



World Food Programme

SAVING  
LIVES  
CHANGING  
LIVES



## WFP Armenia Country Brief August 2020

## In Numbers

**20,077 people** assisted in August 2020

**0 USD** cash-based transfers made

**20 MT of vegetable oil** distributed

### Operational Context

The WFP Armenia Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for 2019-2024, focuses on programme implementation with innovative interventions and delivery modalities in the areas of nutrition, social protection, food value chains and disaster risk reduction. These activities 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. In order to respond to COVID-19, an emergency budget revision was approved, allowing WFP Armenia to support procurement of emergency personal protective equipment and medical equipment for the health response, as well as providing food assistance to vulnerable populations effected by the health and socio-economic consequences of the pandemic.

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 23.5 percent in 2018.

The first COVID-19 case in the country was registered on 1 March. The government announced the state of emergency from March 16 to September 12, however, the majority of restrictions have been lifted from 18 May. As of 31 August, the number of COVID-19 cases in Armenia reached 43,977 with 882 deaths.

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**

### Operational Updates

- In August, WFP received the findings from its assessment on how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the food security situation of the Armenian population. Preliminary findings from the study, conducted among 4,217 households nationwide between 22 June and 3 August, indicate that approximately 90 percent of respondents applied coping mechanisms during the pandemic, such as borrowing money or using savings to buy food, and reducing the quantity and quality of daily meals. More than 70 percent reported to have experienced significant food insecurity in the 30 days before the interview, and that particularly people living in urban areas have lost their jobs during the pandemic. Thanks to this study, WFP is developing its evidence-based emergency response to support 43,000 individuals with food and cash assistance to prevent further deterioration of their food security levels.
- In collaboration with the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, 20,000 vulnerable people received oil-ration for one month. An additional 77 beneficiaries were assisted in the frames of food value chains project in Berd.
- WFP has worked jointly with the Ministry of Education to develop the strategy aimed at organising the School Feeding programme after 15 September when schools will re-open. Different scenarios have been discussed, including take-home rations due to the closure of school canteens and kitchens.
- In August, WFP's food value chain project in Berd, Tavush, received new collection and packaging equipment. The technology will support the cooperative engaged in pulses production to enhance their collection centre and increase its processing capacity, expected to reach up to 180 tons. These new infrastructural investments will support farmers, increasing the market availability of nutritious products and creating additional income.

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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)
<b>32.1 m</b>	<b>21.4 m</b>
2020 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (October 2020-March 2021)
<b>10.3 m</b>	<b>0</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

#### 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.

- As part of its Transformative School Feeding model, WFP installed new solar stations in Garnarich, Tsaghkut, Zorakert and Aghvorik and launched the set-up of greenhouses in Garnarich and Tsaghkut. These investments will directly support schools-based food productions to increase the quantity and quality of nutritious food available in local markets, while creating new skills and job opportunities for community members.
- In August, the Agrarian University and WFP finalized a feasibility study on non-traditional vegetables to broaden the scope of WFP's food systems models. The findings will be used to guide the establishment of new

greenhouse productions, including in schools, to increase the market availability and consumption of highly nutritious food commodities.

- WFP Armenia finalized its Social Behavioral Change Communications (SBCC) formative research. The study, which is formed by a mix of individual and family interviews among 66 participants, will inform WFP's forthcoming nutrition activities that will support improving Armenian's dietary habits.
- WFP and its partners, including World Vision, have worked with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to develop food banks as a vehicle to meet food security needs of the population amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. The IT infrastructure is being developed and the platform is expected to deliver its first results by November in support of the Government.

## Monitoring

- In August, the monitoring team received the data from the first Food Security assessment to establish a new baseline for food security in the country and assess how food consumption scores have changed in the regions. The assessment has been designed with support from the World Bank and a final report will be produced in September in partnership with the United Kingdom Embassy to Armenia. To assess food security dynamics amidst the pandemic and monitor its evolution through time, WFP will carry-out a second assessment in Fall 2020 with the financial support from the United Kingdom Embassy.

## Partnerships

- WFP received a corporate financial advance to launch its emergency response and to timely meet the food security needs of the most vulnerable as identified by the food security assessment. The loan, valued USD 1.5 million, will be used to provide food and cash assistance to targeted individuals for two months while, in parallel, WFP will advocate for resources to partners.
- The United Kingdom's Commonwealth Foreign Office (CFO) through the UK Embassy in Armenia has provided financial support to WFP to support its activities during the COVID-19 response. WFP and the UK will partner to develop food security assessments, and use findings to support key line ministries to enhance vulnerability targeting and the development of food systems models.

## Donors

Republic of Armenia, Russian Federation, United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, WFP 2030 corporate funds, RA Ministry of Health, Fruitful Armenia Fund, Armenia General Benevolent Union (AGBU), Izmirlian Foundation, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, UN SDG Fund.

**Photo Caption:** WFP Armenia participating in the field demonstration of experimental potato varieties organized by "Gyumri Breeding Station".