**Joint News Release**

**DATE: TBC**

**WFP in partnership with the Social and Industrial Foodservice Institute organized Inauguration Ceremony for “Arpi Community Development Project”**

**YEREVAN** – UN World Food Programme (WFP) in partnership with the Social and Industrial Foodservice Institute (SIFI) organized the inauguration of “Arpi Community Development Project” on September 10 in the Garnarich village of Shirak province of Armenia.

WFP and SIFI piloted an innovative approach to promote a nutritional and economically sustainable school feeding programme by expanding community’s financial participation in school feeding activities in Armenia.

In Arpi Community, WFP and SIFI are investing in local businesses to ensure their profitability and contribute to the sustainability of the School Feeding Programme.

“One of the most essential components in upbringing and health of our children is balanced nutrition. I am happy to witness the development of the School Feeding Programme in Armenia, and the results of the project which has been implemented by the UN World Food Programme, with financial contribution by the Russian Federation and expertise of Russian colleagues”, – Ruslan Kandaurov, General Consul of the Russian Federation in Gyumri.

Within the scope of the project, greenhouses were established in two schools and solar panels were installed in five schools allowing them to save and gain an additional source of income to support school feeding. Moreover, the investments targets four milk processing plants and poultry farms with new equipment to mechanise their production processes and provides solar panels to reduce the energy costs of the businesses.

“It is essential to set up a mechanism where the project assets themselves continue to generate income which over the next 25 years can be invested in the needs of the community. Moreover, WFP is commited to implement projects that do not have negative environmental impacts”, said Nanna Skau, WFP Deputy Country Director.

Within the project, the “Arpi Community Development and Investment” Fund has been formally established to ensure total community ownership of the programme. WFP together with SIFI, provide guidance and technical support to the foundation that will be later responsible for maintaining the sustainability of the school feeding programme in the community.

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The United Nations World Food Programme is the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate.  We are the world’s largest humanitarian organization, saving lives in emergencies and using food assistance to build a pathway to peace, stability and prosperity for people recovering from conflict, disasters and the impact of climate change.

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