



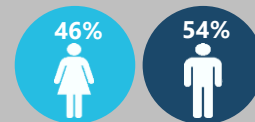
World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES



## WFP Armenia Country Brief April 2021

## In Numbers



46,180 people assisted in April 2021

427,348 USD cash-based transfers made

414 MT of food assistance distributed

US\$1.5 m six months (June – November 2021) net funding requirements

### Operational Context

In Armenia, WFP supports the Government and partners in their efforts to eradicate food insecurity and malnutrition in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and to implement the Government of Armenia's Development agenda. Together with government line ministries and partners, WFP is contributing to the development of human capital, the improvement of health and the promotion of sustainable economic growth that benefits the whole population.

Through the adoption of its five-year Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for 2019-2024, WFP Armenia's interventions focus on shock-responsive social protection activities and policy development; enhancing food systems; developing evidence-based studies and policies on food security and nutrition; strengthening Disaster Risk Reduction and Response instruments and capacities; enhancing and fully nationalising the School Feeding programme and, as needed delivering emergency food assistance and supply chain service provision.

Following the adoption of its CSP in 2019, WFP undertook two Budget Revision in 2020 and 2021 to respond to growing emergency food security needs in Armenia brought by the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict in the adjoining region of Nagorno-Karabakh.

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 26.4 percent in 2019, while WFP's nationwide assessments conducted in November-December 2020 point to 19% of households being food insecure.

Population: **2.97 million**

Income Level: **Upper middle**

2019 Human Development Index:  
0.76 (**81 out of 189 countries**)

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

### Operational Updates

- A Memorandum of Understanding between WFP and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia was signed on 12 April 2021 to provide a framework of assistance to vulnerable women and children spontaneous arrivals from the adjoining region of Nagorno Karabakh, who are currently residing in Armenia. The number of spontaneous arrivals from the adjoining region of Nagorno Karabakh, who will be benefiting from the monthly assistance is determined by the beneficiary transfer lists that are received from the Government and can vary. The first transfer was successfully carried out at the end of April.
- WFP commenced its cash transfers on 30 April assisting 13,350 women and children spontaneous arrivals. WFP is providing a top-up to the Government safety net programme with a monthly transfer of US\$ 24 for four months. The money will be transferred in three instalments of US\$ 32 for the months of April, May and June. The decision to provide three instalments of US\$ 32 (totalling US\$ 96) instead of four instalments of US\$ 24 has been taken to address an increase in the use of negative coping mechanisms (borrowing/ taking out credit loans to cover food needs) by beneficiaries confirmed by the latest food security needs assessment completed in March 2021.
- Deputy Regional Director (DRD), Kate Newton visited Armenia to learn about WFP operations, challenges, and future plans.  
  
During her stay, the DRD met with all WFP Country Office staff, various partners and Government counterparts including the Deputy Minister of Education, to discuss the cooperation built over the years between WFP and the Government of Armenia to ensure the sustainability and full nationalisation of the School Feeding (SF) Programme. Additionally, Ms Newton had an online conference with the Social and Industrial Foodservice Institute (SIFI), the long-standing cooperating partner of WFP Armenia, to discuss the successes of the school feeding programme that were jointly achieved during 10 years of cooperation.
- WFP has started the distribution of take-home rations for targeted 53,894 schoolchildren to ensure the families benefit from a well-balanced diet while school canteens are closed. In April 26,115 children and 6,575 kitchen helpers were assisted.

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**Photo Caption:** WFP Armenia on a field visit to a community centre hosting displaced population from NK in Gegharkunik. February 2021 (Photo: Aimé Saba)

## WFP Country Strategy

### Country Strategic Plan 2019 – 2024 (CSP) (July 2019 - June 2024)

Total Requirements (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)
<b>41 m</b>	<b>26 m</b>
2021 Requirements (in US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$) (June-November 2021)
<b>14 m</b>	<b>1.5 m</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 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.

- Infrastructure renovation plans for 72 schools in Lori and 24 schools in Gegharkunik regions were finalised and preparation for the purchase of construction materials and equipment started. Similarly, preparations for the purchase of kitchen equipment for 38 schools in Vayots Dzor region started.
- WFP launched a Social Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) pilot campaign to increase consumption of healthy breakfasts. Around 690 schoolchildren participated in the interactive performance phase during which interactive theatres played in schools promoting the idea of eating breakfast. All participating classes have received habit trackers to keep track of each child's progress.
- On 1st April the WFP Food Value Chain team launched the Togh Project in Syunik region. This project is funded by the Ministry of Economy and strengthens agricultural productivity of 15 farmers

in a border community by introducing new farming techniques and building capacities that will ultimately increase profit.

- The first National Food Systems Summit dialogues were held in April 2021. The theme of this discussion was around strengthening resilience in food value chains and food safety policies and control systems.

## Monitoring and Assessments

- The first take-home rations (THR) post-distribution monitoring (PDM) report for the school feeding programme was finalized. The overall feedback of the THR distribution process was very positive - it was implemented in a well-organized, safe, accessible, and respectful manner. According to the majority of parents, school helpers and headmasters, children would greatly benefit from reopening the canteens and resuming the provision of hot food instead of THR. Maintaining the hotline for beneficiary feedback is ongoing since the start of the CBT programme.
- The [food security and market monitoring bulletin](#) has been developed and shared externally and internally.

It included the analysis of a food security and vulnerability assessment conducted among spontaneous arrivals from Nagorno-Karabakh and host families in January-February 2020, and the food basket and exchange rate monitoring for the period of February 2020-February 2021.

- WFP VAM unit supported data collection, analysis of database and report development of the nationwide childhood obesity surveillance initiative (COSI) that was conducted by the Arabkir Medical Center together with WFP and WHO. It is an important study to understand the weight status among primary school children describing weight, height, body mass index (BMI), as well as the prevalence of underweight, overweight, and obesity. The report will be officially shared at the beginning of June.

## Donors

Armenia General Benevolent Union (AGBU), British Embassy Yerevan, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Mr. Eduardo Eurnekian companies, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Government of Flanders, Government of France, Fruitful Armenia Fund, Izmirlian Foundation, My step Foundation, Russian Federation, The Republic of Armenia, The Republic of Armenia Ministry of Health, Saint Sarkis Charity, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA), United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, UN SDG Fund