



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

## WFP Armenia Country Brief September 2020

## In Numbers

0 people assisted in September 2020

0 USD cash-based transfers made

0 MT of food assistance 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. 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. On 27<sup>th</sup> September, the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan across the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh escalated and while two truces have been negotiated, the shelling continues, and thousands of people are living below ground in Nagorno-Karabakh or are spontaneously arriving to Armenia. Due to the conflict, the Government of Armenia adopted martial law with temporary restrictions on rights and freedoms.

The first COVID-19 case was registered on the 1<sup>st</sup> March and the Government imposed a State of Emergency in mid-March which lasted till mid-September. Most public health preventive measures remain in place. The daily number of COVID-19 infected is peaking. As of 30 September, the number of COVID-19 cases in Armenia reached 50,850 with 963 deaths.

WFP has been in Armenia since 1993, initially to provide emergency support. Since 2000, WFP has shifted to development assistance and under the current 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, while keeping most of the public health preventive measures in place.

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

- While schools reopened on September 15<sup>th</sup>, COVID-19 prevention measures do not allow schools to prepare daily meals. WFP and the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport (MESCS) agreed to distribute take-home rations to ensure the continued access to food and nutrition security of children. WFP will provide food assistance to more than 50,000 children's families across the regions, while the MESCS will support additional 50,000 children and their families under the national school-feeding programme.
- In September WFP finalized a food security assessment to analyze the impacts of COVID-19 on food security. Key findings were presented to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MLSA) and a working group was created to leverage the findings to inform evidence-based targeting and geographical coverage of WFP's forthcoming food assistance interventions. Jointly with the MLSA, WFP is preparing a project to provide food assistance to COVID-19 impacted and vulnerable households with marginal income. WFP continued to support capacity strengthening of the MLSA and National Statistical Committee to institutionalize food security assessments and use these exercises to better identify vulnerable individuals. WFP will launch a follow up assessment in October, and will be able to analyze how the household food security situation has been impacted over time due to COVID-19.
- End of September, WFP, the Social and Industrial Foodservice Institute of Russia (SIFI) and Sustainable School Feeding Foundation (SSFF) conducted the annual needs assessment for renovation of school kitchens and cafeterias in the Lori region to prepare schools for the hand-over of the programme to the Government scheduled for 2021.
- WFP installed five solar panels in schools and in four local farmers' production units in Lori region. These investments will directly support schools-based food productions to increase the quantity and quality of nutritious food available in local markets, while creating new skills and job opportunities for community members.

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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)
32.1 m		22 m
2020 Requirements (in USD)	2021 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (April 2020- November 2021)
10 m	6 m	0 m*

\*The overall NFR for regular activities is zero since the un-programmed contributions are available to cover these requirements. Meanwhile requirements for new activities which were added as Crisis Response, are covered through WFP advance (IRR) for value of US\$1.5 m.

#### 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

##### 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.

#### 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.

- WFP is expanding the scope of its nutrition sensitive food systems with the development of whole grain wheat food value chains. 69 farmers with total of 100 ha of land in the Tavush region joined the programme. Land preparation started in September.
- WFP's food value chain project in Berd, Tavush, has registered some positive results in September. The Berd Cooperative harvested 82 MT of pulses and legumes and WFP is now supporting Farmers to improve their sales by partnering with marketing companies to work on the branding of the cooperative.
- In September, UN agencies, including WFP, finalized the Socio-Economic Response and Recovery Plan (SERRP) for Armenia based on the United Nations Framework for the Immediate Socio-economic Response to COVID-19. It focuses on supporting

the Government of Armenia's efforts to tackle the immediate health emergency during the COVID-19 outbreak and on coordinating between social support to vulnerable populations as well as economic recovery measures that minimise the long-term impact of the pandemic.

- On September 27, fighting erupted between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. The conflict escalation caused casualties and significant infrastructure harm in several communities and cities. WFP Armenia as a humanitarian development agency is preparing support to the affected population in the Republic of Armenia. In the meantime WFP, leveraging on its existing programmes, continues to strengthen the food security of the most vulnerable in Armenia during these challenging times.

## Monitoring

- In September, post distribution monitoring methodology and tools were developed for oil distribution to vulnerable families implemented in the frames of shock responsive school feeding programme implemented as COVID-19 response measure.
- Through its M&E team, WFP has continued supporting the capacity strengthening of the National Statistical Committee (NSC). Specifically, in September the team worked on data management for the Integrated Living Conditions Survey (ILCS 2019) and additionally assisted with data analysis, reporting and research on Poverty.

## Partnerships

- WFP in partnership with UNDP developed a proposal for the UN Human Security Trust Fund. The Joint Programme aims to support local communities in several regions of Armenia in sustainable development and leverage the Human Security Approach to address economic, environmental and health insecurities that have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Partnership team in Armenia facilitated a lessons learnt exercise with the Partnership team in Palestine to share Armenia's experience, thus far, in engaging with the Armenian diaspora and private sector for resource mobilization and advocacy.

## Donors

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