



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP Armenia Country Brief July 2020

In Numbers

29,512 people assisted in July 2020

481,375 USD cash-based transfers made

867 litres of cooking oil distributed

Operational Context

The WFP Armenia Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for 2019-2024, focuses on programme implementation with innovative interventions and delivery modalities in the areas of nutrition, social protection, food value chains and disaster risk reduction. These 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. In order to respond to COVID-19, an emergency budget revision was approved, allowing WFP Armenia to support procurement of emergency personal protective equipment and medical equipment for the health response, as well as providing food assistance to vulnerable populations affected by the health and socio-economic consequences of the pandemic. 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. The government announced the state of emergency from March 16 to August 12, however the majority of restrictions have been lifted from May 18. As of July 31 the number of COVID-19 cases in Armenia reached 38,841 with 749 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 July 2020, WFP Armenia continued flexibly responding to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic in Armenia by joining forces with local partners and supporting the most vulnerable members of the society. In order to avoid disruptions in the provision of school meals, WFP introduced the shock responsive school feeding modality, and transferred 233,784,000 AMD (around 481,373 USD) to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MLSA) to support 29,223 primary school children from vulnerable families for two months.
- Within the framework of the previously built cooperation with Caritas Armenia, WFP delivered food packages to the partner that facilitated distributions of food assistance to 325 children with disabilities or from disadvantaged backgrounds. In parallel, WFP established a new partnership with the House of Hope Charity Centre, jointly providing food assistance to 289 children and their families.
- In the end of July, in collaboration with the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, an additional 20,000 vulnerable people were reached with oil-ration for one month.
- Two strategic meetings were held between Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia (MoESCS), WFP and Social and Industrial Foodservice Institute (SIFI). The meetings aimed to discuss several vital issues, including the development of a national school feeding strategy, elaboration of the road map for the cooperation between WFP and MoESCS, as well as various scenarios for schools reopening, modalities for organization of studies and disinfection of school and kitchen premises.
- WFP Armenia continues to co-lead Supply Chain (SC) and Food Security and Agriculture (FSA) Sectors under the guidance of the UN Resident Coordinator. Specific to FSA, the sector organized a meeting on July 17 with active engagement of the partners including FAO, UNICEF, SDC, ADA among others and discussed ongoing assessments to evaluate the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on food supply chains, livelihoods and nutrition in Armenia.

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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)
32 m	21 m
2020 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (September 2020 - February 2021)
10 m	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 outcome 4: Vulnerable populations in Armenia have access to basic needs and livelihoods during and in the aftermath of a crisis.

Focus area: *Crisis Response*

Activity 4:

- Support to Government and partners to identify and provide food assistance to vulnerable populations.

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*

Strategic Result 8: Sharing of knowledge, expertise and technology, strengthen global partnership support to country efforts to achieve the SDGs

Strategic Outcome 3: Vulnerable populations benefit from improved capacities of national entities and partners to prevent and respond to emergencies

Focus area: *Crisis Response*

Activity 3:

- Provide on-demand service provision to the Government and other partners.

- In the frames of COVID-19 response, the SC sector handed over supply and demand platform to the government. This tracking and reporting tool coordinates purchases and reduces the possibility of over or under supplying essential medical equipment and personal protective equipment.
- WFP continues to organize and operate WFP Air Passenger Service based on need. On July 20, WFP operated a second Sharjah-Yerevan-Sharjah flight with two incoming and three outgoing passengers.
- Jointly with other UN agencies, WFP started drafting Socio-Economic (SE) Recovery Framework to be presented to UNCT and subsequently to the Government of RA. In parallel, the formulation process of the UN Cooperation Framework is ongoing and will include linkages to the SE Recovery Framework.

- WFP continues to work in the Arpi Lake community schools and communities to ensure the schools are equipped with the renewable energy. Specifically, in July, all necessary roof repair works for installation of solar stations have been completed. In addition, construction works for two school-based greenhouses will commence in August.
- After the stabilization of the situation in the border area, beneficiary-farmers of Berd Value Chain project have already started their harvesting activities. The farmers involved in pilot food value chain project received a new combine for harvesting and thanks to new technologies almost zero harvest losses were found.
- Planned trainings with Agrarian University for Berd project beneficiaries have been postponed due to the emergency situation in Tavush. Procurement process of a hydroponic greenhouse and freezing storage has been initiated.
- Jointly with the Agrarian University of Armenia, WFP launched a feasibility assessment for whole grain value chain project. The first technical discussion with the assessment team took place in July.

Monitoring

- Due to the temporary suspension of schools and monitoring activities, the Monitoring and Evaluation team focused on conducting food security assessments and analysis.
- In July, WFP completed the data collection for nationwide food security assessment. 4,217 households had been interviewed to measure the impacts of COVID-19 on their food security levels. WFP will work on the data analysis and reporting in August.

Partnerships

- WFP Armenia is in technical discussions process with the Ministry of Economy for successful implementation of a shock responsive food systems model, which will be further presented to donors and used for fundraising activities.
- Leveraging on already established partnerships during COVID-19 medical response, the country office is developing a Private Sector fundraising action plan with RBC Private Partnerships and Fundraising (PPF) to identify, approach and channel additional resources to support food aid activities and the development of shock-responsive food systems.
- Two funding proposals for the total value of USD 1 million have been submitted to the Armenia Ministry of Environment. The first one targeting the development of Geospatial (GIS) tools and analyses, and the second proposal mainly focusing on climate-sensitive food systems.

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.

Photo Caption: In the frames of partnership with Caritas, food assistance is being distributed to vulnerable families