



WFP Armenia Country Brief

Highlights

WFP SAYS NO to GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

- The launch of the National Strategic Review in Armenia is scheduled for Monday 15 January 2018.
- Yerevan to receive a new loan from the German Development Bank (KfW) worth \$93 million to assist with budgetary expenditures.
- World Bank provided further support to the development of Armenia's irrigation systems through a \$2 million loan for the Additional Financing of the Irrigation System Enhancement Project.

WFP Assistance

Sustainable School Feeding in Armenia	Total Requirements (in USD)	Total Received (in USD)	6 Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)*
DEV 200128 (2010 - 2017)	30.3 m	29.1 m (96%)	-
Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan	5.5 m	n.a.	

*December 2017 – May 2018 - based on projected requirements under the TICSP

Using either in-kind or cash modality, WFP provides hot nutritious meals for 180 days of the school year to 60,000 primary school children, in 566 schools, in six out of Armenia's ten provinces. This represents 40 percent of the primary student population in Armenia (not including the capital Yerevan). The objective is to support the food security for these children; provide a safety net for their families; and address Armenia's nutritional concerns. Additionally, WFP distributes take-home entitlements to 1,700 kitchen staff involved in the daily preparation of school meals, allowing them to receive either food or cash entitlements calculated for a family of five. This contributes to the economic and social empowerment of unemployed women from local communities, as the food entitlements are often the only source to cover the daily food needs of their household.

Operating exclusively through cash-based transfers (CBT), the government-led portion of the programme covers 30,000 schoolchildren in 340 schools in four provinces: Syunik, Vayots Dzor, Ararat, and Tavush. Both WFP and the government programme cover primary school children from grades 1-4.

The recent transfer of funds from WFP to the new national Sustainable School Feeding Foundation (SSFF) provided WFP with an opportunity to foster the transfer of knowledge and training. This, in turn, facilitated the broadening and scaling-up of daily work with the Government on all aspects of programme implementation. Furthermore, with the technical support of WFP's cooperating partner, Social and Industrial Food Services Institute (SIFI), the Government is focused on further handover, which should be completed by 2023, with the aim of strengthening government capacity to deliver nutritious, locally sourced school meals in Armenia.

During the initial phase of the hand-over in 2014, government-led schools implemented dry instead of hot feeding, mostly providing biscuits and juice to children. However, as of May 2017, thanks to WFP's assistance around 67 percent of schools in these provinces have moved to providing hot, nutritious meals. Compared to a snack modality, hot feeding provides multiple health benefits, including dietary diversity and rich source of micronutrients. Lessons learned from the initial hand-over revealed the need for a gradual approach with adequate forward planning and targeted capacity development activities to prevent reversing the programme quality.

In Tavush, the Government and WFP agreed on a transitional model combining a set of activities to prepare for a smooth handover. In addition to introducing cash transfers, the SSFF, WFP, and SIFI deliver tailored trainings to school headmasters and teachers. This initiative will improve school infrastructure, provide kitchen equipment, and enable state and non-state partners to coordinate interventions for nutrition, hygiene and sanitation, school rehabilitation, finance and education. This successful and innovative model implemented will be replicated in other provinces.

WFP's vision is to gradually transition to a home-grown school meals approach, linking schools to farmers, providing fresh and locally sourced food to children, thus boosting the local economy.

Alongside WFP's strategic partnerships with the Government and other UN agencies, it has continued to build operational partnerships with international financial institutions, including the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) and research institutions, like International Food Policy Research Institute, London School of Economics, and Ca

In Numbers

60,000 primary school children reached

1,700 kitchen helpers assisted with family entitlements

People Assisted November 2017



Main Photo Credit: Vladimir Malkhasyan, field monitor WFP Armenia
Caption: Schoolchildren having a meal at school prepared with the help of WFP representatives during a school visit.



November 2017

Operational Updates

- **Official launch of the National Strategic Review (NSR) in Armenia:** The launch of the National Strategic Review in Armenia is scheduled for 15 January 2018. The official launch will conclude a year-long consultative process of thorough analysis led by the Government of Armenia and supported by both Armenian and international partners. The review focused on how to achieve the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 2 on "ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture". The meeting will present the recommendations of the review and highlight the state of food security and nutrition in Armenia. His Excellency Vice Prime Minister, Mr. Vache Gabrielyan will chair the panel. He will be joined by the Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, and the Lead Convener of the review. The Director General of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and WFP Director of Policy and Programme in HQ will also be in attendance.
- **Yerevan to receive USD 93 million German loan:** The Armenian government announced on November 9 that the German Development Bank (KfW) will provide a soft loan of 80 million-euro (USD 93 million) to support government efforts to improve waste management and introduce a national system of agricultural insurance in Armenia... This "budgetary support loan" will be disbursed in two equal instalments this year and next year. Agricultural insurance is increasingly seen as a vital necessity in Armenia where thousands of subsistence farmers lose their crops each year due to hailstorms, droughts, and other natural disasters. Since 1998, KfW has financed hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of projects in Armenia's energy, finance, healthcare, real estate, and water supply sectors. Ongoing projects include the construction of a new power transmission line that will connect Armenia to Georgia and the building a first-ever energy-efficient office complex in Yerevan.
- **The World Bank provides additional support to the development of Armenia's irrigation systems:** More than 630 Armenian farmers will directly benefit from improved water service delivery, thanks to a USD 2.5 million loan as additional financing to the Irrigation System Enhancement Project, signed on 14 November by the Government of Armenia and the World Bank. The financing aims to further assist the Government in its efforts to ensure efficient, cost effective, and sustainable irrigation, through reduced use of energy and improved timing of water supply. The World Bank country manager in Armenia highlighted that the Bank's intervention since 2013, will decrease water shortages experienced by farmers, increase reliability of water supply and timely delivery – allowing for an increase in productivity, while the reconstructed tertiary system will provide farmers with a choice of on-farm technologies, such as drip irrigation. The on-going construction of the new Baghramyan-Norakert gravity scheme will deliver water to about 573 hectares of agricultural land, helping 635 farmers in the cultivation of their crops. The project has also completed the construction of the Meghri and Geghardalich gravity schemes, while Kaghstrashen is underway. Expected outcomes include energy savings of about 36.4 million kilowatt hours (kw/h) annually, equivalent to about 30% of the total irrigation needs in Armenia, while reducing water losses by about 23 million cubic meters annually.

Country Background & Strategy



Armenia is a landlocked country and highly vulnerable to external shock factors, including global economic downturn and conflicts. Border closures with neighbouring Turkey and Azerbaijan since Armenia's independence in 1991 have constrained the economic development of the state. According to the latest [National Statistical Service](#) data, the poverty rate reached 29.8 percent of the population in 2015. Armenia's HDI, which stands at 0.743, remains low compared to the average HDI of neighbouring countries in the region, according to the latest data from the IMF.

WFP established its presence in Armenia in 1993 with an emergency operation. During 1999, the emergency operation was replaced with a protracted relief and recovery operation. Since 2010, the Programme has shifted to development assistance, through Development Project 200128 – 'Development of Sustainable School Feeding'. Aligned with government priorities, WFP continues to support the ongoing development of a National sustainable school feeding programme.

Based on the [Comprehensive Food Security, Vulnerability and Nutrition Analysis \(CFSVNA\)](#) conducted in March 2016, WFP proposes to keep the focus on school meals, with a potential expansion to social protection programming around disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness. The results of National Zero Hunger Strategic Review, anticipated to be endorsed by the Government in January, will shape the Country Strategic Plan of WFP from 2019 onwards.

Population: **2.97 million**

2016 Human Development Index:
84 out of 188

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **19% of children between 0-59 months**

Donors

Russian Federation, Republic of Armenia and Israel

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