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Armenian Caritas



BIANNUAL
REPORT | 20²²₂₃

We are CARITAS

Caritas Armenia is a benevolent NGO that was founded in 1995 by the Armenian Catholic Church with the assistance of Catholic Relief Services. The name of the organization derives from the Latin word for LOVE. Our focus is on social protection, care and humanitarian and development aid, community development programs that improve living and educational conditions. We are engaged in public health activities for the most vulnerable social groups. Within migration and integration direction we realize sustainable reintegration measures for returnees. Armenian Caritas has provided direct assistance to thousands of people since its establishment.

Our Mission leads us to promote personal multi-fold development and strengthening of communities with love and compassion, respecting the dignity of each individual. Our vision is to be a strong and significant

role player in consolidation of social justice and social protection in the Republic of Armenia. Our Strategic Priorities for 2022-2026 cover the fields of social protection of vulnerable groups, migration and integration, proportionate community development and resilience to emergency situations.

Who do we care for

We - the employees and volunteers of Armenian Caritas, assist the most vulnerable members of our society to find the way to a dignified and equitable life, regardless of their religious affiliation, race, gender or other differences. We target children from vulnerable families, elderly people, people with disabilities, refugees and displaced population, but also rural communities, through provision of social-psychological, humanitarian, development and medical aid.



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Every year, “Armenian Caritas” presents the summarized report of its activities carried out in support to the most needy people in Armenia. “Armenian Caritas” has a heartfelt commitment to fight against poverty and injustice that lead to human tragedy and the exclusion of people living in the most vulnerable situations. During the entire period of its existence, the whole staff of “Armenian Caritas”, united in solidarity, has not stopped working for a better future, where no one is left behind, always being close to the needs of the most vulnerable and deprived, the lonely elderly, children with disabilities, and other marginalized groups and communities, by continually supporting and guiding them to overcome the challenges they face.

Today “Armenian Caritas” is implementing various social, humanitarian and development projects in almost all the provinces of Armenia, with the major focus on the regions of Shirak, Lori, Gegharkunik, Ararat, Syunik, Kotayk, Armavir, Tavush, and Yerevan. Thus, “Armenian Caritas” promotes personal multifold development and strengthening of communities, respecting the dignity of each individual.

“Armenian Caritas”, staying true to its mission, continues to bring positive change to thousands of people by implementing various social, educational, inclusive, public health care, and emergency response programs. Since September 2023, following the terrible tragedy of forcibly displaced and stateless Armenians from Artsakh (aka Nagorno-Karabakh), “Armenian Caritas” started a



Rapid Response Appeal to meet the essential needs of the affected population and provision of post-traumatic psychosocial services to the refugees.

Certainly, we are not alone in the fulfillment of our challenging mission: the Armenian and the World Catholic Churches with their charitable structures, member organizations of Caritas Europa and Caritas Internationalis, Bishops' conferences, governments of Germany, Austria, and Liechtenstein, and a significant number of other benefactors are with us. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all of our benefactors and partners, who assist us in alleviating the

difficult situation of people and development of our country.

As a conclusion, in the occasion of Christmas and the New Year's Eve, we send our heartfelt and sincere wishes to you and your loved ones, asking the blessings of the Newborn King, our Lord Jesus Christ, as the good news of the birth of our Lord comes to comfort all of us and to give love and peace to all of those who follow Him. We read in the Gospel of Luke these words: “Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a Savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord” (Luke 2:10-11).

Remaining always in union of prayers,

RAPHAEL BEDROS XXI

Catholicos-Patriarch of Cilicia of Armenian Catholics
President of Armenian Caritas



Gagik Tarasyan

The heart of Caritas beats thanks to people and their faith in human kindness

Every year brings us new challenges. This year was not different. But at the same time, it is through these challenges that we become stronger and more compassionate. I am proud to say that our timeless hard work has paid off during this difficult year.

The continuation of the conflict in Nagorno–Karabakh and its consequences left hundreds of people homeless and in need of support. On September 24, a mass exodus of Armenians from NK began towards Armenia. As of October 9, 100,632 refugees, including an estimated 30,000 children, fled to Armenia. Armenian Caritas was at the forefront to provide humanitarian, psychological and material support to the forcibly displaced population.

With the support of our Partners, we developed programs to provided social protection to the most vulnerable groups of children, elderly people, people with disabilities; women and youth, supported migrant and refugees with counseling for employment, integration and inclusion; strengthened and mobilized the community potential, enhanced the resilience of people and bordering communities, aimed at reaching and sustaining a long-term positive impact to their lives. In total we help more than 100,000 individuals per year.

The societal problems that we face every day would have bigger negative impact if we do not put others ahead of ourselves. Those at the forefront of helping people in

need are our project staff members, including social workers, psychologist, volunteers, medical personnel, and, of course, the management team, standing next to people and with people.

We believe that it is an expression of Christian brotherly love to attend to those people who have no choice but to endure their suffering. Outlined by Caritas Internationalis and Caritas Europa Strategies, we share the set of values and principles which guide our presence, commitment and actions in Armenia. The heart of Caritas beats thanks to people and their faith in human kindness. I would like to thank our employees and volunteers for this. People are the main inspiration for Armenian Caritas and human relationships are at the core of that.

It is in my highest hopes that we will have enough strength to lend a helping hand to all of those in need.

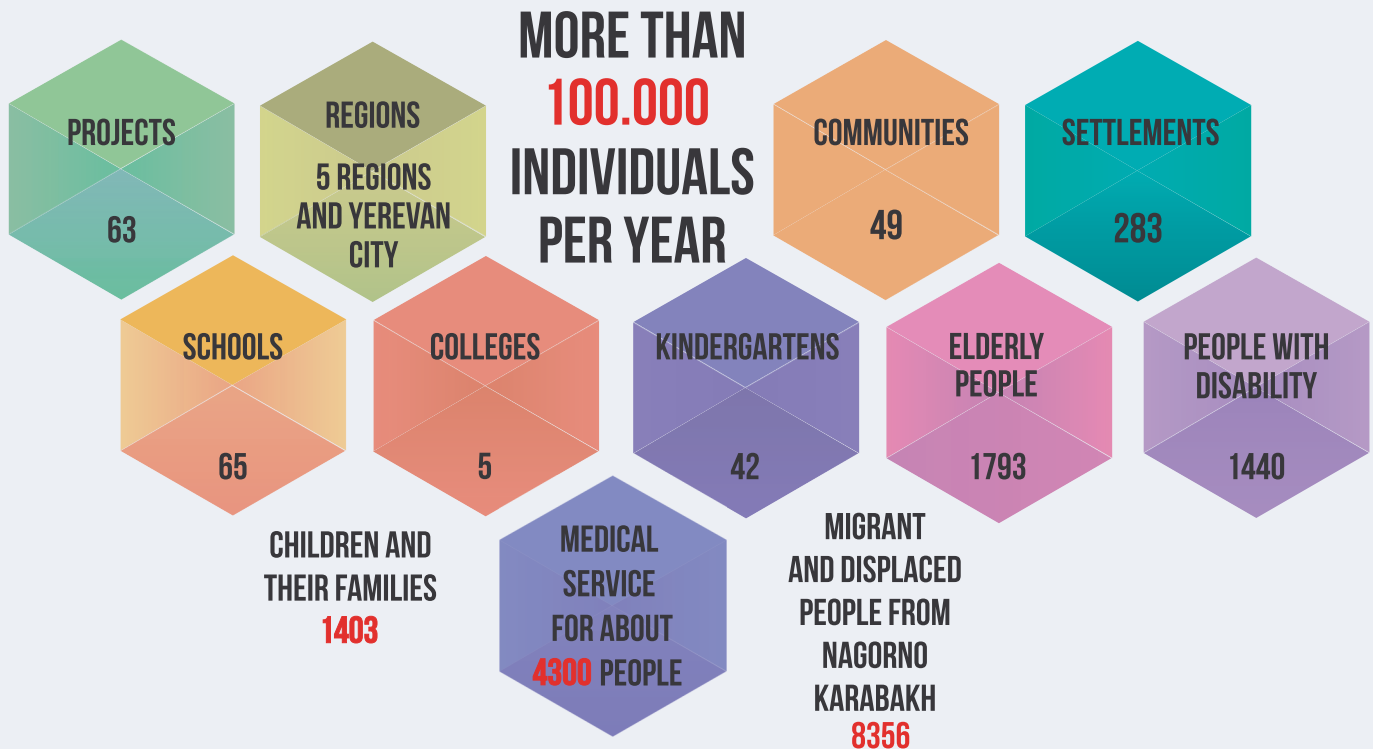
Our vision is unchangeable, inspired by the Holy Scripture and the Catholic Social Teaching of the Church, we create an environment where people are not alone when they are in need. Their dignity and basic human rights are protected. Justice and love prevail. Our vision is to have a lasting and positive change in people through the promotion of social justice and enhanced sustainable development in Armenia.

Executive Director of Armenian Caritas

ARMENIAN CARITAS DEVELOPS ACTIVITIES WITHIN 4 PRIORITIES AREAS



Promote personal multifold development and strengthening of communities with love and compassion, respecting the dignity of each individual



Social Protection of Vulnerable Groups

The Goal of the Priority is to contribute to the provision of social protection for vulnerable groups by promoting social justice, sustainable development, and inclusion.

Improve the protection mechanisms of the rights of disadvantaged children, children with disabilities, and elderly. Make social care services accessible for PWD over 18 y/old and the elderly people in target regions of Armenian Caritas. Improve access to social psychological services for disadvantaged children and adolescents. Promote inclusion of elderly, disadvantaged children, their families, and PWD in the society.



88-year-old Razmik Gevorgyan, beneficiary of Armenian Caritas' "Home Care" program in Gyumri, lives with his wife, Zhenya Gevorgyan. Razmik and Zhenya both struggle with diseases including: heart arrhythmia, vein thrombosis, and have disability groups. The husband can move in the house only with the help of his wife. The spouses are having a hard time, as the children left a long time ago and live in the Russian Federation.

For years, due to financial problems and disappointments, the couple did not celebrate their birthdays. This year, a surprise was prepared for Razmik Gevorgyan's birthday on the initiative of the program's social caregiver. Project employees visited the elderly couple and turned their day into a holiday. "I am grateful to the employees of Armenian Caritas for this surprise, I haven't had a birthday party for a long time...", Grandpa Razmik says.



When she first appeared in the newly opened "Sabine" Small Group House in the summer of 2018, she was curious to know everything about it. Everything was interesting, in every detail, because the constant feeling of insecurity and anxiety typical for a child who had lived in an orphanage was haunting her. Then she calmed down, relaxed and realized that... she is at home. Her parents had left her, her younger brother and sister were in the orphanage since 2014. The relationship with her father was partially preserved, but the mother had disappeared from the children's lives forever. In 2018, Mane moved to "Sabine"

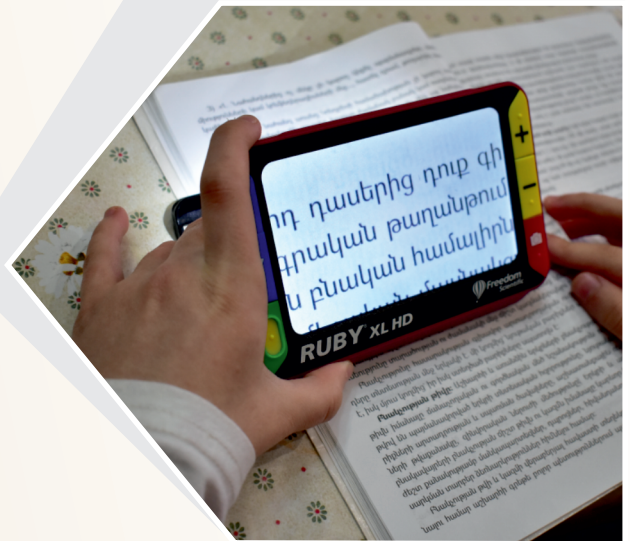
with her sister and brother and still lives there. "I am so grateful to my fate that during the most difficult period of my life, when my parents were not with me, I lived in Sabine, which replaced my family and became my home. Now I have only one wish: to stay here until adulthood," she admitted on one occasion. In 2020, contact was restored with the children's mother through the efforts of the project team. The younger sister and brother, per their wish, decided to leave Sabine and started living with their mother and her second family. Mane did not go with them. Her five years of living in Sabine House and using the program's services will end with her adulthood. Meanwhile, Mane graduated from the school and continues her education at the medical college, where she her favorite profession. Thanks to the professional skill courses organized Sabine house, she has mastered the art of make-up, the secrets of sewing, and many other skills that will help her in her independent life. Mane believes in her abilities She is confident, optimistic and has a sacred dream: to create her own family and children the love and affection she had received during the past five years. "I no longer complain about the fate that has befallen me, and I am sure that God loves me very much because He connected my life with Sabine."



Meet Lida, a 14-year-old girl from Gyumri, Armenia. She's a smart, hardworking, and brave young lady who loves playing the piano and singing. Despite facing challenges, Lida overcomes them with strong determination.

Lida's journey took an unexpected turn when she had to undergo two challenging operations at such young age. These operations left her with poor vision, but Lida didn't let this obstacle defeat her. With the help of Petra Flieger, an international expert from the Armenian Caritas project "My Right: Inclusive Education in Armenia and Kosovo," Lida received special glasses with a power of +20. These glasses were a game-changer, significantly improving her vision. Before having the glasses, Lida needed a lot of artificial light and special-format books for her studies. However, with the new glasses, her need for these aids diminished. Lida's progress at school increased, and she became more engaged in her education. The glasses opened up a world of possibilities for her.

Lida also attends a musical school, where she studies piano and singing. Despite her visual challenges, Lida has achieved notable success in her musical endeavors. In 2020, through the collaborative efforts of the Austrian "Association for Seeing Impaired and Blind People," and time, as Lida can now manage her homework on her own. The magnifier, combined with her glasses, has proven to be a powerful duo for her academic success.



Lida's mother expresses gratitude for the magnifier, emphasizing its usefulness in improving her spelling and grammar. Teachers have also noticed Lida's progress, reflected in higher marks at school. Beyond academics, Lida uses the magnifier for various interests, from reading literature to exploring the world map and deciphering musical texts.

Lida's inspiring journey is a testament to her resilience and the transformative power of assistive technology.

Migration and Integration

Support the protection of the interests and rights of migrants and displaced persons and contribute to their sustainable integration through the improvement of policies, mechanisms and services.

Contribute to the improvement of the socio-economic conditions of migrants and displaced persons through the development of innovative approaches and opportunities. To raise the level of awareness on the negative consequences of irregular migration in the target regions. To improve the relevant policies, mechanisms and their implementation in the migration field through advocacy.



Mrs. Anahit is 36 years old, married, and has three children. She left for Germany alone in February 2022 in order to receive medical treatment after she was diagnosed with blood leukemia.

To be able to go to Germany, they had to sell their apartment. They currently live in a rented apartment. After receiving medical treatment in Germany, they found out that she had a tumor. Then she had a surgery and got the necessary medical treatment that she needed. In June 2022, she returned to her homeland. She applied for joining the project “Joint Reintegration Services” and her eligibility was approved.

Before leaving Armenia about 7 years ago, she had attended manicure courses as she always liked that profession, but never worked as a master due to a lack of means to purchase the necessary materials and tools. She decided to use the reintegration budget for attending manicure and pedicure courses in order to update her knowledge and improve herself as a master. Due to the support program, she was able to purchase the necessary tools and materials to start her work as a master. After successfully finishing her courses, she started to work at home and compile the list of clients. Now she works in a beauty salon.



Mr. Mikoyan is 40 years old, married, and has two children. He returned from Germany with his wife and two children in August of 2022. Before leaving for Germany, his family lived in Ukraine. When the war broke out, he fled to Germany with his family, leaving his fast-food business behind. After living in Germany for a few months, they decided to return to their homeland and apply for assistance.

The returnee decided to use the reintegration budget to restart his fast-food business in Armenia. He wanted to bring all of the equipment that he used in his fast-food business from Ukraine, but he couldn't. Before leaving Armenia, they had a store in Ashtarak city, and operated that business for about 3 years. Having experience in the field of selling fruits and other agricultural products, he decided to use the reintegration budget to establish a store that sells vegetables and agricultural products.

The store is about 50 square meters and is located on one of the central streets of Ashtarak city. Mr. Mikoyan states, he is very grateful for the Joint Reintegration Services program run by Armenian Caritas because it has allowed him to purchase all necessary electronic equipment, renovate the rented store, and construct a built-in refrigerator in the to preserve produce and reduce wastage. “I had no income but because of Armenia Caritas we could regain our self-sustainability,” states Mr. Mikoyan.

Shoghik and her family were displaced from Karintak village of Shushi region (Nagorno-Karabakh). During the first days of the war, she left the village with her four children to Armenia. Shoghik said that they left the village without having time to put on shoes. Everything was left behind, nothing was taken. They only thought about saving their lives, and had no idea that they would leave the village forever. The eldest son participated in the 44 Day War in 2020, and he stayed there until the last invasion from the Azerbaijani army. Her son was wounded during the attacks and had undergone a lung surgery.

Shoghik said: 'We did not imagine could not take any of our possessions with us. We thought we would go back to our village. It turned out that we left everything. We left two houses, we had three cars, there was a big shop, our land, we came to Armenia and have to start our lives anew, from zero. We left Karabakh with the children, my eldest son and my husband stayed there.'



She now works as a cleaning lady at the school in Byuravan village. Shoghik's sister lives in Armenia. They came and stayed at their house for 40 days. Then, it was impossible to live together with 15 people, and they decided to obtain a cheap, half-built small house. Relatives helped them purchase this house.

Shoghik has four children and her eldest son is married. She lives with her daughter-in-law, grandson, grandmother, grandfather. All nine of them have lived in very difficult conditions.

Then they applied to the "Make home, not war" project of Armenian Caritas, which was funded by the Polish Aid Agency. The family was involved in the project. The bedrooms, living room, and kitchen of the house were renovated.

Shoghik expressed her satisfaction from Armenian Caritas and said, "We are well placed, the children each have their own room, we have our bedroom, the kitchen, the facilities are very good, we are satisfied. My son's health is fine now."





Projects

- Shirak
- Lori
- Ararat
- Syunik
- Yerevan
- Kotayk
- Armavir
- Tavush
- Gegharkunik

Centers and Offices

- Shirak
- Lori
- Ararat
- Syunik
- Yerevan
- Gegharkunik

Proportionate Community Development

Contribute to the proportionate development of communities by promoting sustainable economic growth and reforming the accessibility and quality of community services with the participation of key community actors.

Support the democratic processes in the consolidated target communities of Gegharkunik, Lori, and Shirak provinces of RA through dialogue between the Local Self-Governing Bodies (LSGB) and the community. Increase the role of CSOs in the consolidated target communities through capacity building and the expansion of cross-sectoral linkages. Promote the establishment of sustainable agriculture (ecological, social and economic) and entrepreneurship in target communities through the advancement of innovative, technological, infrastructural, and business potential. Strengthen the VET sector in the target communities by upgrading methodological, entrepreneurial, and collaborative potential. Advance a community consolidation and comprehensive development model based on AC experience.





Manukyan's multi-member family lives in Haykavan village of Shirak region. Currently, none of the family members have a permanent job. The youngest man in the family used to be a contract serviceman in the military, but while defending his homeland on the front line during the 44-day Artsakh war, he was critically wounded.

He returned home after receiving treatment in the hospital for a month, but unfortunately was not able to continue his military service due to his lasting health conditions. His parents also have serious health problems and need permanent care. Currently, farming activities are the primary means of livelihood for his family. Haykavan is one of the non-gasified villages of Shirak region. The only way for the residents of the village to get hot water is by using a wood stove or an electric water heater, both of which are very expensive and inefficient. The solar water heater provided in the scope of the “Promotion of living conditions and health through the use of solar energy in marginalized households

in the North of Armenia” project greatly alleviated strain on this family, which was facing such difficulty. The housewife explained, “After the unexpected visit of Armenian Caritas staff members, we were waiting with hope and eagerness. Becoming a beneficiary of this project was a real surprise for us”. This family has faced many difficulties so far; previously, they had to heat water on a wood stove in order to take a bath and use an electric water heater tap in order to wash the dishes. After the installation of the provided SWH, both firewood and electricity costs have been reduced and the financial burden of the family has been lightened. “Now we face less hardship. This is a huge support for us,” expressed the housewife with great joy. She continued to give words of deep gratitude to the benefactors and all of those who helped them.

Tamara moved to Armenia on September 27 2020 when the conflict over Nagorno- Karabakh was escalated. The town of Vardenis was the first stop, where Tamara decided to stay and wait for the end of the conflict. After moving to Vardenis, Tamara started receiving psychosocial support from the World Vision Armenia Organization, where she learned about Caritas project. “I received a call from the CEO of the “Youth for Change” NGO and was informed, that they were implementing the "Available Education" project, financed by Armenian Caritas.” Within the framework of the project, Tamara was offered to take hairdressing training courses. In this regard, hairdressing was more familiar than other three offered professions; that is why Tamara chose it. She studied hairdressing at Vardenis Badeyan State College for three months, and currently provides paid hairdressing services. "After the training, I was provided with hairdressing tools and started to provide paid services, due to which my family's financial situation became more stable. Participating in the project not only provided an opportunity to generate a stable income but it also solved my unemployment, allowed me to meet new people, and integrate into community life.”



47-year-old Alvard Khachatryan is a mother of four children. Before attending the course offered by the Project Handicraft Workshop for Women, Alvard worked in a store, as a sales lady. She also made cakes and pastries and sold them in several shops in Gyumri. A few years ago, she was recommended to take part in the project by a friend and in 2022, as soon as she saw the open call on social media posted by Armenian, she immediately decided to apply. She quit her job, because she always dreamed about learning sewing.

Alvard is a nurse by profession but she didn't enjoy studying in medical school and has never been interested in nursing. Both her mother and grandmother were tailors and during her childhood, Alvard used to help them. She wanted to learn how to sew so that she could continue their profession and pass it on to future generations. Armenian Caritas, funded by Renovabis, appeared in Alvard's life and provided her with a life-changing experience. Alvard says that she has learned a lot due to the project. She highlights the professionalism of the sewing trainer, who made her fall in love with sewing. She started from zero and by the end of the training, a miracle happened – she realized that she could sew. Besides, she learned a special type of Armenian embroider, called, “Marash.” She finds it an absolutely beautiful piece of art and is happy that she had an opportunity to know about it.

“I was a beginner, that's why I had many difficulties. Before coming here, I was sure that I knew how to iron clothes, but it turned out that even ironing matters if we want to sew something well. Firstly, we need to iron the fabric and it has to be done correctly. Such kinds of details were shocking for me,” Alvard says.

Alvard did her best to overcome these challenges. After completing the course, she believes that age shouldn't matter if anyone wants to learn. She encourages her two daughters to study well and to work hard because she thinks being financially independent is very important for a woman.

Now she works from home and according to her it's a big advantage, though she has already got a job offer from one of the sewing factories in Gyumri. Due to the project, Alvard is currently able to earn money, financially support the family, and still take care of them, as she no longer has to hurry to work, she can easily manage her time now. Above all, her newfound joy lies in crafting clothes for her newborn grandchild.



Resilience to Emergency Situations

Enhancing resilience of the targeted population through awareness raising, preparedness actions and effective application of the state policies and mechanisms.

Contribute to effective application of the state mechanisms in the field of Disaster Risk Management through network cooperation. Develop and approve the concept of emergency response at the organizational level and ensure its implementation as appropriate. Contribute to enhancing capacities of the population and stakeholders in the target regions to better respond to emergency situations.



Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh

On the afternoon of September 19, 2023, Azerbaijani armed forces launched a wide-scale military offensive against Nagorno-Karabakh (NK), targeting civilian communities and a peaceful population. An agreement was reached on cessation of hostilities. On September 24th, a mass exodus of Armenians from NK began to the Republic of Armenia. As of October 9th **100,632**, refugees, including an estimated **30,000** children, fled to Armenia.



Armenian Caritas

Continues providing humanitarian support to the population forcibly displaced from NK. In three communities of Ararat Province (Masis, Sis, Noramarg), 500 sets of bedding were distributed.

Armenian Caritas continues supporting the displaced households with shelter (100 people) at Toros summer camp in Shirak Province. The organization also provided food and hygiene kits (100), warm blankets, and bed linen (more than 500) to these households.

Armenian Caritas submitted a Rapid Response Appeal through Caritas Internationalis with the initial budget of 250.000 EUR to raise funds for the essential needs (food and NFI) of 454 displaced households, along with post-traumatic psycho-social services to 250 displaced persons. The following Caritas Member Organizations have contributed to RRA - Caritas Austria (50.000€), Caritas Denmark (12.500€), Caritas Belgium (50.000€), Caritas Spain (172.290€), CAFOD (22.500€), Caritas Canada (24.375€), Caritas Korea (47.384€).

The local AC staff in Syunik Province distributed 100 packages of food and non-food items to the forcibly displaced population in Goris and Tegh communities (Aravus, Kornidzor, Karashen villages).

Despite her age, 5-year-old Lucia is forced to leave her home with her brothers, parents, and grandmother for the second time. Because of the war, she left her friends, favorite toys, and their new and beautiful house behind in Artsakh.

For the first time in 2020, due to the Azerbaijani military attack in 2020, they left the village of Taghavard in the Martuni region of Artsakh and moved to the village of Haykavan in the Shirak region of the Republic of Armenia. After staying in Haykavan for several months, they returned to their native village, Taghavard. Despite the danger with Azeri military checkpoints in front of the village and periodic shots taking place, like other Taghavard residents, Lucia's family stayed in the village until September 2023 similar to other Taghavard residents.

During the last attack, children and adults already knew where to hide in the school's bomb shelter. **"I was afraid of shooting, but my brothers were with me,"** says Lucia, adding that the older brother is 15 and the others are 14 and 13 years old. Arakelyans and others in the village knew how long it would take for the enemy to load their weapons and realized that they had only half an hour to leave the village. While the sons, wife, and mother left the village without taking anything with them, the father of the family, who was a rescuer, helped the others. Arkady, the father, was 10 years old when his father was killed in the war. He says that he has seen so many difficulties that he would not even want his enemy's child to see those difficulties. In Haykavan, the family found a house for rent,

the sons are going to school, and Lucia is going to kindergarten. **"I have new friends, but I miss our backyard and my toys"**, said the girl with tears in her eyes.

Armenian Caritas was one of the first in Armenia to visit Arakelyan's rented apartment, made a needs assessment, and quickly gave the family a stove and eco blankets. Shirak is in the north part of Armenia, and the stove is very important not only for heating but also for cooking. **"After the death of my husband, I raised my three children with zhingyalov bread,"** says Arkady's mother, Mrs. Romela,

making the dough with her granddaughter Lucia.

Lucia, like a real housewife, tries to open the dough and place the greens into the dough, closing it with her small hands. Real Artsakh girls should be able to cook this national food from childhood.



Zhingyalov hats is a type of flatbread stuffed with finely diced herbs and green vegetables. It is a traditional dish of Armenians from Artsakh and Syunik and has traditionally been a staple in times of scarcity, such as famine and war. Unleavened dough is rolled out until it becomes paper-thin, then it is filled with a stuffing that consists of 10 to 20 types of diced and oiled wild and cultivated herbs.

They say that apart from the heat given by the stove, they are also amazed by the warmth and attitude of the people of Caritas. **"What we saw really gives us hope and faith that we are not alone."** Although the girl dreams of becoming a doctor, she has helped her grandmother and mother since childhood. The only things that Lucia wants today are peace, never to be shot at again, and never have to part with her new friends again.

***By horse: from Berkadzor to Kornidzor.
Having lost everything in Artsakh, Rafik
Sargsyan gained a grandson in Kornidzor.***

For over 24 hours, 60-year-old Rafik Sargsyan traveled from Berkadzor to Kornidzor by horse, arriving in Armenia with 3 year-old Buyan.

"September 19th was an ordinary day. I was going to take the cattle to the field until the sounds of shells were heard. There were shootings for two days in a row and then they announced that we should leave the village," Rafik Sargsyan told.

For the fourth time in his life, he left his home and farm in Artsakh. First Karvachar, then Akna and Askera. He regrets nothing more than the grave of his sons and wife. In 2014, Rafik's wife died and was buried in Karvachar while his contract soldier sons, 28 and 22 years old, died in the 44 Day War and were buried in the brotherly cemetery of Stepanakert. "I don't regret what I left, but that the children are there..." says Rafik with tears in his eyes.

In the 44 Day War, he himself received a shrapnel wound and lost sight of one of his eyes. The shrapnel injuries remind him of the carnage, but the pain of losing his family's graves and native land is more unbearable. Before reaching Kornidzor, the Azerbaijanis hit him in the leg with a stick, cursed at him, and attempted to take his horse, but he did not let go.

Kornidzor had nothing. Grigor Ghahramanyan, who brought food to the people of Artsakh near the Hakar bridge, saw a man with a wounded leg coming on a horse



and decided to give him shelter under his roof. His wounded leg was finally treated in Kornidzor, and in a short time, Rafik not only found a warm corner in Kornidzor, but he also found a family. Most importantly, he found his grandson and the youngest of the house, Oleg, who calls him, "Grandpa," and says, "I will not let him go anywhere from our house." According to Oleg, everyone calls Rafik, "Grandfather" now. "Now our grandfather is the joy of our house. We bonded a lot. We love and respect him. He is a very modest and kind person," says his aunt Nelly.

Seeing the hospitality and kind attitude of Kornidzorts'i, Rafik sees hope in a corner of his heart; the world is not destroyed, there is humanity. "I am grateful to all of those who can reach out and share my difficulties," adds the grandfather.

Rafik Sargsyan's wishes now are to be able to be grateful to the family that hosted him and his Buyan, and to keep a few animals both to help the family and to have a job for himself.

Armenian Caritas is one of the first groups of people to provide food and hygiene packages for Grandfather Rafik, and this is not the only support. In the near future, Rafik Sargsyan will also be under the attention of Caritas's Syunik team.



For love and compassion

Armen Hakobyan moved to Armenia with his family after the war in 2020. At that time, Armenian Caritas was one of the first organizations to reach out to a family that was forcibly displaced from Artsakh. Now, Armen is already a part of Caritas, and he, with love and compassion, helps forcibly displaced families from Artsakh as a result of the Azerbaijani attack of 2023.

After moving to Goris, Armen decided to do what he loves. With the financial support provided by the state, he bought 2 hectares of land in the Karashen community and established an apple and walnut orchard. **“It’s been three years already and we are waiting for a harvest next year. We have established a garden and are trying to establish ourselves. We have to live with hope and keep Artsakh in our minds and hearts. Let’s build Armenia.”**

Moving to Armenia was quite difficult for Armen. There were many problems, but by a lucky chance, he was recognized as a beneficiary of Armenian Caritas. After learning about the vacant position of an agriculturist in the Support to the Displaced National Population from Artsakh program, Armen applied and went to work at Caritas.

During this time, Armen received an offer to become the director of the school. However, seeing the work done by Caritas, he decided to refuse that position in order to stay and work at Caritas. **“At the time, Caritas was next to me. I would not lose hope and I could feel important. Now, I am helping the newly displaced people with Caritas. This is much closer to my heart,”** says Armen.

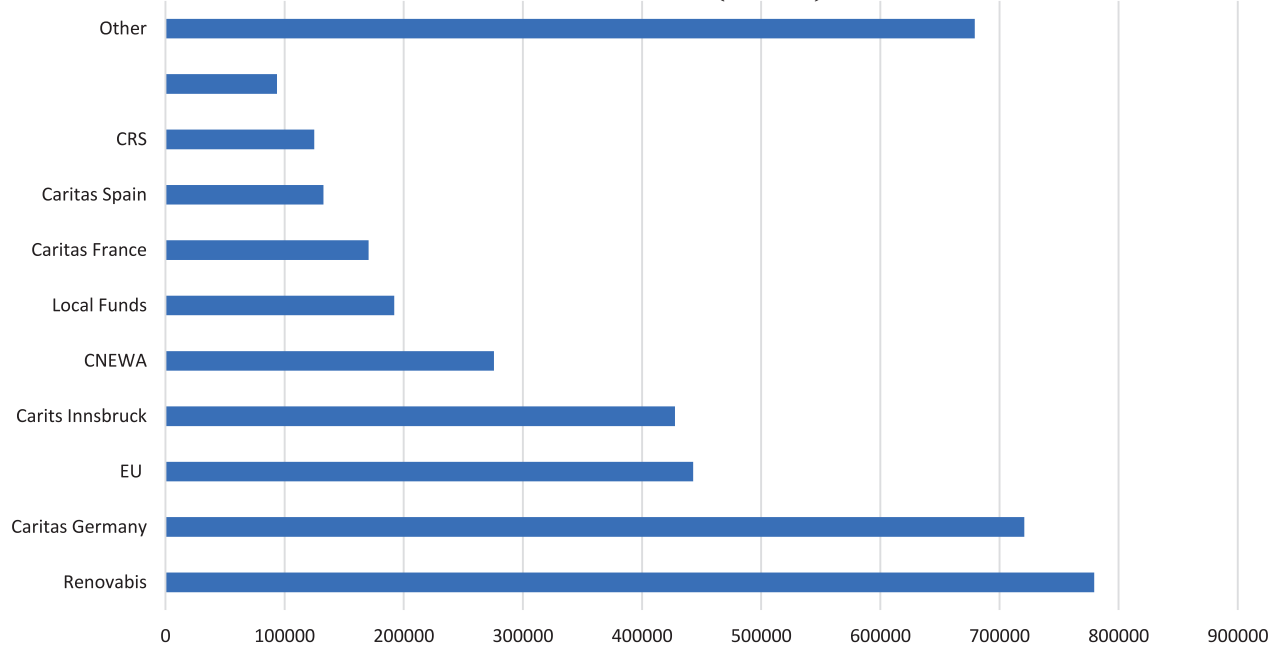
For the sake of working with love and sincerity, one can refuse positions. The biggest income for Armen and his teammates now is people’s gratitude, thankfulness, and hopeful eyes.

They lived in the village of Vurgavan in the Kashatagh region before the war. The village had 45 families. As a result of the attack in 2020 the village became part of Azerbaijan before the troops entered the village, a day before the residents were given the opportunity to leave the village. **“The villagers somehow managed to get out,”** says Armen, noting that his family has since moved to the city of Goris in Syunik region.

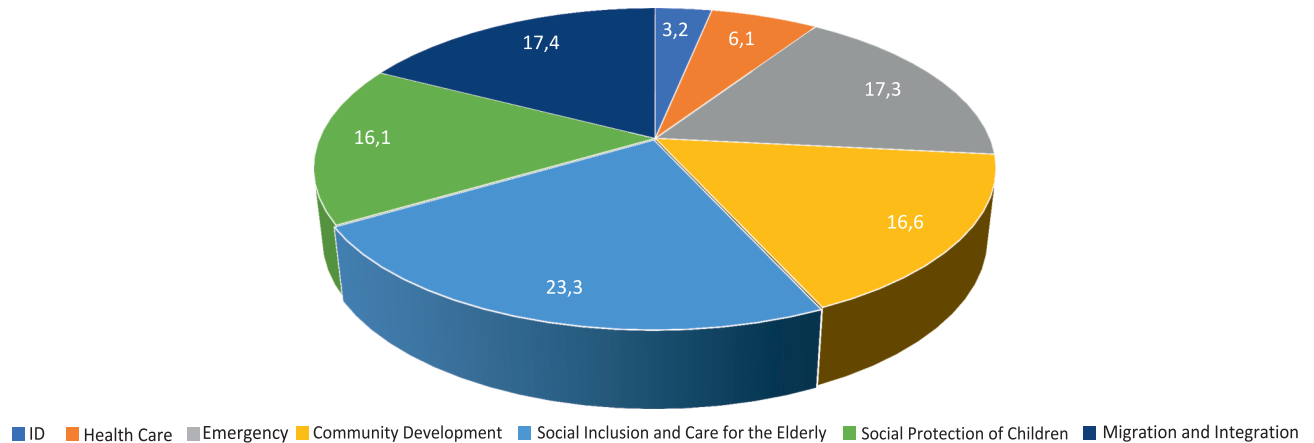
They left a lot in Artsakh: a large two-story house, a two-hectare vineyard, two-hectare persimmon garden, which only photographs have been able to preserve.

Armen is part of a family of educators: the father is a mathematics teacher, Armen is a history teacher, and the wife is a school teacher. **“All of us were working. I was also the director of the Urekan school from 2007 to 2020. As the director of the school, I received awards, as well as the medal of the President and Prime Minister of Artsakh. We also engaged in gardening,”** says Armen.

Incomes 2022 (EUR)

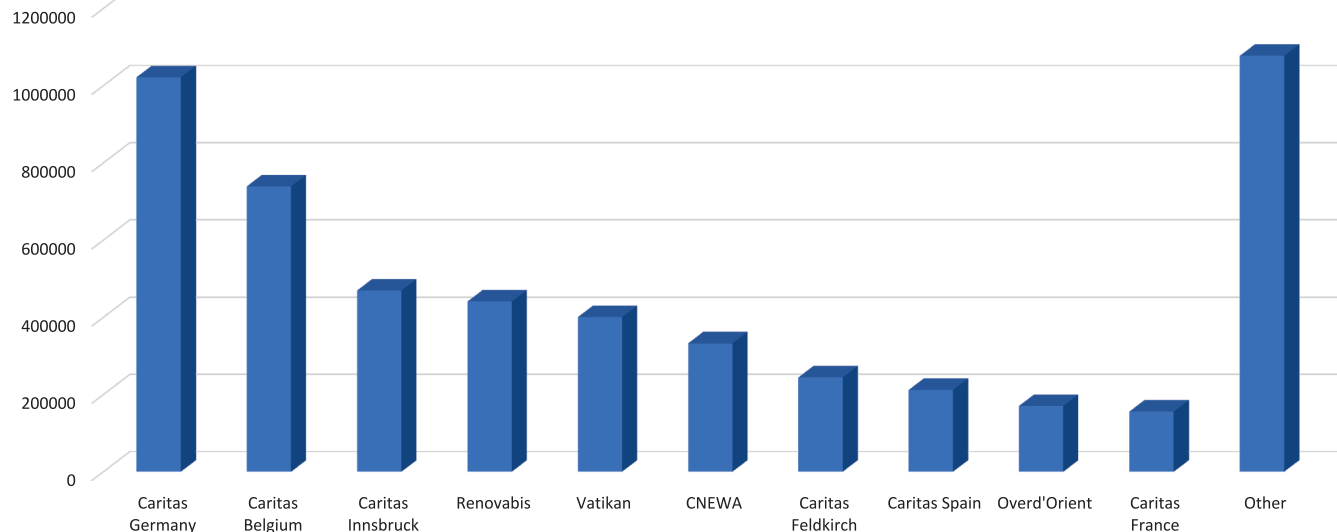


Strategic Directions

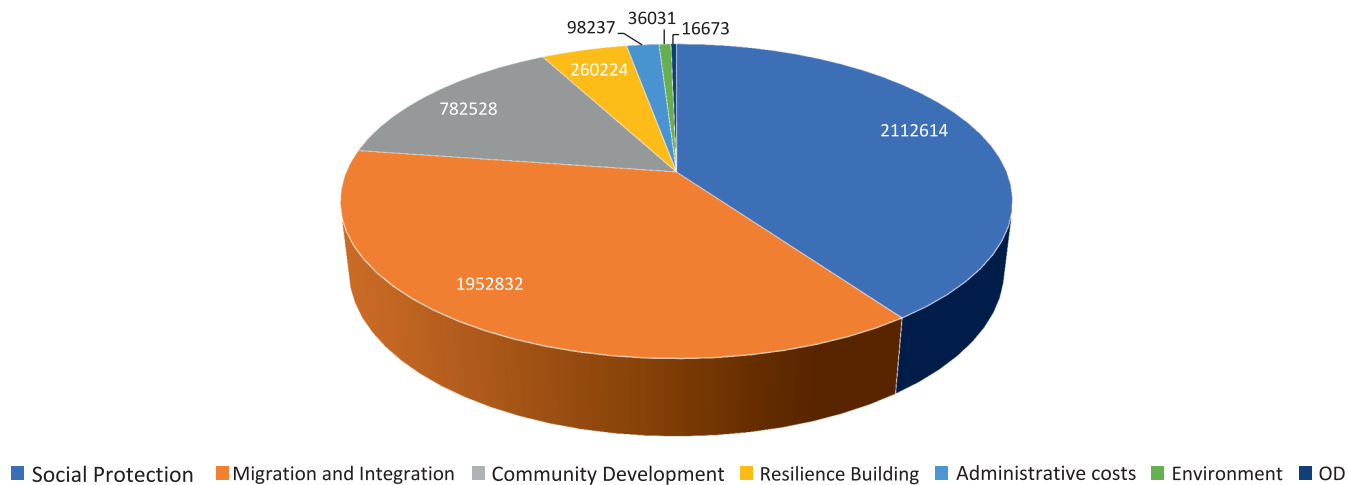


Total for 2022 - 4,039,075 EUR

Incomes 2023 (EUR)



Strategic Directions 2023 (EUR)



Total for 2023 - 5,259,139 EUR