



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Armenia Country Brief September 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**

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

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

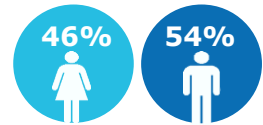
In Numbers

199 mt of food assistance distributed

0 cash based transfers made

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

53,696 people assisted
in SEPTEMBER 2018



Operational Updates

- On 7 September, WFP Representative in Armenia and Country Director Jelena Milosevic, and Deputy Minister of the Education and Science Arevik Anapiosyan signed an agreement to conduct an evaluation of the impact of school snacks to the attention, concentration in class and the school readiness of preschool-age children in Shirak, Lori and Gegharkunik provinces in the frames of the National School Meals programme. The Deputy Minister highlighted the importance of the evaluation for the evidence-based policy development. The results of the evaluation will allow WFP Armenia to strengthen the design and implementation of the school meals programme in Armenia, as well as to contribute to the state programme for education development.
- In September, WFP transferred the management and implementation of the school meals programme in Shirak province to the Government of Armenia. To ensure a smooth handover, WFP provided schools with cash-based transfers, enabling them to procure commodities from January to June 2018. The school headmasters, parents and children highly appreciated the diversified menu as a result of the application of the modality. Most of the commodities used were produced locally, accounting for around 76 percent of the total procurement. According to the Shirak Regional Administration, communities and headmasters, the modality also contributed to the local trade development and the sales of local agricultural products.
- WFP Armenia is currently working on its Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for 2019-2023. The strategy will focus on strengthening the school meals programme to become a transformative and innovative model with application of green energy solutions, strengthened linkages between local farmers and schools, launching of school gardens and greenhouses. The CSP also outlines capacity-strengthening activities on national, community and school levels.

Contact info: Hripsime Ohanyan (Hripsime.Ohanyan@wfp.org)
Representative and Country Director: Jelena Milosevic
Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/armenia

Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (TICSP) (January 2018 - June 2019)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD October 2018 - March 2019)
8.2 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

Partnerships

- WFP Armenia and UNDP will collaborate on implementing a pilot project in Berd community, Tavush province. The project will establish a local procurement center aimed at facilitating smooth supply chains and linkages between the local farmers and schools as well as larger market. Moreover, the project will help inform WFP Armenia's country strategy on school meals with locally grown production.

Monitoring

- In September, WFP Armenia summarised the monitoring results of the implementation of the CBT modality in Shirak province. In total, 147 schools in the province were part of WFP's CBT modality, with 13,523 primary school children receiving daily school meals with a new and diversified menu.
- Through the CBT, the schools created a new market for 47 local suppliers, which were not only from the main cities but came from across the province. These suppliers were granted contracts as a result of competitive tendering process the schools had to undergo in accordance with the Armenian procurement laws.
- 12 out of the 20 food items procured by the schools under the CBT modality were produced locally (bread, beans, cheese, poultry, potatoes, onion, tomatoes paste, cabbage, carrots, red beets, apple, eggs).
- 85 out of 147 schools involved in the school meals programme in Shirak province own land, which is possible to use for agricultural purposes. Of this, 14 are using it as such (orchard, potato or vegetable garden), but only 5,700 sq.m. or 2.5 percent out of around 22.5 ha of arable land owned by the schools is being used.

On 20 September, WFP and the Social and Industrial Foodservice Institute jointly organized the Healthy School Feeding Day event at school №15 in the city of Gyumri located in Shirak province.

The event featured interactive games and competitions that explained the importance of healthy diet and lifestyle.



The event was attended by Arsen Julfalakyan, an Olympic silver medallist, World and European Champion, and three-time Olympian from Gyumri, Armenia. He also participated in the activities, shared his experience and told about the importance of healthy diet and exercise.



Donors

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