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**WFP WELCOMES USAID CONTRIBUTION TO STRENGTHEN SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS IN ARMENIA**

**Yerevan, Armenia –** With a generous contribution of US$750,000 from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) will support the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to strengthen the shock responsiveness of the social protection system in Armenia.

In recent years, Armenia faced multiple shocks that revealed an acute need to enhance the adaptability and response mechanisms of the social protection system to meet the needs of vulnerable populations during and after crises.

In partnership with USAID, WFP launched the “Integrated Response to Increased Food Prices in Armenia” project that aims to improve and strengthen shock-responsive policies and promote social assistance tools for food-insecure populations over the next 15 months.

“USAID is proud to work with the World Food Programme to support the government of Armenia in its efforts to respond to the needs of citizens, especially vulnerable populations, in the face of unforeseen challenges. We are pleased that at least 3,000 people will directly benefit from this program,” said USAID/Armenia Mission Director John Allelo.

Also, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the WFP will develop and enforce shock-responsive social protection policy protocols, procedures, and resources. WFP will further operationalize food cards as cash-based transfer tools for meeting rapid food needs caused by shocks and crises to three thousand food-insecure persons in three regions.

“We have experienced shock after shock in Armenia, and we aim to support the Armenian Government to have social systems in place that can adapt and provide the right assistance at the right time to people in need. “WFP welcomes USAID’s generous support to facilitate that the government of Armenia have all the necessary social protection tools and mechanisms and help people during and in the aftermath of shocks,”said Nanna Skau, WFP Deputy Director and Officer in Charge*.*

WFP values the crucial role of improving the shock-responsive social protection system in Armenia, considering that the country is prone to various types of shocks. By enhancing social protection systems WFP can reach more people who are at risk, and therefore a multi-stakeholder approach is required to address the consequences of the shocks and ensure a timely and effective response to hundreds of people across Armenia.

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The United Nations World Food Programme is the world’s largest humanitarian organisation 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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