



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Armenia Country Brief March 2023

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, 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 Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for 2019-2025, 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 five Budget Revisions in response to a range of developments, including growing food insecurity in Armenia brought by the COVID-19 pandemic and the hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan; providing capacity strengthening to support displaced and food insecure populations living in border provinces (marzes), strengthening national food systems in Armenia and the national social protection system and the latest revision of the CSP extended its duration for one and a half year extending it from mid-2024 till end of 2025, to align it with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for Armenia (2021-2025).

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 27 percent in 2020, while WFP’s fifth Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment conducted in January 2023 revealed that 30 percent of households are food insecure.

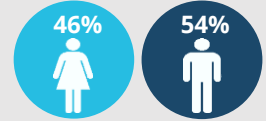
Population: **2.97 million**

2020 Human Development Index: **0.77**
(**81 out of 89 countries**)

Income Level: **Upper middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **9% of children**
between 6-59 months

In Numbers



2,962 people assisted

In March 2023

US\$ 118,000 cash-based transfers made

US\$ 2.8 m six months (April – September 2023) net funding requirements

Operational Updates

- Within the framework of the “Resilience and economic recovery of border communities in Armenia” (REBCA) project, aiming to support vulnerable households in conflict affected provinces to meet essential needs of food and restore psycho-social conditions, WFP completed its first month payments to 2,540 food insecure people (612 households) in Vardenis, Jermuk and Sisian communities in March. In addition to food insecurity, households have intersecting vulnerabilities due to disability, extreme poverty and living in conflict – affected areas.
- As part of the strengthening of the shock-responsiveness of the national social protection system, WFP convened the first inter-ministerial taskforce to validate the roadmap for designing response protocols. The taskforce comprised of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure (MTAI), Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES), Ministry of Interior (Mol) and chaired by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MLSA).
- In support of the “Green Energy for Productive Farming” project, which aims to enhance food security for smallholder farmers, WFP installed a 20-kilowatt solar station in five settlements of Vardenis and Chambarak communities. Trainings were provided to 150 smallholder farmers on the methods of cultivating high value berries integrating climate-conscious perspectives for agricultural planning.
- To decrease post-harvest losses and link farmers to markets, WFP is constructing a logistics hub in Khndzoresk (Syunik province). WFP also installed 40-kilowatt solar station for the logistics hub building to decrease operational costs, enhance green energy, and decrease dependency on traditional energy supplies.
- WFP organized a training for 39 members of its established cooperatives on “Risk sensitive agriculture for legumes” within the framework of South-South Cooperation. The training covered the entire agricultural production and marketing cycle, including discussions on climate change adaptation.

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Photo Caption: Solar station installed in the community owned building of Vahan bordering settlement, within the framework of “Green Energy for Productive Farming” project
WFP/Vahan Arakelyan

Country Strategic Plan (2019-2025)

Total Requirements* (in USD)	Total Received (in USD)
84 m	35 m
2023 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (April – September 2023)
11 m	2.8 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*

Activities:

- 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*

Activities:

- 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*

Activities:

- 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.
- Strengthen national food systems in Armenia, supporting actors along the food value chain.
- Provide support to national institutions to strengthen the national social protection system.

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*

Activities:

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

- Within the “Milk in schools” project, WFP in partnership with a School Feeding and Child Welfare Agency conducted training on “Benefits of milk consumption for healthy lifestyle” for 80 teachers, schoolchildren, and parents in Jermuk and Yeghegnadzor schools, where 153 students in fifth to eighth grades receive a cup of milk daily. The project aims to address calcium deficiencies among children and induce behaviour change.

Monitoring and Assessments

- WFP completed the fifth Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment (FSVA5) focusing on understanding household food security levels and choices during winter period. In total, 4,274 household interviews were conducted. The assessment showed that 30 percent of households are food insecure. Provinces with the highest percentages of food insecurity were as follows:



Of the interviewed households, 30 percent stated having debts, of which almost 70 percent of the debts were to cover food purchases.

- In February 2023, the Food Price Inflation increased to 9.8 percent and the Consumer Price Index 8.1 percent in comparison to February 2022. The highest food price inflation was seen in capital Yerevan (10.5 percent) Tavush (10.4 percent), Ararat (10.3 percent), followed by Lori (9.2 percent). The Diesel price increased by 1 percent whereas the price of petrol decreased by 35 percent between February and March 2023.
- In March, WFP conducted a Market Functionality Index (MFI) assessment, including trader and market interviews in Spitak, Noyemberyan, Gyumri, Ani, Akhuryan and Amasia communities to prepare for scale up of Food Card distributions. Findings confirmed the possibility to scale up in all those locations.

Planning a Decentralized Evaluation

- WFP Armenia is currently planning for the decentralized evaluation of the School Feeding Programme. The evaluation is to be carried out in 2023 and the results will inform future programming. The WFP regional evaluation unit in Cairo is supporting the planning and organized a two-day workshop and field missions in March.

Donors

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