollars - but I can't." "People cannot till their land, they have no income, which is why they have to leave to work in Russia," said Aharon Asilbekian, deputy head of the village administration.

During the hostilities, the lands and mountains between Aygehovit and an Azerbaijani village on the other side of the border were repeatedly mined. There are still mines on around 450 hectares of land, roughly half of the village's plots and gardens. Mined areas are to be found in five of Armenia's ten regions bordering Azerbaijan. As a result, large tracts of otherwise fertile farming

land are lying idle. Seven people have been blown up after accidentally triggering mines since 1994, four of whom died...

A study carried out as part of the programme in 2005 revealed that there are around 300,000 square metres of mined territories in Armenia, which is nearly one per cent of the entire country. "This is quite a lot for such a small mountainous country as Armenia, especially if we consider that landmines are most often planted on roads, including those leading to water sources, and bridges," said Grigorian... "We intend to clear all the territories of no military significance, that is 127,000 square metres," he went on. "To do this, we need big financial investments - around 38 million dollars."

An estimated 69,000 residents in 60 villages in Armenia are afflicted by the problem... Since 1994, Armenia has recorded 398 cases of people blown up by mines. In about a third of them, people were killed, with 16 deaths recorded in the last two years. "

UNCHR, 6 November 2000, para. 24:

"While security incidents in the border regions were reported to have decreased significantly, particularly in recent months with progress in the peace process, in the absence of a lasting settlement of the conflict security risks persist, especially in the villages located in close proximity to the border. As an indication that such dangers remain very real, when visiting one village located only a kilometre from the border [in region of Tavush], the mission delegation was instructed to disembark from the cars and leave these concealed behind trees as to minimize the risk of 'being shot at'. Another village visited was 700 metres from the border, with trench lines clearly visible."

See also *"Perils of Frontline Farmers," Institute for War and Peace Reporting, 5 July 2007.*

Freedom of movement

No legal restriction on internal movement (2009)

- The propiska system was abolished, and it was not replaced with a registration system
- The law provides for freedom of movement within the country

US DOS, 23 February 2009:

"While the law provides for freedom of movement within the country, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation, there were some restrictions in practice... In order to leave the country on a temporary or permanent basis, citizens must obtain an exit visa. Exit visas for temporary travel out of the country may be routinely purchased for approximately 1,000 drams (approximately \$3) for each year of validity. Following leadership changes in the police passport and visa agency, exit visas were routinely provided within one day of application. In October, the government abolished the requirement for emigrants to deregister themselves from the civil registry, which had widely been viewed as an onerous process that was subject to extensive corruption."

US DOS, 4 March 2002, sect. 2d:

"The Constitution provides for freedom of movement within the country, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation; however, the Government places restrictions on some of these rights. The Government does not restrict internal movement, and citizens have the right to change their residence or workplace freely. However, citizens must negotiate with a corrupt and inefficient bureaucracy to register these changes. In addition registration of residence is difficult, because in

order to be registered at a particular residence, a person must be either the property owner or an immediate family member of the owner. Special written permission from the owner of the property, signed by a lawyer, is required to make a temporary or permanent registration of a non-immediate family member."

OSCE, 1998:

"While the *propiska* system has officially been abolished, some elements of it remain, such as a stamp in citizens' passports. There is no registration system that replaced *propiska* or the legal basis for it. According to local non-governmental organisations, there are some contradictions between laws on issues related to freedom of movement."

SUBSISTENCE NEEDS

Nutrition

Vulnerable groups in Armenia cannot secure their basic food requirements (2007)

- Approximately one third of the population was food deprived in 2004, compared to about one half in 2001
- Food deprivation levels were higher in Yerevan where one half of the population was food deprived in 2004
- Diets mainly consist of cereals and oils, with dairy, roots and meats accounting for 5 per cent of calories
- Extreme poverty was higher in rural areas in 2001, in particular as an effect of the drought during summer 2000
- Negative trends in food consumption patterns are translating into high rates of malnutrition among children
- Factors associated with malnutrition include unemployment, female head of household, refugee status, lack of access to land, pensioner status and the lack of support from abroad

National Statistical Service, 2007:

"Almost one third of the population was food deprived in Armenia based on food consumption data collected in the 2004 Armenian Integrated Living Conditions Survey (ILCS 2004). In Yerevan close to one in two persons was food deprived, a similar level to that for the lowest income quintile group at national level...

The high food cost of 1000 of Kcal (211 dram) in the Yerevan city was linked to added cost of transport, distribution, losses and profit of food made available to the market. The higher level of dietary energy consumption in rural areas compared to other urban areas or Yerevan showed that on average people in rural areas are better off than national average.

The average daily energy consumption of an Armenian food deprived person was of 1580 Kcal in 2004, falling short by around 220 Kcal to reach the minimum energy requirement of 1796 Kcal plus an additional 224 Kcal, that is, more than 440 Kcal to reach the national average dietary energy consumption of 2020 Kcal.

Armenians daily devoted 395 Drams to food, about three fifths of the total consumption expenditure at national level. This level of food consumption expenditure provided on average 2020 Kcal of energy consumption. Most households acquired food as purchases (76 percent) and in Yerevan food purchases were higher than at national level (90 percent)...

Proteins, fats and carbohydrates contributed 11, 23 and 65 percent respectively to the total energy consumption at national level from a relatively balanced diet. The diet was based on cereals and products and oils and fats to dietary energy consumption, 58 and 11 percent of total energy. Dairy products, roots and tubers and meat contributed with 5 percent each to total energy... The share of proteins in total energy was near the lower bound of recommended range for proteins and the share of fat closer to the higher bound of recommended range for fats, hence the diet was within recommended ranges of FAO/WHO experts.

The prevalence of critical food poverty, not having enough income to acquire minimum energy needs as defined by FAO for assessing food deprivation, was less than one percent at national level. This even if the population was devoting a large share of total consumption in food (60 percent)."

WFP, 5 April 2001, paras. 8-12:

"Approximately 55 percent of the population cannot meet their basic food needs. The poorest segments of the population allocate 73 percent of their income to buying food. Approximately 70 percent of the population rely on agricultural production for survival. Agriculture has become less effective as a safety net, as evidenced by the fact that extreme poverty is higher in rural areas. The average land plot is 1.2–1.5 ha per household. Available arable land comprises 66 percent of the country but only between 30 and 40 percent is under cultivation owing to lack of access to irrigation, agricultural inputs and expertise, and efficient equipment. With the added effects of the drought that decimated crops and affected livestock production last summer [2000], living conditions have become precarious for a large number of the rural population. Having lost most of their produce, subsistence rural households have little to sell or barter and are therefore faced with serious food shortages. The available coping mechanisms such as out-migration or the consumption of seeds and livestock will add to the adverse consequences of the drought in the coming years. In addition, information from the meteorological service and from WFP monitoring reports in the drought-affected areas shows that rain and snowfall in areas sown with winter crops was below normal in autumn and winter. This factor indicates a continuing drought situation affecting the coming harvest. To follow developments in the current drought situation, WFP will support the fielding of a joint FAO/WFP crop and food supply assessment mission in spring 2001.

A nationwide nutrition and food security survey of 3,900 households conducted in September 2000 by WFP, and co-funded by UNICEF and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), revealed low levels of consumption in low-income households and a substantially unbalanced diet, consisting mainly of bread, potatoes, tea and cabbage. Almost 61 percent of households had sold household assets to meet their food needs. About 56 percent of households reported changing their food consumption patterns and were eating cheaper food, while another 10 percent were eating smaller meals and/or reducing the number of meals eaten. A seven-day food frequency count showed that while 98 percent of households had consumed bread on a daily basis, many had not consumed any additional food items that would have ensured nutrient adequacy. Fewer than one in four households consumed meat, an important source of iron. This is likely to contribute to an increase in the already high rate of anaemia. A 1998 nutrition survey showed an anaemia incidence of 26 percent in children under 5 and of 15 percent in women. Dairy products, important food items and good sources of calcium, are not consumed by 32 percent of the population. Those who did consume dairy products did not do so often enough or in sufficient enough quantities. Fresh vegetables are another important food source for vitamins and minerals, but a large proportion of the test population admitted to not eating them regularly.

These negative trends in food consumption patterns are translating into high rates of malnutrition among children. Whereas in 1998 chronic malnutrition ranged from 6.2 percent to 44 percent, with an average of 13 percent, the 2000 survey found rates ranging from 14 percent to 31 percent, with a higher average of 22 percent. Particularly high levels of chronic malnutrition were found in Gegharkunik and Syunik. Using the criterion of mid-upper-arm circumference, the 2000 survey also found 7.8 percent of the elderly population to be malnourished.

Households that had chronically malnourished children persistently had lower frequency counts on all food items than did households with no malnourished children. The incidence of chronic malnutrition was dependent on how many household members were able to find employment. About 27 percent of children from households with no stable employment were chronically malnourished, compared with 18 percent in households that had at least one member working. Of

households eating only one meal per day, those with no member working (13.8 percent) were twice as many as those with one member working (6.5 percent) and three times as many as those with two members working (3.8 percent).

Of households consuming only one meal a day, 16.1 percent were households headed by women, twice as many as those headed by men (8.4 percent). Single elderly households had the highest proportion, at 23.4 percent. The refugee population had the lowest frequency counts on all food items except for bread, pasta and potatoes, compared with non-refugee households. Factors associated with low food intake and malnutrition include the absence of a working member in the household, female head of household, refugee status, lack of access to land, pensioner status and the lack of any support from relatives abroad."

See the full text of the [Food Security and Nutritional Status Survey, Armenia September 2000](#) [Internal link]

See also map "[Distribution of households according to vulnerability](#)" WFP. 21 September 2000 [map section]

Health

Results of Demographic and Health Survey 2005 (2006)

- Major causes of death are cardiovascular diseases, cancer and accidents
- Incidence of infectious diseases is rising
- Children appear malnourished based on stunting and wasting data
- One-quarter of adults are hypertensive, but the majority were not aware
- Health system financed by tax revenues, out-of-pocket payments, humanitarian donations and project-specific international support

National Statistical Service, 2006:

"The Armenia Demographic and Health Survey (ADHS) is a nationally representative survey of 6,566 women and 1,447 men aged 15-49. Survey fieldwork was conducted during the period of September to December 2005...The major causes of death in Armenia are similar to those in industrialized countries (cardiovascular diseases, cancer and accidents), but there is also a rising incidence of certain infectious diseases such as tuberculosis...Most men and women have heard of tuberculosis; however, only slightly over half of respondents correctly identify the mode of tuberculosis transmission (through the air when coughing).

In a well-nourished population of children, it is expected that slightly more than 2 percent of children will be stunted or wasted. In Armenia, 13 percent of children under age five are stunted and 5 per cent are wasted. Overall, 4 percent of children are underweight...

Eight in ten women and men have never visited an eye doctor. Most of those who do get care, go to get glasses. Survey data show a slight decline in the proportion of men age 15-49 who smoke, from 67 percent in 2000 to 64 percent in 2005. The proportion of women who report smoking remains negligible at 2 percent. The 2005 ADHS included blood pressure measurement for consenting adults age 15-49. Results indicate that about one-quarter of adults in Armenia are classified as hypertensive. A very disturbing finding is that four out of five respondents with high blood pressure are unaware that they are hypertensive...

The present health system of Armenia has inherited the positive and negative features of the Soviet health system. On the positive side, it incorporates a rather developed structure and network, and sufficient staffing. However, the system is largely focused on hospital care, as well as deficiencies in the primary health system and a generally low quality of medical care.

In the former Soviet Union, health care was highly centralized. Medical services were basically accessible for the whole population. After independence, the unfavorable socioeconomic and political situation brought forward the need for developing a program of radical reforms.

The system reforms initiated since the mid-1990s were based on the condition that health services could no longer be freely provided to the whole population. Thereafter, a majority of the population had to pay the full cost of medical services. Although the government tried to provide free medical care to vulnerable groups of the population under state-guaranteed programs, the under-financing of the health sector implied that even the persons included in these groups had to make partial payments. Thus, the changes violated the principle of equity and caused concerns about the deterioration of the population's health.

Historically, the state budget was the primary funding source for health care. Currently, the health system is financed both from local and international sources. The main local sources are the state budget and direct out-of-pocket payments by the population. International financing sources are general humanitarian donations and project-specific support.

The state budget remains the main formal source of financing. State funds are derived from general tax revenues. State health expenditures are not sufficient to support the core system and to meet the health needs of the population. In 2000, actual public health care expenditure amounted to only 4.4 per-cent of the state budget, about 1.0 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP). However, this share has since risen to 7.4 percent of the state budget in 2005 (1.4 percent of GDP). This increase has been attributed to the strengthening of sustainable budgetary policy introduced by the government, as well as a wider public acceptance of poverty reduction and related programs that are directed towards improving health as national priority.

Official external health financing sources include humanitarian aid (donations of medical supplies and equipment) as well as credit and grant programs with or in coordination with the MOH. Grants and credit projects financed by foreign governments and international and multilateral organizations are now the dominant form of external support in immunization, maternal and child health, reproductive health, adolescent health, iodine deficiency, and HIV/AIDS prevention that emphasizes prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV."

Shelter

IDPs from earthquake still living in temporary shelter (2009)

- More than half a million people were left homeless after 1988 earthquake
- Since then they have mostly been living in temporary accommodation, many in shipping containers
- The government has promised all will have homes by 2013, though the quality of recent construction is poor

IWPR, 19 February 2009:

"Armenians still homeless from the huge earthquake of 1988 were appalled when they first heard that promises they would finally be housed last year were going to be broken. But then they saw the condition of the buildings intended for them, and were relieved. According to officials and local people, some of the blocks were not properly built. Critics also said that there were insufficient quantities to house all those who needed homes...

The earthquake, which struck Armenia on December 7, 1988, shattered houses across the whole north of the then-Soviet republic, destroying 17 per cent of all the living space in the country. In Leninakan – now called Gyumri – more than 20,000 flats were destroyed, along with 11,000 private houses and 120 administrative buildings. More than half a million people were left homeless, of whom 7,000 still lack accommodation after more than two decades but the government has promised that all will have homes by 2013. Of the total, 4,200 are in Gyumri and whole chunks of the city are still made up of domiks - old shipping containers turned into temporary accommodation that has become permanent.

A key part of the rehousing scheme was the Mush-2 complex being built by Glendale Hills, but it was not finished by the end of the year as promised...At the moment, the building site in the Mush-2 district has around 20 four-storey buildings, but some of them are still lacking windows and roofs. There was no road until the president announced he intended to visit late last year, when one was built in just ten days. The deputy head of the state construction control agency of the construction ministry, Artashes Sargsyan, confirmed the houses had been built in a hurry...

Sargsyan told officials to make sure the improvements were made by May 15, but the would-be residents are not too hopeful, saying they have learned not to put too much trust in government promises. "Children have been born in these domiks and have suffered from various diseases because they are living in dangerous and polluted accommodation, and the problem is not being solved. My neighbour, for example, was given a flat but was forced to return to the domik. Such cases are frequent. Getting a flat does not mean the problem is solved, since these people have nowhere to work," Sargsyan said.

One domik resident, 67-year-old Eva, who asked that her surname not be used, has lived in her makeshift home for 21 years together with her son and daughter. When they moved into the domik, they considered it a step up from the temporary accommodation they had, but they have grown tired of it. In September 2001, the government gave them a 3,000 US dollars certificate with which to buy a flat, but it was not enough, so they decided to repair the domik and make it more comfortable. The money allowed them to connect it to the gas, water and the sewerage systems and they have lived there ever since.

Residents of other regions have also failed to get their new homes. Some 182 residents of the village of Akhuryan in the Shirak region have been waiting for 20 years, and were initially angry that the delays in Gyumri would stop them getting new homes...Meanwhile, Vahan Tumasyan, head of the Shirak Centre non-governmental organisation, has appealed to the government to investigate the Mush-2 district buildings' ability to withstand another earthquake. He said that, in meetings with construction workers, he was told that poor materials had been used, and called for an expert examination to put potential residents' minds at risk."

IDPs living in temporary shelter more than 10 years after conflict (2000)

- 75 percent of the persons displaced as a result of the conflict lived in temporary dwellings
- Only a small percentage of IDPs were able to buy houses, the remainder mostly lived with relatives
- IDPs lived in temporary shelters and with relatives for more than 10 years

UNHCHR, 6 November 2000, paras. 20-23:

"In the border regions, the Survey [undertaken in 1998 by the Refugees and Displaced Persons Working Group] found that an estimated 75 per cent of the displaced were living in pasture huts and other temporary dwellings, 18 per cent residing with relatives, 3 per cent were accommodated in hostels and rest homes and only 4 per cent had been able to purchase homes of their own. According to government estimates, more than 12,300 houses in the border regions were damaged, with 40 per cent of these having been ruined. In the region of Tavoush, it was estimated that some 250 houses had been completely destroyed, 935 had been seriously damaged and more than 7,000 had suffered some damage. The Governor reported that the houses of only a small number of returnees had been reconstructed. Usually, this has been the result of the returnees' own efforts, though it was noted that the local government had provided some reconstruction assistance in 1994 immediately after the introduction of the ceasefire when some people began to return, and especially to women heads of household.

Indeed, in the villages visited, damage to shelter was evident, with the extent of damage varying from one shelter to another. The mission met with one elderly woman whose house had been completely destroyed and who was compelled to live in a stable. It also visited returnees living adjacent to their destroyed homes in temporary shelter consisting of an iron container which had initially been used by persons who had lost their homes as a result of the earthquake of 1988. By 'temporary', it was explained that these structures were designed for use of a period of two years. Now in use for 12 years, these structures are showing signs of serious wear, including leaks and water damage. Moreover, the Representative was informed that many of the shelters reportedly were not even in habitable condition when they were first provided to the conflict-induced internally displaced: the Minister for Regional Administration and Urban Planning (whose responsibilities include securing shelter for internally displaced persons) spoke candidly about the inadequate condition of the temporary shelter provided by the Government, noting that they had been 'falling to pieces' when they were transported to the internally displaced several years ago. Lacking insulation, the shelters were reported to be very cold in the winter and hot in the summer. Local authorities in the villages in the border areas stressed, above all, the need for shelter reconstruction, maintaining that if houses were rebuilt, more people would return."

IOM, January 1999:

"Only one per cent of the displaced population has been able to buy houses of their own and the greater part of them live with relatives."

Department of Migration and Refugees, 2000, p. 4:

"The Department of Migration and Refugees at the Government of the RoA (hereafter the DMR) based on the existing materials and researches done, had made an estimation of the damages to the people, infrastructures in bordering Marzes [or provinces] in the result of war. The survey carried among the displaced show that 75% of them live in temporary dwellings, and 18% at relatives."

Infrastructure in border areas ruined by the military operations (1999)

- Roads, buildings and water supply and irrigation system suffered heavy destruction
- Displaced families have no resources to repair their damaged homes
- Almost 80% of social infrastructure was destroyed in border areas and farms became inoperable due to destruction

Department of Migration and Refugees, 2000, p. 4:

"Researches have shown that many Marzes [provinces] have extremely poor infrastructures, which greatly hinders the return of residents to these settlements. The military actions have ruined 60% of the roads in the researched areas, 40% of housing, large parts of administrative buildings, 50% of the water supply and irrigation system...

The frontier settlements in Noyemberian and Tavoush regions of Tavoush Marz [province] are in a disastrous situation. Almost 70% of them have no water supply or irrigation systems 65% of the roads interconnecting these settlements are in a very bad state. Due to military actions 1292 of 5045 homes have been ruined. Having no means to renovate these damaged houses people have wither gone in living in them in their ruined state or they have left their homes and found refuge with relatives resulting in often several families living in one house."

IOM, January 1999:

"Destruction of the social infrastructure in border villages (almost 80%), impossibility of running farms because of the decrease of cultivable lands (in some places up to 90%), lack of irrigation systems, agricultural equipment, the pressure of high taxes and lack of state assistance."

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

General

Education in border areas affected by the conflict (2000)

- Severe shortage and bad conditions of school buildings in the border areas
- Lack of qualified teachers, textbooks and school supplies
- Poor condition of roads also hamper access to school on rainy days

UNHCHR, 6 November 2000, para. 29:

"Educational opportunities also have been severely curtailed. Some border villages have no functioning schools. Where school facilities do exist, 60 per cent require urgent renovation and 12 per cent of the buildings require basic renovation to make them usable at all. School buildings are considered to be in particularly poor condition in Tavoush and Sjunik marzes. Throughout the region, functioning nursery schools are very rare. Aside from the damage to or destruction of physical infrastructure, a number of other problems impede access to education. Qualified teachers are required for most of the schools; however, given the poor housing conditions in the area, few teachers are willing to live in the region. Pupils suffer from a lack of textbooks and other school supplies. Moreover, when it rains heavily, a number of the (dirt) roads are washed out and become impassable, making transportation very difficult. Under such conditions, which prevailed on the day of the Representative's visit, children are unable to attend school - as indeed was the case that day. The impact of the conflict on education has been devastating. The mayor of one village, lamenting that 'children are lost in such conditions', explained that in the 10 years since the war, not a single child from the village had gone on to higher education, whereas 8-10 children routinely had done so during the pre-war (and Soviet) period."

IOM, January 1999:

"One of the factors accounting for the poor educational level of the frontier region population is that many of the villages (30%) are in mountainous and high-mountainous settlements connected with the regional centres with poor communications - primarily bad roads...Some of the frontier settlements have no functioning schools (Soflu, Tsguni). These are some villages formerly inhabited by Azerbaijanis, which used to have schools. The school buildings look shabby, shelling and the earthquake damaged some of them. Not even basic renovation works have been conducted for many years. According to our primary conclusions, 12% of the school buildings need basic renovation to make them usable and some 60% need urgent renovation. The rest of the 28% of school buildings can be considered to be in a useable state. Most of the schools need qualified teachers, pupils are not provided with textbooks and functioning nursery schools are very rare."

ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Self-reliance

Most IDPs self-sufficient, according to NRC study (2005)

- Most IDPs considered themselves economically self-sufficient in 2005
- Access to safe and fertile farmland improved their self-reliance
- A small number of families were fully dependent on financial assistance
- Many IDPs may be working in the shadow economy

NRC, 1 March 2005:

"Approximately 70 percent of IDPs consider themselves to be economically self-sufficient, receiving no outside financial support. One-third of this group is not satisfied with their economic situation.

About 12 percent of IDP households have their expenses partially covered by others. This includes friends, members of their community, and aid organizations. Eighty percent of these households are satisfied with their level of income.

Just over one percent of IDP households are fully dependent on outside financial assistance. About 75 percent of these are single- or two-member households, primarily elderly pensioners.

IDPs living in the provinces of Gegharkunik, Vayots Dzor and Syunik report higher levels of self-sufficiency. This is due to a larger abundance of farmland in the former two provinces as well as the greater degree of security in Syunik, where both sides of the border are under Armenian control, removing the threat of sniping and reducing the prevalence of landmines. Villagers in Syunik are also known to scavenge building materials from abandoned buildings in Armenian-controlled Azeri villages for use in repairing their homes.

Lower levels of self-sufficiency were reported in the provinces of Shirak, Lori, and Tavush. This can largely be attributed to widespread damage remaining from the 1988 earthquake that devastated parts of these regions, and the related loss in employment opportunities. Tavush was also the most heavily bombed province during the conflict.

A full 77 percent of those interviewed did not indicate a type of employment, while a further 8 percent were designated as unemployed (see Figure 8). This may suggest a high level of activity in the shadow economy among IDPs, most of whom are unable to engage in the same type of work they did before displacement. This generates a high level of vulnerability."

Economic indicators show poverty reduced (2007)

- Earthquake zone, borderline regions and urban population are particularly affected
- Employment is not a guarantee against poverty

National Statistical Service, 2007:

"Armenia has substantially reduced poverty from 1998/99 to 2004. Almost 700,000 people were lifted out of poverty and the incidence of poor people fell by 21 percent points, from around 56.1 to about 34.6 percent.

Poverty has become lower and less severe, as the poverty gap and severity of poverty have declined significantly as well. In 2004, the poverty gap was estimated at 7.4 percent, down from 17.2 in 1998/99; while severity of poverty was estimated at 2.4 percent (down from 7.2). The shortfall between the consumption of the poor and the poverty line (in percent of the poverty line) fell from 31 to 21 percent.

Despite these remarkable results, poverty still remained an important issue for Armenia in 2004 as 34.6 percent of the population—over one million people were poor and among them about 200,000 very poor. Poverty in Armenia was higher among the urban than rural population, although the difference has been narrowing and was not strongly pronounced in 2004.

In 2004, rural areas had the smallest and non-Yerevan urban areas the highest incidence of very poor population (4.4 and 9.2 percent respectively). A similar situation was also observed in 1998/99, indicating that subsistence agriculture played an important role in protecting people from falling into extreme poverty. The growth in agricultural production translated into increased real farm incomes, especially for poor households and had a positive effect on rural poverty reduction. Also, food prices increased much more than non-food prices between 1999 and 2004 (29.3 percent and 6.1 percent respectively). As food production is the dominant source of income/consumption for rural households (mainly in the form of own consumption), the relative price increase of food products had a favorable impact on rural population. Yet, it should be noted that rural poor were mostly employed in agriculture, with a negligible share working in the non-farm sector."

UNDP, 2001, p. 11:

"After a decade of economic reforms, one of the most challenging issues is the widespread poverty with 55% of the population living under the poverty line. Comparative analysis of data available over the years have revealed positive shifts in the depth and severity of poverty as well as extreme poverty have decreased from 27.7% to 22.9%. However, general poverty yet does not show any indication of being reduced. Poverty is especially severe in the earthquake zone, the rural areas where there is no possibility to cultivate land, borderline regions and the urban population. Among the peculiarities of poverty in Armenia (typical of the CIS countries) should be mentioned that employment and education do not always help people get out of poverty"

UNDP, 2001, p. 15:

"Analyses of the labor market of Armenia from 1994 to 2001 reveal that its situation is still extremely tense, with growing disparity between labor supply and demand. During the last years, Armenia's labor market has demonstrated an increasing tendency in hidden unemployment and hidden employment.

The official registered unemployment level in 2000 stood at 11.7%, and in 1999 – at 11.2% (34.4% according to independent evaluations). Unemployment is especially acute in the disaster zone and in urban areas. Women will constitute a majority among the unemployed. There is an increasing ratio of the unemployed is the 31-50 age group. On the other hand, employment is not a guarantee against poverty – of the employed 17% is considered extremely poor."

Farming difficulties in border areas (2007)

- The process of economic transformation placed a particularly heavy burden on socially vulnerable groups, including IDPs
- Large segments of the population have been forced to rely on subsistence farming for their livelihood
- There has been a growing trend towards a feminization of poverty
- The drought in 2000 resulted in significant reduction of agricultural production, especially in the northern part of the country
- Agricultural production is also affected by the lack of agricultural equipment and seeds, damage to irrigation systems, lack of agricultural labour, insecurity and landmines

IWPR, 5 July 2007:

"Despite the two countries signing a truce in 1994, no peace deal has been forthcoming and sporadic shooting over the frontier is frequent. Tensions are permanently high, though there have been no casualties in this village since the end of the war. The village's fields mark the border between the two countries. Local residents walk across a small hill on the outskirts of the village and find themselves in an open field with the Azerbaijani province of Nakhichevan at the other end.

There was fighting and bombing here during the Karabakh war. Houses were destroyed in the village and there were deaths too. "During the war, the Azerbaijanis somehow managed to reach our rear and one of them died in the fighting. It was haymaking time and our soldiers returned the corpse to them under the condition that they would not shoot for a week, enabling us to harvest the crops," said Vachagan Poghosian, head of the village administration.

Shooting regularly mars the truce along the whole border, with both sides accusing each other of breaking the ceasefire. "Violations of the ceasefire are not constant. The Azerbaijani side often disseminates misinformation. However, there are, of course, incidents. An Azerbaijani sniper killed two civilians in 2007," said defence ministry spokesperson Seyran Shahsuvarian.

Khachik itself is lucky, however, no one has been killed or wounded since the truce was signed and villagers working in the fields said shooting was rare from either side. "Nevertheless, we work in fear. Fear is inevitable. You never know what a stupid man will do. They could start shooting. You must not underestimate the enemy," said Rafik Petrosian, as he worked in the fields.

"The soldiers are in the field with us, but what could they do if the Turks (this is how the Armenians traditionally call Azerbaijanis) attacked? They will just kill us and that is it," he said. And the villagers do not take any chances. They stay at home on days considered important by either side, not wanting to inflame emotions."

UNHCHR, 6 November 2000, para. 17:

"[I]t must be noted that the internal displacement crisis occurred in the context of a difficult period of post-Soviet transition, involving not only a sudden change of political system but an abrupt transition towards a competitive market economy which led to a sharp decline in living standards. The economic blockade by Azerbaijan and, subsequently, Turkey as a consequence of the conflict has further exacerbated the economic difficulties of the country. Among the countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States, Armenia is reported to have the highest rate of official unemployment and one of the lowest levels of nominal salary - approximately US\$ 25 per month.[4] More than half of the population lives below the poverty line and almost 28 per cent of the population is very poor and unable to secure minimum nutritional requirements.[5] While these difficult economic conditions have affected the population as a whole, the United Nations reports that the process of economic transformation has placed a particularly heavy burden on the socially vulnerable groups, including internally displaced persons, 'whose situation grows

worse as prices increase and pensions and salaries are eroded'.[6] At the same time, the economic difficulties also constrain the capacity of the Government to address their plight."

[Endnote 4: 1999 Annual Report of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Armenia, p. 8]

[Endnote 5: United Nations Development Programme, Common Country Assessment: Armenia (Yerevan: United Nations, 2000), p. 51]

[Endnote 6: 1999 Annual Report of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Armenia, p. 13]

WFP, 5 April 2001, paras. 1-4:

"In the 1980s, Armenia was primarily an industrial country; in 1985, the share of industry in its gross domestic product (GDP) was 73.9 percent. The break-up of the Soviet Union and the dispute over Nagorno-Karabagh resulted in a severe energy crisis and economic blockade, which led to the collapse of the majority of the country's industrial capacity. The 1998 Russian financial crisis caused a further decline in Armenia's economy. In 1998, Armenia's GDP was only 41 percent that of 1989. By 1999, its GDP composition had changed dramatically, with industry constituting only 20.4 percent, agriculture 29.8 percent, services 41.3 percent, and other areas 10 percent. Today, agriculture is the largest source of employment, accounting for approximately 40 percent of the workforce.

By the end of 1996, 55 percent of the population was in absolute poverty. The continuing decline of socio-economic conditions has led to an immense inequality in the distribution of the national income, evidenced by the high Gini coefficient of 0.690 in 1998/99. [The Gini coefficient is derived from the cumulative distribution of earnings across the population, ranked by capital incomes] According to the World Bank Report of June 1999, 'Improving Social Assistance in Armenia', vulnerability to poverty continues to be high, with many households constantly moving in and out of poverty, and an unemployment rate of 25 percent.

Widespread unemployment has forced a large percentage of the population to rely on subsistence farming for their livelihood, though these people barely contribute to Armenia's food market. The proportion of imported food products remains high. Furthermore, the drought in 2000 resulted in a 27-percent reduction in the wheat and barley harvests and a 40-percent loss in the potato harvest.

There has been a growing trend towards a feminization of poverty. Women have suffered the most severe consequences from unemployment and out-migration. Households headed by women are among the most disadvantaged, both economically and socially. About 82 percent of women with four or more children do not work. Sixty-seven percent of single mothers are unemployed. Most households with many children (51 percent) and single mothers (63 percent) rely solely on family remittances and other assistance for survival. In the past, even US\$100 sent from an emigrant to his poverty-stricken family was enough to help that family survive for a few months. The recent economic crises in Russia, however, have given Armenian workers there limited opportunities to earn enough money to send back to their families, so there has been a substantial decrease in remittances received."

WFP, November 2000, para. 12:

"The population most affected by the drought will be subsistence farmers in the northern part of the country (marzes of Shirak, Lori, Tavush, Geharkunik, Aragatzotn and Kotayk). Already struggling to survive at a minimum level of existence, these farmers have few resources or coping mechanisms left to offset the negative effects of this drought."

UNHCHR, 6 November 2000, para. 26:

"In the border areas, agriculture and stock-breeding constituted the main means of food for subsistence as well as income-generating activity, either directly through the sale of commodities or through employment in processing plants. At present, however, agricultural activities are severely curtailed: about 25 per cent of cultivable land and about 40 per cent of irrigated land is

not being utilized, primarily due to the lack of agricultural equipment and seeds, damage to irrigation systems, lack of agricultural labour and the significant presence of landmines. In one village visited by the Representative, it was reported that 254 out of 390 plots cannot be cultivated owing to the presence of mines. At the same time, residents informed the Representative that despite the lack of access to their land, they are compelled to pay taxes on land which they cannot cultivate - a requirement which appears inherently unjust and should be relaxed by the Government until such time that demining occurs and enables safe access to the land. Decreasing the profitability of the agricultural production which does occur are the problems of transportation to market caused by damage to roads and the fact that plants for the processing of agricultural goods also have been destroyed or damaged. Reportedly, only one in five internally displaced persons in the border areas is employed."

IOM, January 1999:

"When evaluating their living condition as poor the people indicated two main sources of income. Unemployment benefit and income from farming and life stock breeding. Secondly salary and support from international organisations. The latter is one of the most important sources in Tavoush Marz.

The reasons for the particularly low income for subsistence in remote border areas are:

- a) transportation costs for taking agricultural products to market are high
- b) part of the cultivable lands are mined
- c) irrigation problems
- d) benefits are not differentiated particularly fixed incomes such as pensions
- e) almost no investments in the spheres of economy and social infrastructure

This has created families deprived of minimal means of existence...About 25% of cultivable land and about 40% of irrigated land are not utilised. 50% of industrial enterprises do not function and livestock has decreased more than 50% since the beginning of the transition period. Cultivable land is largely under-utilised in the researched areas because of numerous reasons. The primary problems are no agricultural equipment, landmines, absence of irrigation systems and no seeds...There are a large number of single people and families consisting of only two or three members in frontier villages. Naturally, it is difficult for these families to cultivate land and grow vegetable gardens. Because of no tax exemptions the standard of life of all families continues to deteriorate and the residents of frontier regions are in unequal conditions in comparison with the residents of non-frontier regions."

Child labour in Armenia (2007)

- Informal child labour higher than formal child labour
- Majority of working children are boys
- About 1/3 of working children are below the legal working age
- Children work mainly to provide income for family
- Working children are frequently absent from school; some have dropped out

Harmonic Society, 2007:

"Fortunately Armenia is not among the countries that have a high occurrence of child labour. Yet, the practice exists in our country as well. Social vulnerability, poverty and other factors in families with children force many children to go to work at an age below (often with conditions conflicting with the law) the one accepted by society..."

The problem of labour exploitation of children used to exist also in the Soviet period. It became particularly severe in the post-Soviet period as a result of massive and extreme poverty as well as the change of the economic system. Land privatization forced rural families to reassume production functions, the accomplishment of which, in the absence of financial means, forced them to brutally involve all members of the family, including children...

There is poor information available on the nature and occurrence of the phenomenon. Firstly, employees' registration procedure does not include children. Secondly, recording in the labour market is complicated due to shadow practices, and thirdly, when it comes to children employers tend to hide this phenomenon avoiding additional responsibilities which are stipulated for employers in the event of child labour exploitation.

1,066 households have been surveyed, out of which in 65 at least 1 working child has been identified, in some of them more than one, and the total number of working children was 71...In particular, 1.4% of working children are of the age 7-9, 28.2% children of the age 10-13 and 70.4% children of the age of 14-18. This means that about one third of working children are of the age lower than the age allowed under labour legislation.

The composition of the number of working children by gender is the following: boys - 84.5%, girls - 15.5%. These include only children who have employers or who have been paid for their work...2.6% of children have dropped out of education because of work and 5.1% of children have an absenteeism rate of one month and more...58.7% of children combine education and work. 41.4% of working children do not study...A large group of working children - about 30% has already dropped out of the education system. The reason is the schooling costs, as well as lack of interest in education by the child and/or parent. Merely 19.7% of working children have permanent jobs, the rest have either seasonal or occasional jobs.

By marzes the highest number of working children were observed in Shirak - 15.6%, Armavir - 12.8%, Syunik - 11.8% and Ararat - 9.7% and the remaining marzes 5-5.5%. In Yerevan the number equated to 3%.

Children work in various environments - from their own house to the street. Child labour takes place in formalized (production, construction etc) and non-formalized environments (house, field, garden, street)...Among sectors, agricultural work of children is the highest in occurrence and rural children are involved in such work.

80% of working children have only a verbal arrangement with the employer. There are only a few cases where the work of children is recorded duly in accordance with the stipulated procedure and in conformity with the norms and requirements in effect. Mostly - in 23.3% of cases - children are paid on a daily basis, only 16.9% monthly, the same - weekly, and 7.7% in kind...The survey findings show cases when the child is not paid at all (9.2%)."

Public Participation

Political participation of IDPs (2009)

- Initiatives have taken place to encourage political participation of IDPs
- However, more engagement with IDPs is needed

CRI, September 2009:

"A number of limited and fragmented initiatives have taken place at the political level with regards to the promotion of informal dialogue at the grassroots and middle levels, support for the protection of human rights, encouraging civil society-governmental cooperation, the media and political participation of IDPs. Some initiatives have taken place at the policy level, for instance the improvement of accountability and transparency, the opening of public debate and societal participation, mediation and reconciliation initiatives. Moreover, most of the initiatives that have taken place to support dialogue between the parties to the conflict have occurred wither between Armenia and Azerbaijan or within regional frameworks (South Caucasus, Black Sea region)...There is a need for more grassroots engagement with IDPs."

Additional information on this topic could not be found among the sources consulted.

PROPERTY ISSUES

General

Property claims of IDPs (2009)

- IDPs from Artsvashen have applied to the European Court of Human Rights against Azerbaijan regarding loss of property

EHRAC, 2009:

"Mr. Arakelyan, an Armenian national, was forced to leave his home in the village of Artsvashen, Gegharquniq Region, Armenia, when Azerbaijani forces captured the village on 8 August 1992. He has been unable to return to his home since then and currently lives in another village in his home region. In his application to the ECtHR he complains that his property has been illegally occupied and that the Government of Azerbaijan has failed to ensure the return of his property or to provide him with relevant financial compensation for his property."

Additional information on property claims of IDPs could not be found among the sources consulted.

PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT

General

Reports of return movements and integration (2009)

- According to US DOS, most IDPs had returned or settled elsewhere in the country by 2009
- The government reported in 2008 that in the three years preceding about 10,000 IDPs had returned
- Continuing obstacles to return were fear of landmines and socioeconomic problems

US DOS, 25 February 2009:

"During the country's war with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh, the government evacuated approximately 65,000 households from the border region, but most have since returned to their homes or settled elsewhere. Of the remaining IDPs, almost two-thirds could not return to their villages, which were surrounded by Azerbaijani territory, and others chose not to return due to socioeconomic hardships or fear of landmines. The government afforded full citizenship rights to IDPs but did not have programs to help integrate them; however, international organizations supported their adjustment."

Government of Armenia, 25 September 2008:

"The research queries among the rest of the IDPs have shown that during last three years 9692 persons returned to their original places of residence and 1259 persons (adult members of 626 families) out of 5784 expressed willingness to return once the respective living conditions are created and 740 persons (adult members of 379 families) are still in hesitation."

USCR, 2000:

USCR: "Some 60,000 Armenians displaced from villages bordering Azerbaijan since 1993 are believed to have integrated locally and were not receiving UNHCR or government assistance at year's end."

IOM, January 1999:

"Being deprived of the possibility of land cultivation, they have difficulties in adapting to new areas without having a solution to the housing and employment problems."

Hayden, 1998, p. 165:

"Since the 1994 cease-fire has been relatively well-observed, it is believed that many of [displaced as a result of the war] have returned to their homes, for there is evidence of repopulation and agriculture activity."

Continued impossibility of return for Artsvashen IDPs (2005)

- Armenian exclave Artsvashen currently under Azeri control
- IDPs from Artsvashen have little hope of return given stagnant peace negotiations

NRC, 1 March 2005:

"An Armenian enclave within the borders of Azerbaijan, the village of Artsvashen is currently under Azeri control. In close proximity to the Armenian province of Gegharkunik, Artsvashen was occupied by Azeri forces during the conflict, forcing the local Armenian population to flee their homes and find refuge elsewhere in Armenia.

Displaced persons from Artsvashen are unique within the Armenian context as the current Azeri control of their village makes their return impossible. Today, the majority of the 2818 people who were displaced live in Gegharkunik, while others have either emigrated abroad or relocated elsewhere in Armenia."

Some IDPs still wish to return (2005)

- Half of interviewees stated their wish to return to their area of origin
- People with more socio-economic stability and adequate housing wished to return less than those who are unemployed and retired
- IDPs in Yerevan expressed wish to return more often than IDPs elsewhere
- Shortage of jobs and usable farmland were obstacles to return

NRC, 1 March 2005:

"One of the fundamental goals of the study was to identify the desire of potential IDPs to return to their former places of residence. Their desire to return was analyzed within the context of various socioeconomic and demographic indicators, such as gender, age and employment status.

Of those who gave a precise answer, 50 percent of interviewees say that they do wish to return to their former place of residence, should the obstacles be removed (see Figure 6).

The greater a person's socioeconomic stability in exile, the less their desire to return to their original place of residence. The number of unemployed and retired people who definitely wish to return is very high. Meanwhile only 1.2 percent of those who claim to be economically self-sufficient expressed a desire to return. These trends are true in both rural and urban settings.

Housing conditions also play a significant role in whether an IDP wishes to return to their former place of residence. The more one is satisfied with their present housing conditions the less likely they are to express a desire to return. This relationship is especially strong in rural areas.

More women than men indicate that they will not return, while the proportion of males among those who wish to return to their former residences is slightly higher. This is probably related to the relatively large number of female-headed households in Armenia, where raising children without spousal support makes relocation more difficult, particularly in regions where agriculture is the main source of livelihood.

IDPs in Yerevan are the most likely to indicate a desire to return—the number of those disposed to return is nearly 2.5 times higher than those who have chosen to stay. This is due to the low level of integration for IDPs in the city, where agriculture is not possible...

As illustrated in Figure 6, the most common obstacles identified were related to housing conditions or availability. Over 25 percent of homes in bordering areas were damaged during the conflict, and close to three percent were completely destroyed (see Appendix B, Figure 1).

A shortage of employment and farmland were also cited as significant impediments to returning. Around five percent, or 2500 hectares of farmland in the bordering areas is mined, while a further

five percent are under the threat of sniper fire. A further 10 percent of land is not being cultivated due to other security reasons, damaged roads and irrigation systems and a lack of machinery, as well as due to erosion, landslides, and other naturally occurring obstacles (see Appendix B, Figure 2).

A clear relationship was found between how frequently an IDP visits their former place of residence and disposition to return, with those visiting more often expressing a greater desire to return to their former residence. Frequent visits may reflect the intensity of the bonds with a former village, and also allows the IDP to develop a realistic picture of the current situation in their previous place of residence.

Nearly half of all respondents did not identify any impediments to returning to their former residence. This may indicate that for some households their willingness to return is more of an abstract idea, rather than a genuine desire."

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

General

Access to Nagorno Karabakh (2009)

- ICRC, Medecins sans frontieres and Save the Children provide assistance in Nagorno Karabakh
- Refugees in Nagorno Karabakh have not received assistance
- Azerbaijan has refused to give access to international donors to Nagorno Karabakh
- The US is the only direct humanitarian aid donor in Nagorno Karabakh

CRI, September 2009:

"Focusing on humanitarian assistance and rehabilitation, rather than development and democratisation, several NGOs have established a permanent field presence in Nagorno Karabakh. Main examples include the International Committee of the Red Cross, Medecins sans frontieres, Save the Children and various diaspora groups...Yet, neither the UNHCR nor any other international organisation has addressed the needs of the refugees who are currently residing in Nagorno Karabakh, rather than in one of the recognised states...Unfortunately however, Azerbaijan's refusal to grant international donors access to Nagorno Karabakh, has resulted in a forced exclusion of that region and its citizens from [assistance]...There is only very limited engagement in Nagorno Karabakh itself with the US as the only international actor providing direct humanitarian aid (USD 5 million annually)."

Human rights organisations operate freely (2009)

- Non-governmental human rights organisations generally operate without government interference
- The prosecutor general has created an office to communicate with international human rights observers
- There have been no reports of impediments to the work of election observation missions

US DOS, 29 February 2009:

"A number of domestic and international human rights groups generally operated without government restrictions, investigating and publishing their findings on human rights cases. Government officials were somewhat cooperative and responsive to their views."

US DOS, February 2001, sect. 4:

"There are several human rights NGO's organizations that are active and operate openly, criticize abuses publicly, and publish their findings on government human rights violations. In general public access to information on human rights cases usually is adequate, with extensive media coverage of significant court cases, but there was less openness after the October 1999 shootings by civilian and military prosecutors. However, nongovernmental human rights

organizations often report funding difficulties, and at least one, the well-respected Helsinki Association, had to close its offices for part of the year due to lack of funds. The Helsinki Committee continued to operate and did receive permission to have access to detention facilities, and has made several visits.

As part of the commitments it made in advance of joining the Council of Europe (COE), the Government permitted monitoring of its human rights practices by the COE and reaffirmed this right for the ICRC, which retains full access to civilian detention facilities.

An office created by the prosecutor general in July 1997 to communicate with international observers was responsive to requests for information, although information about criminal cases stemming from elections remained relatively general and incomplete.

Current electoral law allows local and international observer organizations to monitor all elections, and such organizations reported no impediments to being allowed to observe the 1999 elections and this year's by-elections."

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

National response

Low visibility of IDPs resulted in a low level of attention (2000)

- Shared ethnic identity explains a certain solidarity between the displaced and the authorities
- However, no political attention has been given to the plight of the internally displaced in particular because of lack of territorial claims connected to them

UNHCHR, 6 November 2000, paras. 46:

"Part of understanding the situation of internal displacement in Armenia involved placing it in its subregional context, a second objective of the mission. As in other cases in the region, a shared ethnic identity between the displaced and the authorities helps to explain why, in a situation of ethnic conflict, the internally displaced are not associated by the authorities with the 'enemy' and denied national protection and assistance on that basis. However, the situation of internal displacement in Armenia differs from that in other countries in the region in a number of ways. To begin with, the number of persons uprooted is comparatively small. The nature of the displacement crisis also is different in that the affected areas were on the sidelines rather than in the centre of the area of conflict (which has been concentrated outside of the territory of Armenia) and are not under occupation. There are no camps or other large and visible concentrations of internally displaced persons, who instead have largely been taken in by relatives or friends or settled in small groups in temporary accommodation. Indeed, as noted earlier, government officials and international personnel have not mapped out where the internally displaced are located. Also, a defining characteristic of the Government's response to internal displacement in Armenia, which contrasts with other cases in the region, is that the plight of the internally displaced has not been highlighted and promoted for political purposes, in particular for the regain of territory. In fact, the Government has paid little attention to the issue of internal displacement as such. Moreover, its approach has been reflected in the international community's response, which has also not focused attention and resources on the plight of the internally displaced in Armenia as it has in other countries. On account of the difficult economic situation of the country as a whole, the Government clearly is lacking the capacity to meet the needs of its internally displaced single-handedly. International support to reinforce Armenia's efforts is required. Just as the problems of internal displacement must be viewed in their regional perspective, so too must international efforts to find solutions to them."

State Migration Service responsible for IDPs as of 2010 (2009)

- There was no governmental agency responsible for IDPs from 1988 to 1999
- As of 2010, the State Migration Service is responsible for covering issues of IDPs
- The Ministry of Economics and the Office of the Coordinator of Humanitarian Aid also deal with the internally displaced population
- Development and assistance for refugees and internally displaced persons is implemented by City and Regional Councils

Government of Armenia, 21 December 2009:

"There was not any governmental agency responsible for the issues for internally displaced persons from 1988 to 1999. In the mandate of the Department of Migration and Refugees (which functioned from 1999 to 2005), State Migration Agency (from 2005 to 2010) and now State Migration Service (since January 2010) were included provisions covering also the issues of IDP's."

Greene, 1998, p. 280:

"Armenia established the State Department for Refugees on November 5, 1991, shortly after gaining independence but nearly three years after refugees had started arriving in large numbers from Azerbaijan. The Department of Refugees had basic responsibility for registration of refugees and IDPs and cooperated with all governmental and non-governmental organizations dealing with refugees. It prepared identity cards for refugees and IDPs, including a special card for people from Nagorno-Karabakh. In September 1995 the Department for Refugees was combined with other offices and integrated into the Ministry of Social Security, Labor, Migration, and Refugee Issues."

UNHCHR, 6 November 2000, para. 30:

"Within the Government, the focal point for the issue of internal displacement is the Department for Migration and Refugees (DMR). Formerly part of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, the DMR was established in 1999 as an independent department, reporting to the Prime Minister. Its mandate is to develop and coordinate implementation of a unified national policy of migration, including with respect to internally displaced persons. Valuable assistance in developing national policy, harmonizing migration-related legislation and undertaking certain operational programmes is being provided to the DMR by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) through its Capacity Building in Migration Management Programme. As part of this programme, working groups comprised of government officials from the relevant ministries and academics, supported by IOM, have been established to formulate recommendations for government review in the areas of policy and management; legislation; refugees and internally displaced persons; and border management and information systems."

Other relevant institutions

Green, 1998, p. 280:

"The ministry [for Labour and Social Security] works closely with many international organizations, particularly UNHCR, in assisting all vulnerable people. Two other departments that frequently deal with IDPs (as well as refugees and the needy) are the Ministry of Economics and the office of the Coordinator of Humanitarian Aid and Development- assistance for refugees and IDPs is implemented by city and regional councils."

Government project for IDPs adopted in 2008 (2009)

- Government seeks \$38 million to rehabilitate border areas
- Programme will include reconstruction and repair of over 18,000 homes and resettlement of 1000 IDPs
- Conflict-affected communities who were not displaced will also benefit

Armenia Liberty, 1 October 2008:

"The government will ask Western donors to provide more than \$38 million for its new plan to rehabilitate Armenia's border regions severely damaged during the war with Azerbaijan, a senior official said on Wednesday.

Gagik Yeghanyan, head of the State Migration Agency, said the government has drawn up a three-year program that envisages the reconstruction and repair of more than 18,000 homes and the resettlement of more than a thousand internally displaced persons (IDPs) in those areas. "This is a rather ambitious but substantiated program," he told a news conference...

According to Yeghanyan, more than 2,000 Armenian IDPs are now ready to return to their pre-war homes. Under the government program, each returning family would get a one-time payment, equivalent to more than \$700, to buy crop seeds and farming equipment, he said.

Yeghanyan added that those families whose houses were completely destroyed by shelling would be paid \$7,700 each to rebuild them. There are almost 1,700 such houses across the country, he said. Yeghanyan said another 16,500 homes were damaged to varying degrees during the fighting. The government wants to pay their owners \$1,500 each. "This will be done not only for the returnees but those who actually live there," the official said."

Government of Armenia, 25 September 2008:

"1. The Project aims at:

- 1) Assisting to the return of 626 IDP households who expressed willingness to move back to their permanent places of residence;
- 2) Assisting 379 IDP families hesitating in their decision to return and facilitating to the return of those who are on their way to return;
- 3) Supporting to the integration of population in border areas.

2. It is expected that the following results will be achieved after the implementation of the Project:

- 1) Resettlement of 626 displaced families in their permanent places of residence;
- 2) Recovery of social and economic conditions for 626 households to ensure their adequate livelihood.
3. The activities to be implemented in the scope of the Project can be conditionally broken down into Resettlement and Recovery components.

The Resettlement component of the Project involves the issues related to the return of 626 IDP households who expressed willingness to move back to their permanent places of residence as well as of 379 IDP families hesitating in their decision to return; and targets at creating adequate livelihood for these people.

4. The Recovery component of the Project touches upon the interests of people indicated in the section above as well as of all those 37454 persons who have already taken an initiative of return; and aims at reconstruction and recovery of ruined and damaged social and economic entities and their capacity strengthening for generation of own profit thereby supporting to the integration of population in the border areas.

It should be noted that after the seize-fire the Armenian Government set the recovery of destroyed settlements as a priority and worked out the ***National Concept of Addressing the Priority Issues in Border and High Mountainous Settlements.***

5. However, this project along with all other similar projects developed in the past remained unfinished because the country was under a huge burden of problems inherited after the independence, such as the earthquake, massive refugee inflow, etc.

Principal Approaches

6. The return of the displaced will be carried out on the voluntary basis under the personal security guarantees.

7. Minimum social conditions will be created for the returnees, including provision of shelter and food for a certain period of time.

8. The resettlement process will run parallel with the projects for reconstruction of damaged social importance infrastructures in the areas of concern.

9. The Project will be widely broadcasted involving the NGO sector, households, local governments, regional and national governance agencies.

10. Within the framework of the Project, assistance will be provided both to the internally displaced persons and to those who have already returned. Those who haven't left their homes but suffered as a result of the armed conflict will benefit from the Project as well.

11. It is envisaged that the Project will result in the voluntary and guaranteed return of over 1005 households and ensure minimum livelihood for them as well as for those families who suffered from the conflict.

12. The total cost of the Project is USD 38,53 million. It will be carried out within the period of 2008-2010 on regional and community levels in the light of the joint efforts of international donors and other NGOs with due regard to the specificity of different approaches.

Resettlement

13. The Resettlement component of the Project will target at nearly 2608 persons (almost 1005 households) in supporting to the return of these people to their permanent places of residence and their resettlement in their own reconstructed or renovated houses. These people may also actively engage in the reconstruction/ renovation process. Under this component of the Project it is planned to identify the priority of settlements with organizations concerned and within a 3-year-period create adequate conditions for fostering the annual return of 330 families to their places of origin.

While in the resettlement process each of the families will receive USD 600 with the aim of starting an economy (acquire animals, seeds, tools, etc.), USD 105 as a single-time allowance and up to USD 45 to each member of the family to cover personal and property transportation costs.

14. A cost of USD 7700 is estimated to create minimum living conditions for 1694 completely destroyed houses/apartments, which means construction of a single room with 32sqm of surface and up to USD 1500 will be spent for 16433 households as a partial renovation cost."

International organizations

UN inter-agency project for sustainable livelihoods underway (2009)

- UN agencies will carry out project to assist vulnerable families in Gegharkunik and Kotayk marzes
- There will be social housing, income generation, business start-up and energy services activities
- Project will conclude in 2011

UNHCR, 19 March 2009:

"With the support of the Government of Japan and the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security in New York, assistance totalling USD 2,484,900.00 has been extended to the United Nations Agencies in Armenia i.e. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) – the lead co-ordination agency of the project, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) for the realisation of 'Sustainable Livelihood for Socially Vulnerable Refugees, Internally Displaced and Local Families' project in Armenia.

The objective of the above project, which was initiated and submitted to UNTFHS for funding by UNHCR, is to assist, through a UN system wide effort, vulnerable families in the identified communities in Gegharkunik and Kotayk marzes in reducing poverty by providing social housing, increasing their self-sustainability through income generation by supporting farming activities and start-up businesses and access to energy services. The UNTFHS project will contribute to the enhancing of living conditions, accessibility of quality health care services, improving educational opportunities as well as building the capacity of direct beneficiaries and self-government bodies.

As the financial agreements of the project have already been signed with all UNTFHS project participating Agencies, the implementation of this project will start on 1 April 2009 to be completed in two years to secure the livelihoods and dignity in the lives of vulnerable communities in Armenia."

Government of Japan, 2 March 2009:

"...Due to rapidly increasing income inequalities and social uncertainties, socially vulnerable people including groups such as refugees and internally displaced people have been suffering from poverty and lack of access to social services in Armenia. Through the following activities, this project aims to reduce poverty and improve access to social services in order to support vulnerable people, especially women and the youth, to attain sustainable livelihood:

- Renovate old buildings to provide housing units for vulnerable households;
- Encourage beneficiaries to get involved in community-based organizations such as women's group;
- Conduct trainings on entrepreneurship and business skills development;

-Establishing Small and Medium Entrepreneurship (SME)-supporting Fund and provide start up loans to 100 businesses and support community-owned programmes;
-Organize trainings on operation and maintenance of renewable energy (RE) systems;
-Train health care providers to build their capacity."

International assistance to Armenia (2009)

- IMF, EBRD, World Bank, UN, EU and OSCE are the main international organisations providing assistance
- The main bilateral donors are France, Germany, Sweden, Greece, Netherlands and UK
- The US is the international donor of humanitarian aid in Nagorno Karabakh

CRI, September 2009:

"The International Monetary Fund (IMF), the EBRD (completing eight investments in Armenia, totalling 116 million EUR in 2005), the World Bank (commitments of USD 398.6 million in 2006 focusing on social reforms, business climate, sectoral credits in energy, transport, water, education and improvement of the country's investment climate), as the key international financial institutions, have programmes or pooled resources to support poverty reduction, restructure the energy sector, strengthen the financial sector and provide support to small and medium enterprises in Armenia.

The UNDP provides assistance in many sectors related to economic development, information technologies and decentralisation. In particular, it is assisting the Ministry of Trade and Economic Development in elaborating a 20-year Economic Development Plan.

The overall goal of the USAID in Armenia for 2009-2013 is to support "sustainable development through increased competitiveness, higher quality social services and a more empowered civil society" based upon three objectives: good governance and democracy, investing in people and economic growth, as well as the peace and reconciliation processes. USAID assistance reached USD 65 million in 2005, USD 63.79 million in 2007 and an estimated USD 62.39 million in 2008.

Under ENP national allocations, European Commission assistance to Armenia is estimated at EUR 98.4 million for 2007-2010 based upon three priority areas: democracy and good governance (EUR 29.52 million), regulatory reform and administrative capacity building (EUR 29.52 million), as well as support for poverty reduction (EUR 39.36 million)...

From the EU member states, the main bilateral donors are: France (support to university education, culture and health care), Germany (one of the biggest bilateral donors, promoting local self-governance, judicial reform and the rule of law, vocational training, infrastructure development, such as the rehabilitation of water systems, and electricity transmission), Sweden (promotes local self-governance, judicial reform and the rule of law, rural development, vocational training, small and medium enterprises development and the promotion of mortgage lending), Greece (health care and education, telecommunications and business training, the Netherlands (macro support, human rights and good governance) and the UK (regional development, public sector reform and improving public expenditure planning mechanisms).

Finally, the OSCE is actively fighting corruption and trafficking, and provides support for democratisation, electoral reform, environment, media, human rights and the rule of law in Armenia...

There is only very limited engagement in Nagorno Karabakh itself with the US as the only international actor providing direct humanitarian aid (USD 5 million annually).

The key actors in the conflict resolution process are the UN agencies (UNDP, UNHCR, UNOCHA and UNIFEM), the OSCE and some state donors such as the US, the UK, Germany, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. Some private foundations, such as the Eurasia Foundation, ...are also active in this field, as well as international NGOs such as the SMI, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF)."

United Nations Representative for IDPs visits Armenia (May 2000)

- The objectives of the visit were to document internal displacement in Armenia and to understand the reasons for the little attention paid to the issue
- The Representative highlighted the need to recognize internal displacement as a factor of vulnerability

At the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, the Representative undertook a mission to Armenia from 18 to 19 May 2000.

UNCHR, 17 January 2001, para. 92:

"The mission to Georgia was followed immediately by one to Armenia, where the problem of internal displacement is considerably smaller in magnitude and much less prominent. The objectives of the mission were to study and document the problem of internal displacement, to seek to understand why it has received so little attention to date, to determine through solutions-oriented dialogue with the Government and representatives of the international community and civil society appropriate solutions for responding to the current needs of the internally displaced, and to understand the problem of internal displacement in Armenia in its subregional context. The findings of the mission regarding these four objectives, along with recommendations to the Government and the international community, are set out in Addendum 3 [\[Internet\]](#). Of particular importance is the need for the Government and the international community in Armenia to recognize internal displacement as a factor of vulnerability - something which has not been done in the past and which explains the lack of specific attention to the particular needs of the internally displaced in Armenia."

See full text of the mission's report in: [Profiles in displacement: Armenia, Report to the UN Commission on Human Rights, 6 November 2000 \[Internet\]](#)

Recommendations by the Council of Europe (2009)

- Council of Europe recommends resolving protracted conflicts, helping IDPs achieve durable solutions, increasing capacity of local authorities, calls on the EU and Council of Europe Development Bank to increase cooperation with relevant member states

CoE, 24 June 2009:

"15. In light of the above, the Assembly recommends the Committee of Ministers:

15.1. as regards durable political solutions:

15.1.1. to seek new political impetus for finding peaceful settlement of the protracted conflicts in Europe with a view to guarantee durable solutions, including the voluntary and informed return of

displaced persons to their places of origin under international humanitarian law and commitments to the Council of Europe;

15.1.2. to urge all member states of the Council of Europe to uphold the international law principles of state sovereignty and territorial integrity of member states;

15.1.3. to work on political, technical and financial issues related to the establishment of the peace-keeping missions necessary for the protection, dignified return and integration of IDPs;

15.2. as regards observance of international protection standards:

15.2.1. to urge the member states to rigorously observe the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and Committee of Ministers Recommendation Rec(2006)06 and to include where relevant the Guiding Principles into national legislation, if this has not already been done;

15.2.2. to examine further the possible legal gaps in international law as far as the treatment of internally displaced persons is concerned with a view to elaborating additional binding international instruments as suggested in the Committee of Ministers' Recommendation Rec(2006)6; and to this end, reconvene the ad hoc Committee of Experts on the Legal Aspects of Territorial Asylum, Refugees and Stateless Persons (CAHAR) to examine this issue;

15.2.3. to raise awareness of the rights and existing protection mechanisms under the European Convention on Human Rights, the revised European Social Charter and its collective complaint mechanism, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) in terms of their application to IDPs;

15.3. as regards the protection of rights of IDPs, to call upon relevant member states to work out, together with the IDPs, durable solutions, including, in particular to:

15.3.1. review, enact and implement national strategies and action plans by setting out a clear legal and institutional framework assuring effective protection of IDPs and addressing their specific vulnerabilities;

15.3.2. involve IDPs in all relevant steps leading to durable solutions regarding them;

15.3.3. fully respect the voluntary nature of return, integration or resettlement;

15.3.5. pursue the process of reconciliation more vigorously, especially in the areas of return or settlement of IDPs, by fostering a political and cultural climate of respect, tolerance and non-discrimination and by investigating and bringing to justice perpetrators of crimes against humanity, war crimes and inter-ethnic violence;

15.3.6. reconstitute property or occupancy/tenancy rights and/or provide prompt, effective and fair compensation to the extent that restitution is not possible, and repair or rebuild restituted houses or construct alternative adequate accommodation;

15.3.7. provide IDPs with full access to rights, legal documentation and free-of-charge legal assistance;

15.3.8. make income-generating activities available to IDPs to facilitate their social and economic reintegration and, in particular, to ensure full and non-discriminatory access to jobs offered by private or public employers; to develop social welfare systems that can benefit IDPs in need of assistance, in particular social housing schemes; where relevant, to transfer social

security and pension rights;

15.3.9. find adequate solutions for the most vulnerable groups of people who are still accommodated in the collective centres, tented camps or other makeshift accommodation;

15.3.10. ensure that displaced children are schooled together with non-displaced children to the extent possible, and that they receive quality education without financial barriers;

15.3.11. ensure that IDPs can exercise their right to participate in public affairs at all levels, including their right to vote or stand for election, which may require special measures such as IDP voter registration drives, or absentee ballots;

15.3.12. monitor the sustainability of durable solutions for IDPs as well as their living conditions, in particular with regard to adequate housing;

15.3.13. ensure that IDPs and returnees have full, free and uninterrupted access to humanitarian assistance; such access should not be blocked or hindered by states because of political considerations;

15.3.14. share experiences and good practices on achieving durable solutions for IDPs...

16. The Assembly further recommends that the Committee of Ministers call upon the European Union to:

16.1. pay increased attention to the issues related to finding durable solutions to the situation of IDPs and their human rights concerns within the framework of its European Neighbourhood Programme (ENP) as well as its new Eastern Partnership Programme;

16.2. maintain the political momentum in the relevant non-EU member states with a clear European integration perspective; to assess improvement of the situation of IDPs, in particular progress with regard to the conditions for durable solutions, within their possible accession processes;

16.3. continue to support the process of voluntary return, local integration or integration elsewhere in the country with financial assistance and expertise;

16.4. contribute financially to the specific joint programmes with the Council of Europe aiming to strengthen the protection of human rights of IDPs in Europe, in particular those of the most vulnerable groups, and to enhance the awareness and capacity of local actors dealing with IDP issues.

17. The Assembly invites the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities to look into the issue of effective means for augmenting awareness and capacity of local authorities as regards the complexities of integration of IDPs in places of displacement, their specific needs and particular vulnerabilities.

18. The Assembly encourages the Council of Europe Commissioner of Human Rights to bring together national human rights institutions and Ombudspersons from the regions with current long term IDPs in order

to assess the progress made in accomplishing various Council of Europe recommendations on protecting IDPs' rights and identify the remaining obstacles for securing durable solutions, and issue a position paper on the subject matter.

19. The Assembly calls on the Council of Europe Development Bank to step up its co-operation with the member states concerned with a view to financing more projects regarding returning refugees and IDPs.

20. The Assembly recognises the need to give a more comprehensive follow up to progress made on the above issues through its country by country monitoring mechanism and "regional" or issue-based reports by its Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population.

Recommendations by International Crisis Group (2009)

- ICG recommends that governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan include populations in debate on conflict resolution as well as Nagorno-Karabakh authorities and Nagorno-Karabakh Azeri representatives in peace talks
- Other recommendations include refraining from use of force at the line of contact, planning for withdrawal of forces, endorsement of basic principles and that peacebuilding projects should include and reach a larger number of people

ICG, 7 October 2009:

"The Armenian and Azerbaijani governments should engage their populations in genuine debate about the options on the negotiating table, as well as the risks of letting the current situation linger. Civil society organisations involved in peacebuilding should revamp their efforts to facilitate constructive, wider discussion. International NGO projects have involved a miniscule percentage of Armenians and Azerbaijanis. Often the same "experts" have been involved for over a decade in conferences that have largely failed to create the greater public awareness on issues, options and their implications that could diminish insecurities and so free the hands of the negotiators.

Furthermore, Armenia and Azerbaijan should gradually involve Nagorno-Karabakh's de facto authorities and the Nagorno-Karabakh Azeri representatives in the peace talks to secure their buy-in to decisions that would directly affect them. An inclusive and multi-layered format envisioning direct contacts between Azerbaijan and Karabakh Armenians as well as between the Karabakh Armenians and Azeris could help promote a more efficient dialogue.

Specific additional steps that should be taken include:

- The sides should reinforce pledges to refrain from use of force by allowing the mandate of the tiny OSCE observer mission to be significantly broadened, for example to authorise investigation of claims of violations, and allowing a larger monitoring force on the ground that could facilitate establishment of an international peacekeeping force once an agreement is in place.

- Azerbaijan should review its position and accept OSCE proposals, apparently agreed by Armenia, to remove snipers from front line areas, and both sides should stop advancing their trenches towards the other's positions.
- Armenia, together with the de facto Nagorno-Karabakh authorities and Azerbaijan, should begin contingency planning on the mechanisms and procedures for the withdrawal of Armenian forces from the districts of Azerbaijan outside of Nagorno-Karabakh they continue to occupy.
- The Armenian and Azerbaijani governments should formally endorse by the end of 2009 the document on basic principles and fully disclose its contents in public forums. Armenia should encourage the de facto Nagorno-Karabakh authorities to uphold the agreement.
- Azerbaijan should allow Karabakh Azeris to play a bigger role in the negotiations and the internal political process, including by passing legislation allowing them to elect the head of their community.
- All sides to the conflict should consider an inclusive and multi-layered negotiation format envisioning direct contacts between the Azerbaijani government and the de facto Nagorno-Karabakh authorities, as well as between the Karabakh Armenians and Azeris.
- External actors, particularly the U.S., France (and, broadly, the EU) and Russia should intensify their collective efforts to encourage Armenia and Azerbaijan to formally endorse the basic principles document and move on at once to negotiating the peace agreement.
- Donors involved in developing, implementing or funding peacebuilding should engage greater numbers of people in their projects, including through electronic media and joint public forums.
- The de facto Nagorno-Karabakh authorities should end their support for settlement of formerly Azeri majority areas with Armenians, including an end to privatisation, infrastructure development and the establishment of local government structures in those areas."

Recommendations by Norwegian Refugee Council (2005)

- Recommendations for return to border areas include repairing damaged housing and infrastructure, agricultural development projects, landmine clearance, improvement of education and health care services and differentiated lending and tax policies

NRC, 1 March 2005:

"Recommended measures towards the return of IDPs:

- Undertake research designed to measure the level of damage caused to agricultural and social infrastructure in the bordering regions. Provide accurate estimates of the resources necessary to make improvements.
- Initiate extensive agricultural development projects in the bordering regions of Tavush, Gegharkunik, Vayots Dzor and Syunik. Projects should include the restoration of existing irrigation systems and the construction of new gravity-based systems when necessary. Soft loans should be made available for the purchase of agricultural machinery, seed, and fertilizers.
- Take concrete measures to remove landmines.
- Restore and construct gravity-based drinking water systems in bordering villages.
- Introduce incentives to encourage teachers and health workers to work in the bordering regions.
- Rehabilitate and construct new social and cultural infrastructure in bordering regions, including schools and public meeting places.
- Introduce differentiated lending and taxing policies in the bordering regions.
- Repair and construct new roads and communication infrastructure.
- Complete the extension of gas and electricity networks to the bordering regions.
- Repair and build new private housing in bordering regions, particularly in Tavush, Gegharkunik, Syunik and Vayots Dzor. Provide long-term soft loans to residents for the purposes of housing.
- Draft and implement projects designed to resettle those IDPs who wish to return to their original villages, including IDPs who emigrated and have since returned from abroad."

References to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

Known references to the Guiding Principles (as of December 2002)

Reference to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation

None

Other References to the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)

None

Availability of the Guiding Principles in local languages

The Guiding Principles have been translated into the Armenian language with the sponsorship of the Office of the UN Coordinator in Armenia. The United Nations published a booklet containing both the English and the Armenian versions of the Guiding Principles.

Date: 1998

Documents:

- GP in Armenian [Internet]

Training on the Guiding Principles

None

OSCE conducts legal review of legal framework applying to internally displaced persons (2000-2002)

- The aim of the project is to review the adherence of national legislation with Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement
- The study found that IDPs were not clearly defined in the Armenian legislation

Review of Compliance of National Legislation to Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (funded by OSCE/ODIHR)

OSCE Office in Yerevan 2001, "Projects":

"The aim of the project is to review the adherence of the national legislation with Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement with a view of producing recommendations to relevant governments. The project is a follow-up to the regional workshop on Internal Displacement organized in 2000 in collaboration with the Brookings Institution Project on Internal Displacement, during which the situation in this field in all three states was reviewed and specific needs of IDPs identified. The objective is to promote application of international standards and principles and to stimulate the development of institutional and legal frameworks for addressing internal displacement.

Timeframe: 2000-2001"

OSCE, December 2001, Freedom of Movement/Migration:

"As a follow-up to the Southern Caucasus Regional Workshop on Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, conducted in May 2000 in Tbilisi, the ODIHR, jointly with the Brookings Institution and the City University of New York, has initiated a project to study the legal situation of IDPs in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. The goal of the project is to develop recommendations for legislation that ensures that IDPs are not discriminated against.

A first study analysing the legal status of IDPs in Armenia was prepared by two local lawyers supervised by Prof. Walter Kaelin of University of Berne, a leading international expert on IDPs. The results of the study, which found that IDPs were not clearly defined in the Armenian legislation, were discussed at a round table with local NGOs, government officials, international experts and NGOs, organized with assistance of the OSCE Centre in Yerevan. The controversial question of whether such a definition should be introduced was discussed. There was general agreement that while simply introducing a legal status for IDPs in itself was not sufficient, such a step could help in focusing protective measures and assistance programmes. International organizations and their Armenian counterparts agreed to continue the dialogue, including on conducting a mapping of the needs of IDPs on the ground."

See also "[Roundtable on Internal Displacement](#)", in *UNDP Bulletin on External Assistance*, May 2002 [Internet]

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