



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP Armenia Country Brief April 2020



In Numbers

0 people assisted
in April 2020

0 USD cash-based transfers made

0 Mt of food assistance distributed

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 activities 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 23.5 percent in 2018.

The first Covid-19 case in the country was registered on March 1st. The government announced the state of emergency from March 16 to June 13, however the majority of restrictions will be lifted from May 18th.

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**

Operational Updates

- With the gradual evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic from an emergency to a socio-economic crisis, WFP has designed a three phased response. First to address immediate needs and tackle the health and food emergency; second to address socio-economic impacts; and third to ensure the long-term recovery of Armenia. In parallel, WFP in Armenia has by now integrated COVID-19 mitigation measures in all its pre-pandemic activities.
- As of April 30th, Armenia registered 2148 COVID-19 cases, with 33 deaths (National Center for Disease Control, 01.05.2020). WFP supports and co-leads the Supply Chain and Food Security sectors for the COVID-19 response, gathering UN agencies, Government line ministries and partners. WFP also actively participates in other sectors such as social policy, education, socio economic and early recovery. Extensive work has also been done jointly with other UN agencies on the development of the UN contingency plan and the coordination of the UN system response.
- WFP in Armenia jointly with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs developed a shock-responsive School Feeding model to continue providing a safety net to children while schools are closed. Cash assistance of 200 AMD per child will be provided for two months to cover the costs of an adjusted nutritious food basket as an alternative to on-site school lunches. The shock responsive school feeding programme will target primary school aged children (aged 6 – 9 years) from the vulnerable families across the country including in Yerevan capital. The implementation mechanisms are currently being finalized with the government.
- WFP in Armenia designed different types of assessments specific to the impacts of COVID-19 in Armenia. Questionnaires to assess the impacts on food security and agricultural activities have been finalised to identify urgent needs and design support to vulnerable populations.

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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)
6m	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 in Armenia is partnering with other UN agencies to work on COVID-19 specific communication materials, such as healthy eating, breastfeeding and behavioral change.
- In parallel to Covid-19 specific activities, WFP continues most of its CSP activities, such as nutrition, DRR and food systems. In April, as part of the nutrition portfolio, WFP finalized the nutrition Social Behaviour Change Campaign (SBCC) formative research. This will be key to designing and implementing culturally appropriate, integrated SBCC interventions tailored to the local context to positively influence eating behaviours of the population.
- The Field Level Agreement (FLA) with the Armenian National Agrarian University (ANAU) was signed at the end of April 2020 for one-year period. It covers the provision of technical and consultancy services in the areas of developing Food Value Chains (FVC), supporting school-based production and enhancing diversification of nutritional meals across Armenia.
- As part of its interventions to support schools and community-based food production, WFP finalised the technical requirements for greenhouses and solar stations to kick start activities with its partner Social and Industrial Foodservice Institute (SIFI).
- WFP continues investing in nutrition-sensitive Food Value Chains and supporting farmers in Berd, Tavush. In April,

three types of pulses were sown, enabling the community to harvest the nutritious pulses this year.

Monitoring

- Monitoring activities of the provision of School Feeding continue to be on hold, due to the temporary closure of schools. Nonetheless, WFP Armenia is conducting online monitoring for agricultural activities in Berd to monitor the spring sowing progress.

Partnerships

- Specific to the Supply-Chain and Logistics sector, WFP supported 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 are brought into the country via airlift transportation from China facilitated by the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In parallel, WFP supported the development of a national system to consolidate and track demand and supply of Covid-19 related supplies and worked on the improvement of information management through creation of sector specific newsletter.
- Specific to Food Security Sector WFP is working on the beneficiary's registration and cash distribution platform. Closely with the Ministry of Economy, WFP and the sector will support the establishment of rapid assessments, the creation of national food reserves and the development of shock-responsive nutrition-sensitive Food Value Chains to stabilize the national supply of food products and of income-generating opportunities.
- Throughout the design of the COVID-19 specific activities, WFP extensively engaged with key line ministries such as Economy and Labour and Social Affairs, as well as with partners such as World Bank to enrich and design targeted interventions.
- Extensive discussions took place with partners such as the World Bank, USAID and the EU on joint areas of intervention during the COVID-19 pandemic. Potential areas of cooperation are the launch of a food security assessment, the establishment of nutrition-sensitive shock-responsive Food Value Chains and potential strategic Food Reserves.

Donors

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