



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP Armenia Country Brief December 2019

In Numbers



54,899 people assisted in December 2019

0 cash based transfers made

320 mt 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 programmes 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 25.7 percent in 2017.

Operational Updates

- WFP Armenia is piloting a clean energy greenhouse model for schools to sustainably produce their own fruits and vegetables and serve as a platform for teaching students about sustainable agricultural practices. In December, the green house in Aragatsotn province was equipped with a solar station, which will be technically verified in January together with training sessions on solar station and green house management for school staff.
- In 2019, WFP Armenia implemented a snack pilot project targeting pre-schoolers to complement the School Feeding Programme. The pilot aimed at providing evidence of the role of school snacks in supporting learning of preschool-aged children. In December the impact evaluation was finalized, and it showed that the provision of morning snacks to preschool children contributed to closing the "ability to learn" gaps between children coming from less advantaged households and their peers. The ability to learn parameters tested during the evaluation were: processing speed, fluid reasoning, and short-term memory. The provision of morning snacks was popular both among families and among school administrators; as nearly half of children in the provinces were not used to having breakfast prior to coming to school. The findings of the evaluation will feed into the revised School Feeding Strategy 2020 of the Government of Armenia.
- In December in cooperation with Social and Industrial Foodservice Institute (SIFI) an initial assessment for the School Feeding and Food Value Chain projects was conducted in "Arpi" community in Shirak province. Upon discussion and finalization of the combined School feeding and Food Value Chain project proposal, project implementation is expected to be initiated in the first Quarter of 2020.

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

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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)
27.9 m	20 m
2020 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (February – July 2020)
6 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 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

- In December, the School Feeding programme continued its preparations for implementing the Cash Transfer modality in Gegharkunik province. The cash transfer model will be implemented from January 2020, as a transition between WFP in kind programming to Government owned School feeding. Capacity building activities for school principals and cooks were carried out and principals received comprehensive trainings on procurement processes, financial reporting, food safety requirements and nutrition standards. The cooks received trainings on food safety requirements, nutrition and menu composition.

Monitoring

- During September-December, the monitoring team visited 137 schools in 4 provinces - Kotayk, Armavir, Gegharkunik and Lori. Total number of beneficiaries in visited schools is 13,914. Data was collected on the different aspects of school feeding such as school's technical capacity as well as compliance to food safety norms and regulation.
- In the clear majority (97%) of monitored schools monitoring team registered good or satisfactory cleanness of kitchen and cafeteria.
- Out of visited schools, only 12% did not require any type of renovation, in all other cases either cosmetic (22%), substantive (23%) or overhaul (43%) repair needs were revealed. 49% of the visited schools did not have a handwashing station near the cafeteria.
- 64% of the monitored schools did not additional school feeding

donations apart from the contribution of WFP and the parents. According to monitoring results, 89% of the parents make contributions to cover other necessary food and products.

Partnerships

- In December, the partnership unit started consolidating many of its partnerships through the formal exchange of letters with the Agrarian University and the ICRC to move forward implementable actions with its partners for 2020-2024;
- WFP Armenia received a Vulnerability, Analysis and Monitoring (VAM) mission from the Regional Bureau in Cairo, Egypt. The mission showcased the latest technological innovations that WFP has made available to implement in countries the tools, analyses and best practices to monitor the evolution and impact of the climate crisis on countries. The mission also trained staff on shock simulation models, which can monitor impact in changes of food prices. Thanks to these new tools, project and funding proposals will be shared in Q1 of 2020 with partners to support national efforts to balance growth with climate change and to monitor price shocks.

Donors

Republic of Armenia, Russian Federation, United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, WFP 2030 corporate funds.

Photo Caption: Children from Dzorakap village participating in the school feeding programme.