



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES



## WFP Armenia Country Brief June 2020

## In Numbers

**6,550 people** assisted  
in June 2020

**46,615 USD** cash-based transfers made

**117 tonnes** 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 1<sup>st</sup>. The government announced the state of emergency from March 16 to July 13, however the majority of restrictions have been lifted from May 18<sup>th</sup>. As of June 30 the number of COVID-19 cases in Armenia reached 26,065 with 453 deaths.

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

- In June WFP Armenia has continued nurturing the partnership with the Government of the Republic of Armenia by establishing several framework agreements.
- A joint letter with the Ministry of Education (MoE) was signed to facilitate the implementation of WFP Armenia Country Strategic Plan (CSP) 2019-2024. MoE jointly with WFP are developing a roadmap to regulate long-term relationship on the school feeding implementation including the engagement for the transformative school feeding in Armenia for the next five years. The Ministry will delegate its operational functions to the Sustainable School Feeding Foundation to facilitate a strategic collaboration on developing normative framework for regulating the school feeding across the country.
- WFP jointly with UNICEF and UNDP has initiated a project with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MLSA) to develop a beneficiary rapid assessment and beneficiary registration platform for vulnerable persons affected by the COVID-19 crisis. The key outcomes of this project will address identifying the right beneficiary and providing the right assistance, equity, inclusiveness and strategic decision making.
- In the frames of the recently established partnership with the Agrarian University, WFP Armenia will conduct several studies and analysis on food systems, this include feasibility study for the whole grain wheat value chain project, growing nutrition dense crops in solar powered school greenhouses, among other. Experts from the Agrarian University visited Berd community, in which WFP has a food systems project, to determine training needs of beneficiary farmers.
- Based on the most recent food consumption behaviour study conducted by WFP, Armenians tend to skip breakfast. Thus, in June, in the frames of its upcoming Social Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) campaign WFP chose the promotion of consumption of healthy nutritious breakfasts as the first behaviour to be tackled. WFP Armenia has started developing materials and a communication strategy to support endeavours in positively changing food consumption behaviours.

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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)
<b>32 m</b>	<b>21 m</b>
2020 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (January-June 2020)
<b>10 m</b>	<b>0</b>

#### 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.

- To build the government's capacity and support the gradual nationalisation of the School Feeding programme, WFP supported the Sustainable School Feeding foundation (SSFF) in preparing high-level workplans for 2020-2023, as well as a 2020 workplan and Budget.

## Monitoring

- Due to the temporary suspension of schools and monitoring activities, the M&E team focused on conducting food security assessments and analysis.
- In June, WFP commenced the collection of data for nationwide food security assessment to be analysed in July. 4,217 households are being interviewed to measure the impacts of COVID-19 on their food security levels. Report will be out early August.
- In addition, food systems were acknowledged as a strategic priority by the government that can build resilience and contribute to overall development of the country. For this purpose, WFP is implementing a second assessment that focuses on the Small and medium-sized agribusinesses' analyzing the impact of COVID-19 crisis as well as the sector's opportunities in the recovery phase.

## Partnerships

- Technical discussions are ongoing with the Ministry of Economy with which WFP agreed on a model of shock

responsive food systems to be jointly implemented and presented to donors for fundraising;

- WFP engaged with the United Kingdom Embassy to Armenia to jointly work on food security assessments and leverage on their findings to support the Government and partners with evidence-based policies and measures;
- Two proposals have been shared with the Ministry of Environment. One targeting Geospatial tools and a second one on climate-sensitive food systems;
- A new model of shock-responsive nutrition sensitive food systems targeting whole grain wheat and greenhouse food productions has been shared with national and international partners;
- WFP Armenia received confirmation from the UN SDG Fund in New York that financial support will be provided to food systems. More precisely, WFP will leverage on this new fund to support the Government enhancing both analyses and implementation of food systems to directly support food security, and establish new drivers of equitable growth.

## A story on Nutritious food from WFP Greenhouses

In June, the first harvest of tomatoes has been collected from WFP's school greenhouse in Ashtrark. The greenhouse has been established as a pilot project for the transformative school feeding programme to support schools producing locally nutritious products.

Despite COVID-19 and the subsequent lockdown, the team was putting all the possible efforts to ensure the greenhouse's infrastructural work would continue as planned. The school staff received trainings and instructions to make best usage of the forthcoming harvesting period.

In the new academic year, the greenhouse will also serve as an educational facility where children will learn to grow vegetables, use the equipment and technologies in the greenhouse and learn the basics of agribusiness.

## Donors

Republic of Armenia, Russian Federation, United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, WFP 2030 corporate funds, RA Ministry of Health, Fruitful Armenia Fund, Armenia General Benevolent Union (AGBU), Izmirlian Foundation, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, UN SDG Fund.