

Emergency relief needed for displaced families in Armenia



Thousands of Armenians are in crisis after being forced to give up part of their land

Early morning on September 27th, 2020, Azerbaijan launched missile attacks along the entire line of contact of the Republic of Artsakh, targeting both military and innocent civilians. Consequently, the Defense Army of the Republic of Artsakh was forced into war to protect its people and homeland. During the 45 days of war, Azerbaijan, backed by Turkey, conducted horrible war crimes by using mercenary terrorists, heavy artillery, banned cluster bombs and chemical weapons. This resulted in the killing and wounding of dozens of civilians, including the elderly and children.

On November 10th, Armenia was forced to sign a painful ceasefire agreement with Azerbaijan and Russia, giving up a big part of its lands to stop the massacre of its people. While Armenia enters into further stages of negotiations, it hopes the OSCE Minsk Group and the other world powers will help Armenia protect its rights by standing by truth and justice.

The military death toll of this war thus far is reported to be 2,500. In addition, there are hundreds missing in action, presumed to be dead or taken as prisoners of war. There is clear and overwhelming evidence that Azeris are using means of inhumane abuse and torture on dozens of Armenian prisoners of war. Azeris have gone as far as to record these sessions and publish them on social media. In some horrific examples, these recordings have been published on the personal social media platforms of the Armenian prisoners of war. There are also thousands wounded, with hundreds of them still in hospitals waiting for surgery or in recovery. Unfortunately, many of these men will be left permanently handicapped.

The war brought more than 100,000 displaced people, mainly women and children, from Artsakh. They were forced to find refuge throughout Armenia. While the war has come to a head with a trilateral peace-treaty being signed, only approximately 20% of people have returned to Artsakh. There are approximately 25,000 people whose homes, businesses, and lives were in the territories that were handed over to Azerbaijani control. Beyond that, there are thousands whose towns and villages are in ruins, the majority of buildings have been destroyed, and there is no basic infrastructure to speak of. This leaves whole areas without electricity, running water, and other basic necessities. As the harsh winter approaches, housing alternatives such as tents, can no longer replace actual homes. This forces the people of Artsakh to stay in Armenia much longer than anticipated. Meanwhile, anyone able to return to Artsakh has safety as their number one concern. Since borders have shifted, they fear Azerbaijani aggression despite the existence of the Russian peacekeeping troops.



JMP has been there from the start to help relieve hardship and suffering; however, the needs are vast:

Medical care for soldiers wounded in full-scale attacks

JMP is focused on supporting the short and long-term treatment of hundreds of soldiers. We support these endeavors by purchasing medicine, hearing aids, other necessary supplies, and by providing physical therapy. This is all done while assisting to lighten the load of the increased financial burden on these vulnerable families. JMP's goal is to help 50 soldiers by addressing their specific treatment needs. An average of \$350 is estimated need per soldier.

Food for displaced families

Refugee Armenians from Artsakh are scattered all over Armenia in temporary shelters. Without jobs or means, these families are faced with the challenge of being able to put food on the table. JMP will prepare and distribute New Year's food packages to these families. These packages will include enough food to provide sustenance for approximately two weeks. Since JMP has resources in regions throughout Armenia, we will be utilizing our network to reach those in the furthest regions and villages. The cost of each food package is \$200 and our goal is to distribute these to 50 families this holiday season.

Christmas gifts for the children and family members of fallen soldiers

With the celebration of the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, being but a few short weeks away, the families of the 2,500 fallen soldiers face going into one of the holiest seasons dealing with sorrow, pain, and instability. To come alongside these families and show them the love and compassion of Jesus is our greatest mandate. Our staff members will personally visit and deliver Christmas gifts to the children. The required funding to provide each child with gifts is \$25. JMP's goal is to purchase and deliver gifts to 200 children.

Moral and psychological support to kids traumatized from the war

The normal psychological and emotional needs of children are vast, compounded with the trauma of displacement, war, and the unknown, we find ourselves with a group of children who are inadvertently suffering. As their parents deal with their own trauma, these children need and deserve to be cared for. JMP's staff and volunteers will be working with 100 refugee children, ranging in age from 4-16. This initiative will help these children, who find themselves in a foreign environment, with communication and socialization.

This children's initiative is going to be multi-layered and include individual and group work, play entertaining, socializing, developmental games, and provide a safe environment outside of the family unit. These activities aim to provide stability, so the children do not feel alone and abandoned. The ultimate goal is to help children open up and trust those around them. We also plan to bring volunteer tutors into this initiative.

The monthly cost of this project is \$2,000. This is inclusive of all tickets and entrance fees to museums, theaters, and other entertainment centers. It also covers the cost of stationary, supplies for games, transportation, special therapies, snacks for the kids, and more.

Now, more than ever, JMP needs help from friends like you. Through no fault of their own, these refugees fled for their lives with just the clothes on backs. It is a long and difficult road ahead, but your support could be the bridge that leads them from despair, towards hope.

Please contact me to learn more about helping our brother and sisters.

[Eliza Minasyan](#), Executive Director
Jinishian Memorial Program

P.S. Please read the statement from the stated clerk
<https://www.pcusa.org/news/2020/10/14/statement-nagorno-karabakh/> and PCUSA's call of distress
<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/defending-armenia/>. You can also learn about Nagorno-Karabakh's history and current crisis through our webinar:
<https://www.facebook.com/PCUSAWashington/videos/403810407310707>.

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me Matthew." 25:35