



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Armenia Country Brief August 2018



Operational Context

Armenia is an upper-middle income, landlocked, net food-importer country, which is 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 present in Armenia since 1993. Initially an emergency operation, WFP's work has since evolved to development assistance since 2000. WFP is currently operating under the Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (TICSP) from January until December 2018.

The results of the ongoing National Strategic Review of Food Security and Nutrition will shape WFP Armenia's 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.



Population: **2.97 million**

2015 Human Development Index: **84 out of 188**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

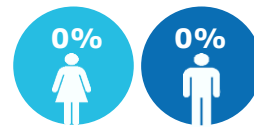
In Numbers

336 mt of food assistance distributed

0 cash based transfers made

US\$0 m six months (September 2018 – February 2019) net funding requirements

0 people assisted
in AUGUST 2018



Operational Updates

- In August, newly appointed Country Director for Armenia, Jelena Milosevic, had a series of meetings with representatives from the international community, strategic partners and stakeholders working in Armenia. At the meetings with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Education and Science, the partners highly appreciated efficient cooperation with WFP, acknowledging the importance of the school meals programme for Armenia as well as the technical capacity accumulated by Armenian professionals in that respect. The parties also discussed Armenia's commitments to the Agenda 2030 with focus on Sustainable Development Goal 2: Zero Hunger and Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals.
- WFP will transfer the management and implementation of the school meals programme in Shirak province to the Government of Armenia in September 2018. To ensure an efficient handover and further sustainable programme implementation, WFP currently supports 82 schools with canteen renovation and 134 schools with kitchen equipment to complement the regular school meals programme. WFP and the Armenian Ministry of Education and Science will have an official handover ceremony in October. The ceremony is planned to take place with participation of high-level representatives from the Government, WFP, UN agencies, civil society, private sector and the Russian Federation, which is the main and only donor of the activities implemented by WFP in Armenia.
- On 1 October, WFP Armenia will launch a pilot project complementing the school meals programme with school snacks for pre-schoolers in selected schools of three provinces. The project will enable implementation of the impact evaluation of the nutrition-sensitive aspect of the "Development of Sustainable School Meals" project in Armenia. The data collection for the evaluation will also start in October. WFP is working with its global partner, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and local partners to conduct the evaluation. The project aims to explore the impact of school snacks to the attention, concentration in class and school readiness of pre-school-age children.

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Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (TICSP) (January - December 2018)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD (September 2018 – February 2019))
5.4 m	7.7 m	0 m

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

- With the start of the new school year on 3 September, 482 schools are ready to provide hot meals to the school children aged 0-4 grades in five provinces. To ensure that, WFP has already delivered 336 metric tons of food to the schools.
- For the new school year, an additional 68 schools will join the school Meals programme: 37 in Kotayk province and 31 in Aragatsotn province. In Aragatsotn, 69 school cafeterias have been renovated and ready to receive equipment for the school meals programme.

Country Capacity Strengthening

- Supported by WFP Armenia, the Sustainable School Feeding Foundation (SSFF) is in the process of being established as a sustainable organizational unit. The SSFF is preparing for the trainings of the headmasters of the schools, which are covered by the pilot project complementing the school meals with school snacks for pre-schoolers. WFP Armenia provides necessary technical assistance to the SSFF for the preparations and implementation of the trainings, which will take place in September.

Partnerships

- Parents' contributions are one of the crucial components of the school meals programme. In Armenia, these contributions are managed by the parent councils. Currently, WFP Armenia and the Ministry of Education and Science are jointly working to develop a sustainable strategic approach to further enhance this key partnership in communities.

A Story from the Field: Headmasters in Syunik Inspired with Gender Mainstreaming into the School Meals Programme

In Armenia, headmasters are key opinion leaders in rural communities, decision-makers and a source for expertise at schools.

WFP, in cooperation with the Armenia Young Women Association, conducted a Gender Equality as a Precondition for Food Security and Nutrition Workshop targeted at specifically school headmasters in Syunik province.

The workshop aimed to improve the capacity of education professionals in analysing the gender dimensions of food and nutrition security and to develop concrete actions to integrate gender into the Sustainable School Meals Programme as well as other potential programmatic activities.

The training included sessions on gender equality, women empowerment, the importance of mainstreaming gender into food security and nutrition, as well as personal and professional commitment to ensure equal rights and opportunities for boys and girls, women and men.

During the practical exercise, the participants developed recommendations and actions to mainstream gender into the School Meals Programmes in their region. A series of introductory training sessions on gender was conducted for cooks as well.

Donors

Republic of Armenia, Russian Federation