2022 Participatory Assessment
Consultation with Persons of Concern to UNHCR

9 focus group discussions
- Newly registered asylum-seekers in the Reception Centre (RC)
- Newly registered asylum-seekers outside the RC
- Asylum-seekers pending asylum claim in court instances
- Recently recognized refugees in/outside the Social House
- Youth (18-25 years old)
- Single parents heading a household
- A separate group of women
- Employed PoC with income insufficient to cover basic needs
- Single elderly persons (61+)

Issues identified

Access to information/awareness
- Insufficient information about rights and assistance services, asylum procedures, and how to appeal a negative decision on asylum.
- Insufficient awareness of state support programs.
- Insufficient awareness about employment opportunities.
- Language barriers and lack of translators at state institutions.

Livelihood and Employment
- Limited employment opportunities due to language barriers.
- Low salaries and insufficient income to cover housing and basic needs; unregistered jobs.
- Lack of awareness about the rights of asylum-seekers and refugees among employers.
- Increase in prices of food and hygiene items.

Legal Aid and access to asylum procedures
- Quality of legal aid.
- Lengthy asylum procedure and examination of appeals by court instances.
- Unavailability of UNHCR Hotline and state social/legal support aids over the weekends.

Housing
- Lack of affordable accommodation due to overheated prices in the rental market.
- Insufficient or lack of income to cover housing costs.
- Limited capacity and substandard condition at Reception Centre and Social Houses.

Health
- Limited access to healthcare services due to high prices for medications/medical treatment.
- Limited scope of state-provided healthcare services.
- Language barriers when visiting healthcare institutions

Key Solutions proposed by PoC
- Increase awareness-raising activities about asylum and appeal procedures and refugee rights.
- Improve online/offline platforms with information on available services in different languages.
- Provide interpretation services to address the lack of translators at the state institutions such as the Public Defender’s Office, Human Rights Defender, and Unified Social Service.
- Strengthen the collaboration between UNHCR service providers and relevant state institutions to improve case management.
- Continue UNHCR economic integration projects: offer grants to purchase toolkits and raw materials.
- Provide Russian, English, IT courses and coaching for business startups.
- Improve the condition of the Reception Centre, and offer new Social Housing opportunities.
- Extend the UNHCR list of provided medication and offer support to cover medical treatment/examination.
- Install the first aid boxes in the Reception Centre and Social Houses.
- Provide food and hygiene, school supplies, and financial support to cover basic needs.
- Create a child-friendly space in the RC.

Conclusion
Reliable communication and awareness-building components, as well as building strong partnerships between the state, international and local organizations, are crucial for effective responses to the needs of PoC. Immediate, short-term solutions shall be provided to those who are in critical need of assistance to cover their basic needs. Long-term economic development projects may be recommended to build the capacities of PoC to access livelihood opportunities and promote social inclusion in Armenia.