



WFP Armenia Country Brief

May 2018

Operational Context

Armenia is a landlocked country, lower-middle income, net food-importer country, vulnerable to external shocks. Since its independence in 1991, the border closure with neighbouring Turkey and Azerbaijan have 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 present in Armenia since 1993. Initially an emergency operation, WFP's work has since evolved to development assistance since 2000. The results of the ongoing National Strategic Review of Food Security and Nutrition (NSR) will shape WFP five-year Country Strategic Plan (CSP). The CSP (2019-2023) will leverage its current core programme towards an inclusive, innovative and transformative model to strengthen national capacities and systems, including in nutrition, and explore pilot approaches and systems for greater impact. WFP is currently operating under the Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (TICSP) since January till December 2018, until the CSP is finalised and ready to be operational in 2019.



Population: **2.97 million**

2016 Human Development Index: **84 out of 188**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

Main Photo

Credit: WFP/Davit Danielyan
Caption: Launch of exhibition to feature young talent from province

In Numbers

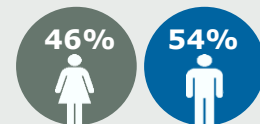
502 mt of food assistance distributed

USD 75,170 cash based transfers made

USD 0 through to the end of 2018 (June-December 2018)

68,060 school children assisted

in May 2018



Operational Updates

- Evidence-based programming:** In early May, the Impact Evaluation of the Nutrition-sensitive Aspect of the "Development of Sustainable School Meals" Project was launched by Dr. Harold Alderman, Senior Research Fellow at International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) to Armenia. Dr. Alderman met with the stakeholders and local research organizations to ensure that there was a shared and comprehensive understanding of the evaluation. Currently WFP's evaluation team, consisting of international and local experts, is working on agreed operational plan.
- WFP Armenia met RA Ministry of Emergency (MoE):** On 25 May, WFP Armenia met with representatives from MoE. The parties discussed a possible cooperation of capacity building for emergency response. The parties agreed to have a larger meeting and to engage other stakeholders such as Republican Center for Humanitarian Aid, Center for Crisis Response, UN partners and Ministry of Emergency of Russia to discuss activities aimed at Disaster Risk Reduction.
- A successful model to reach small schools with no adequate conditions for hot meals:** Garnarich school is one of the 151 schools in Shirak province ready to be transferred to the National School Meals Program in September 2018. WFP is piloting a different model aimed to reach small schools lacking adequate conditions for the implementation of hot meals. Garnarich is a successful example of such model. The school prepares hot meals not only for its students but caters to two neighbouring schools: Berdashen (six students) and Ardenis (21 students), thanks to WFP's provision of cooking equipment.
- WFP Armenia Launched Exhibition to Feature Young Talent from Province:** On May 21, WFP and the UN Department of Public Information launched an art exhibition featuring award-winning Armenian artist, Davit Danielyan. The event marked World Day of Cultural Diversity for Dialogue. The artist was born in Syunik provinces of Armenia, where WFP was running a school meals programme, successfully transferred to the Republic of Armenia Government. WFP Armenia Head of Programme, Gerd Buta stated 'WFP Armenia is particularly proud of its School Meals Programme which, in partnership with the Government, supports the development of young children and helps them realise their full potential.'

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WFP Armenia TICSP

Total Requirement (in USD)	Confirmed Contributions (in USD)	Seven Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) *
5.43 m	6.9 m	0

*June – December 2018

School Meals in Armenia

WFP's Outcome Monitoring Survey results showed that **more 90 percent** of the surveyed parents reported satisfaction with the various aspects of the School Meals Programme, including the attitude of kitchen staff, the quality of food, and sanitary conditions. At the same time, **38 percent** of the parents would like to see greater diversification in menu options, by adding vegetables and meat. Moreover, the share of the parents who wanted to see changes in the menu was the highest among the schools providing dry meals under the national programme – **46 percent**. Some **86 percent** of these parents wishing to see changes in the menus, would like to see hot meals.

Parents' contributions are one of the crucial components of the School Meals Programme. These contributions are managed by the parent councils. Of the parents surveyed, **77 percent** make monthly contributions toward school meals. On average, parents contribute around USD 1.20 per month per child. Around **80 percent** of the parents considered parent council to be one of the most influential co-decision-makers in school meals. Moreover, **74 percent** of parents interviewed are aware of the activities of the parent councils, and **88 percent** are satisfied with their activities.

GENDER MARKER  1

WFP Country Activities

SO 1 *Provide and facilitate technical, policy and institutional support to the Government*

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

Monitoring

- On 11 May, the Caucasus Research Resource Center-Armenia Foundation (CRRC) held an initial presentation of WFP's Outcome Monitoring Survey results. CRRC was selected to conduct WFP Armenia's first outsourced outcome monitoring survey. The nationwide survey consisted of 265 headmasters from schools implementing School Meals Programme, 75 kitchen staff, and 1,054 parents and caregivers of the children benefitting from the programme. Additionally, interviews were conducted with representatives of the Regional Department of Education, Culture and Sport and the State Service of Food Safety, 10 from each respective ministry. Two focus group discussions were also held with parent council representatives.
- Aragatsotn province will transition to the National School Meals Programme in 2019. WFP has been closely working with the regional and local government of the province in the identification of new schools. As a result, 32 new schools have been identified to join the program in September 2018, with start of the new academic year. During the first week of June WFP Armenia, jointly with Social and Industrial Food Services Institute (SIFI), plan to conduct a needs based assessment of 72 schools in the Aragatsotn province. Criteria of the assessment was submitted by the schools. The assessment will allow WFP Armenia to assist the schools with construction materials and prepare their kitchen and cafeterias for the launch of the programme in September.

Donors

Russian Federation and the Republic of Armenia