



## In Numbers

**55,078 school children assisted** during the 2018-2019 academic year due to school holidays



**489 schools in five provinces**

**0 school children assisted** in July due to school holidays

## Operational Context

With the Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for 2019-2024, WFP Armenia embraced a new phase of programme implementation with innovative interventions and new delivery modalities in the areas of nutrition, social protection, food value chains and disaster risk reduction. The new programmes continue contributing to the efforts to end hunger and achieve food security and improved nutrition by 2030. To ensure sustainable and equitable impact, WFP programmes are inclusive and gender-transformative to empower women in key areas, ensure education for all, have a climate-sensitive design and improve the sustainable management of natural resources. WFP Armenia will continue nurturing its continuous and efficient partnership with the Government of Armenia, national and international partners, and involve stakeholders from the whole of society for a maximized and greater impact.

WFP has been in Armenia since 1993, initially to provide emergency support. Since 2000, WFP has shifted to development assistance and under the CSP focuses on enabling, supporting and strengthening an environment for the government to provide solutions for increased food and nutrition security.

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.

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**

## Operational Updates

- WFP and the Government of Armenia are continuing the nationalisation process of the School Feeding Programme. The Government is currently managing the implementation of the Programme in five out of ten Armenian provinces: Syunik, Shirak, Tavush, Vayots Dzor and Ararat. WFP is managing and implementing school feeding in the remaining five Armenian provinces: Aragatsotn, Armavir, Gegharkunik, Kotayk and Lori. The management and implementation of the School Feeding Programme in Aragatsotn province will be officially handed over to the Government early September 2019. WFP is preparing the hand over in Gegharkunik Province planned for September 2020.
- To prepare the schools in Gegharkunik province for the inclusion into the national School Feeding Programme, WFP will align its assistance to the national model, by providing Cash Based Transfers to the province early 2020. The cash will substitute the previously WFP provided six commodities, and WFP will provide technical support at all stages of implementation to the schools, including how to organize the procurement of the food, training on handling cash transfers for school administrators and how to sustain the provision of nutritious quality meals. In preparation of the hand over, WFP carried out preliminary assessments of kitchen and canteen facilities in 117 schools in July, to prepare for renovations. The renovations will start in Oct – Nov 2019, followed by provision of kitchen equipment.
- In partnership with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), an assessment of School Feeding as a social safety net contributes to poverty alleviation in Armenia took place. The analysis showed that the estimated contribution of the Programme to poverty reduction was 0.4 percentage points. The study also notes that if the impact on poverty reduction is to increase, targeting and the level of financial transfers require revision. The assessment results are available in the academic article - "[Assessing poverty alleviation through social protection: School meals and family benefits in a middle-income country](#)" - published in the Global Food Security journal.

## Story worth telling: Pesticide-free veggies and a great biology lab in a school garden to boost nutrition and knowledge of school kids in the city of vanadzor

Yes, this is not a slipup, the school is in the city, charming city of Vanadzor, Lori province and has a flourishing vegetable garden in its backyard. The secondary school number 22 is a splendid educational facility for 240 kids. Since 2010, the school has been benefitting WFP's School Feeding Programme with 110 primary schoolchildren receiving nutritious hot meals every school day.

Being the talk of the town, the garden has been a healthy and tasty "addition" to the school meals and educational curriculum for the past 8 years. You can see beans, tomatoes, cabbage, cucumbers, and beetroots, just to mention a few of the vegetables grown here. There is dill, parsley and cilantro growing in abundance. The school follows a special planting schedule so that there is a harvest all year-round. The fresh and pesticide-free vegetables grown in the garden are used to supplement the food provided by the WFP's School Feeding Programme diversifying and making the daily school meals even healthier, more nutritious and delicious for the primary schoolchildren. Preserved vegetables are available also for the winter season menus.

"Once the parents in Vanadzor find out about the pesticide-free vegetables that we grow in our garden and use for our students' meals, they immediately want to enrol their children in our school" - David Melkonyan, the school headmaster tells showing around the green garden with the plants heavy with vegetable ready to harvest.

Not only does the garden reduce the purchasing costs of food for the school, it also serves as a nice green learning facility for the kids. They are often taken around the garden for their biology class, sneaking in a fresh snack here and there. Thanks to the vegetables produced in the garden, the contributions by parents normally used for diversifying the school meals menus are used to purchase additional sanitary and culinary utensils for the kitchen and the cafeteria.

The school staff aims at expanding their repertoire and attempting to grow a larger variety of crops. The goal for this year is harvesting garlic and onion.

### Donors

Republic of Armenia, Russian Federation, United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security

### Country Strategic Plan 2019 – 2024 (CSP) (July 2019 - June 2024)

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
<b>28 m</b>	<b>2 m</b>
2019 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (August 2019 – January 2020)
<b>6 m*</b>	<b>0</b>

\* 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:** Vulnerable populations in Armenia, including schoolchildren, have access to adequate and nutritious food year round

**Focus area:** Root Causes

##### Activity 1:

- Strengthen and complement the national school feeding programme to facilitate handover to the Government

#### Strategic Result 5: Countries have strengthened capacity to implement SDGs

**Strategic Outcome 2:** National policies, programmes and systems are strengthened to improve food security and nutrition among targeted groups by 2024

**Focus area:** Root Causes

##### Activity 2:

- Provide technical support to national institutions to generate an evidence-base and inform policies, strategies and systems to address food insecurity and malnutrition in Armenia

### Partnerships

- The recipe book used for WFP's School Feeding Programme in Armenia, developed together with the Ministry of Education, Social and Industrial Foodservice Institute of the Russian Federation, community members and families was awarded with an international prize in Macau, China on 4th July. WFP Armenia received a special prize at the awarding ceremony of the Gourmand Awards, labelled by many as the "Oscars for Food". During the international Book Fair at the Gourmand Awards, WFP Armenia provided further information on its programmes to hundreds of international stakeholders. A particular was on the the school feeding programme, which aims to tackle and eradicate hunger in Armenia.