



SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



WFP Armenia Country Brief April 2019

Operational Context

Armenia is an upper-middle income, landlocked, net food-importer country vulnerable to external shocks. Since its independence in 1991, the border closure with neighbouring Turkey and Azerbaijan has constrained the country's economic development. According to the latest National Statistical Service data, the poverty rate reached 29.4 percent in 2016.

WFP has been in Armenia since 1993. Initially an emergency operation, WFP's work has since evolved into development assistance after 2000. WFP is currently operating under the Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (TICSP) from January 2018 to June 2019.

The results of the National Strategic Review of Food Security and Nutrition shaped WFP Armenia's Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for 2019-2024. The CSP was developed through extensive consultation with stakeholders and has been submitted for final approval. The CSP will leverage the longstanding School Feeding Programme to promote an inclusive, innovative and transformative model to strengthen national capacities and systems, including nutrition. It will also explore approaches and systems for greater impact.

Population: **2.97 million**

2017 Human Development Index: 0.755
(positioning it at **83 out of 189 countries**)

Income Level: **upper middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **9% of children
between 0 and 59 months**

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Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/armenia

In Numbers

62,004 people assisted
in April 2019



518 mt of food assistance distributed

32,261 cash-based transfers made

US\$ 0 m six months (May–October 2019) net funding requirements

Operational Updates

- Ahead of WFP's handover of the implementation and management of the School Feeding Programme in Aragatsotn province to the Government of Armenia, WFP carried out preliminary assessments to ensure the sustainability of the project. Results indicate that all schools are fully set up to continue the implementation of school feeding activities; school kitchens and canteens have been completely renovated and furnished with new equipment, kitchen staff have been fully trained on the preparation of food and menus, and the schools' administrators have been trained on procurement practices, contracting and reporting processes. The handover of the implementation and management of the School Feeding Programme in the province to the Government is expected to take place in September 2019.
- WFP Armenia will present the Country Strategic Plan for 2019 to 2024 in June at the WFP Executive Board. The 36 member states will review and discuss the forthcoming five-year plan to provide the official approval and give the start to the new phase for WFP's operations in Armenia.
- WFP Armenia has been implementing a pilot project to complement the School Feeding Programme with school snacks for pre-schoolers in selected schools across three provinces in Armenia since 01 October 2018. The pilot aims to provide evidence that will be analysed through an impact evaluation on the potential role of school snacks in supporting the learning of preschool-aged children. The initiative aims to support the Government of Armenia in evidence-based policy development. As a first stage, the evaluation measured the impact of the school snacks on knowledge acquisition. The preliminary results of the first-round show a possibility of significant effects on cognitive development of preschool-aged children. The complete results will be available in August.
- On 15 April, WFP Armenia delivered a presentation on Food Value Chains and their impact on community economic development, food security and nutrition in Armenia, for students and professors of the Armenian State Economic University (ASEU). The outreach event was a joint initiative of the Department of Global Communications and other UN agencies in Armenia.

Photo Caption: Presentation on Food Value Chains in Armenia for ASEU students in Diorama, WFP Armenia

Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (TICSP) (January 2018 - June 2019)

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
8.2 m	7.9 m
2019 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (May-October 2019)
6.2 m*	0*

* Includes requirements for Jan-June 2019 (under TICSP) and July-December 2019 (under CSP).

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Provide and facilitate technical, policy and institutional support to the Government

Focus area: Root Causes

Activities:

- Conduct school meals activities (in-kind and cash-based transfer) to targeted schools and children

Partnerships

- WFP Representative and Country Director in Armenia Jelena Milosevic and the representative of the Delegation of the European Union in Armenia discussed common areas of interest, particularly for the initiatives aimed at supporting economic growth, the agriculture sector and employment. The discussion has enabled common understandings and areas of cooperation for the future.
- WFP Armenia, jointly with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the UN Country Team, has been working on a concept note to establish a two-year holistic Social Protection Programme in Armenia. The proposal will be submitted to UN Headquarters in New York as a joint initiative, and if successful it will be followed by a joint comprehensive USD 2 million funding proposal.

A Story from the Field: Empowering Schools, Empowering Women for Gender Equality

Showing the big hall where the renovation has already started, Nune Gevorgyan proudly mentions, “And here is the spot where we will have a renovated cafeteria and kitchen with brand-new kitchen equipment and furniture to better comply with food safety standards thanks to the World Food Programme in Armenia”.

The school has 1200 students and currently provides hot meals to 700 primary students under the School Feeding Programme implemented by World Food Programme in Armenia. “When I was appointed as a director in 2014, I saw children not being able to concentrate in class, often not feeling good. I knew the reason was not having breakfast before coming to school and even not having anything to eat for lunch oftentimes. I knew about the School Feeding Programme and the first thing that I

could think of was to arrange hot meals in the school for the benefit of school children, their learning and of course as a factor contributing into community development and social protection”, mentioned Ms. Gevorgyan, the School Director. “I applied to the World Food Programme in Armenia with a request to be engaged in the Programme and at the same time doubting if I could manage - a completely new sphere for me – arranging a fully functioning school canteen and cafeteria feeding 700 students on 180 school days in a year. And now, five years later, thanks to the capacity building by WFP I feel more confident and gladly share my experience and knowledge with other school directors and community members”, she added confidently.



Like Ms. Gevorgyan, most of the directors of the schools lack technical expertise and knowledge on how to organize and manage the whole process of the school feeding once the schools are engaged in the School Feeding Programme. WFP assists the schools and their headmasters, 50 percent being women at each and every step: kitchen and cafeteria set-up, food procurement, food stock management, food preparations, menu creation and nutritional education. And this vocational training greatly contributes to women’s empowerment for their current and future career development and opportunities. This is the way WFP contributes to furthering gender balance and equality by engaging men and women equally in all the aspects related to School Feeding Management.

In addition, WFP engages economically disadvantaged women from local communities as kitchen staff, thus ensuring not only additional income for them but also providing trainings and opportunities for their further career development.

Donors

Republic of Armenia, Russian Federation