



SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



WFP Armenia Country Brief March 2020

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 25.7 percent in 2017.

Population: **2.97 million**

Income Level: **Upper middle**

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

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

In Numbers



50,570 people assisted
in March 2020

Cash-based transfers were suspended due to schools' closures

Food assistance at schools used food from previous months dispatch

Operational Updates

- On 30 March, in response to the unparalleled situation caused by the COVID-19 outbreak, WFP activated a Global Level 3 Emergency, until 30 September 2020.
- The first case of COVID-19 in Armenia was reported on 01 March, reaching 571 positive cases and three deaths by 31 March. The UN has therefore activated the Armenian Disaster Management Country Team. WFP co-leads the Supply Chain and Food Security sectors under the guidance of the UN Resident Coordinator. WFP provides additional support to developing a UN Contingency Plan and to the coordination of the UN system response.
- Specific to the health response, WFP jointly with Government ministries and other partners is coordinating the supply chain efforts of all actors, as well as directly procuring urgently-needed medical equipment.
- The Government of Armenia declared the State of Emergency closing schools across the country as of 13 March. Thus, WFP had put its school feeding programme on hold. For children and most vulnerable families who can no longer rely on this critical social safety net, WFP and the Ministry of Education have designed food assistance activities targeting 100,000 children across the country.
- On 25 March, Armenia's President Armen Sarkissian received WFP's Country Director and affirmed the importance of work on food security and the need to consider a rapid scale-up of programmes that enhance national food value chains, production of fresh nutritionally-diverse food. As well as boosting health across the board, such products should help to minimize the long-term negative effects of Covid-19.

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WFP Country Strategy

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

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
28 m	20 m
2020 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (May-October 2020)
6 m	0

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.

- WFP jointly with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Economy and the State of Emergency Office started the identification of the most vulnerable population groups to assess long-term socio-economic impacts that will require support.
- WFP has supported the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in formulating food baskets under one national standard. WFP provided additional assessments and support for joint interventions targeting food security and livelihood needs of most vulnerable individuals, particularly elderly and disabled.
- In parallel to the COVID-19 emergency response, WFP implementation of most of activities continues as planned. In March, in the frame of the school feeding programme, a training on hydroponics greenhouse management was completed in Ashtarak, and the first stock of strawberry seedlings was planted in the greenhouse by the trained school staff. This is part of WFP's broader investments to equip schools and teach children as well as community members to operate greenhouses, produce vegetables and berries that can be used to diversify school menus and generate additional income.
- In March, WFP Armenia purchased solar panels, as per the Arpi project, to provide the panels to schools and

community businesses to enable school-based production of vegetables to diversify school menus. Solar panels will be installed in April 2020.

- In March, WFP provided 7,650 kg pulses to cooperative of farmers the WFP supported creating in Tavush as part of the nutrition-sensitive Food Value Chain programme. Farmers already sowed 28 hectares of land.
- In March, the number of schoolchildren receiving WFP's meals decreased due to the temporary suspension of schools. Food assistance to 50,570 people was provided from previous months dispatch.

Monitoring

- In March, monitoring activities of school feeding were put on hold, due to the temporary suspension of schools. Nonetheless, WFP Armenia is conducting Online monitoring for spring agricultural activities in Berd project to monitor the sowing process in Berd community.

Partnerships

- Specific to the Supply-Chain and Logistics sector, WFP is supporting the Ministry of Health with the procurement of medical equipment thanks to the financial support of the World Bank. In addition, WFP has procured urgently-needed Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) thanks to the support of Armenia Diaspora foundations. PPEs will be brought in the country via airlift transportation from China coordinated by Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Related to the Food Security sector, WFP has been establishing a common platform gathering food security actors and Government representatives. WFP has also been advocating to the Ministry of Economy for the inclusion of shock-responsive nutrition-sensitive Food Value Chains to be included as a model within the Government stimulus package for COVID-19.
- Weekly donor coordination meetings have been organised by the UN Resident Coordinator and the Government to present needs for the health response as well as to coordinate development partners support and agencies interventions.

Donors

Republic of Armenia, Russian Federation, United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, WFP 2030 corporate funds