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25 years

ARMENIA-UN: 25 YEARS IN THE UNITED FAMILY OF NATIONS

2017
Dear Friends,

Welcome to the story of the UN in Armenia. This year we mark the 25th anniversary of Armenia’s membership to the United Nations as well as the establishment of UN Office in Armenia. The brochure contains a rich array of information and is intended both as a resource and a source for inspiration for others who wish to improve the quality of life for all. It also shows how the UN operates and has impacted the country. It may be useful to our partners, Government, civil society, the private sector, donors, NGOs, and, most crucially, the people of Armenia.

The brochure documents the work of 14 UN agencies. The work they have accomplished touches every walk of Armenian life, from the biggest industries to the smallest farmlands, from the chambers of executive Government to the local town hall, from the refugees that make their home in here to the Armenian migrants who look abroad to make their livelihoods.

With its extraordinary reach, the UN Country Team is known for its conviction towards participatory forms of development and for pioneering innovative solutions to long-standing challenges. The solutions developed by this country office have resonated all around the world, making our staff some of the most knowledgeable and sought-after in their fields.

The future of the “UN in Armenia” revolves around the implementation of the SDGs, an ambitious agenda that seeks to end poverty and hunger, achieve gender equality, promote wellbeing and environment protection, ensure rule of law and maintain peace. And at the heart of this new global agenda is a simple, yet life-changing principle, which we apply every day here in Armenia: leave no one behind.

Do not forget: Armenia is a part of the UN and the UN is part of Armenia. Armenia plays a pro-active role moving the global development agenda, like the SDGs, and it is giving a lot of credit to the country. We are confident that this will continue well into the future.

We offer our thanks and gratitude to all of our partners – across Government, its Ministries and Agencies, and among the development community – with whom we share a common interest and common goals in supporting the people of Armenia.

Bradley Busetto
United Nations Resident Coordinator
Armenia, 2017
ARMENIA AT A GLANCE

Armenia, that will transition into a fully parliamentary republic in April 2018, is a small, landlocked country located in the South Caucasus. It has a population of around 3 million people and is classified in the lower-middle income bracket, with a poverty rate of around 29%.

With a GDP per capita of USD $3,898, the Armenian economy is heavily dependent on private remittances from abroad. Today, the Government is prioritizing the expansion of exportable sectors, support to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and increasing its trade with neighboring countries, the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), which Armenia joined in 2015, and the European Union (EU).

Armenia has taken several strides forward under the MDGs. In particular, the country made substantive advancements in reducing child mortality and improving maternal health. Armenia is among the polio-free and malaria-free countries, has eliminated mother-to-child transmission of HIV. As Armenia looks towards the SDGs, this progress needs to be translated in other areas too.

Despite some improvements related to gender equality, Armenia still ranks 125th in political empowerment of women and 143rd in health and survival of women (out of 144 countries studied). Though some success has been achieved in tackling corruption, particularly in the tax and customs administrations, close relationships within political and business circles continue to raise concerns about undue influence.

Unemployment affects a significant portion of the labour force, with rates especially high outside the capital and among youth. As a result, high rates of outward migration persist, with approximately 30,000 people leaving the country each year. Additional reforms are needed to enhance judicial independence, government transparency, and the protection of human rights.

Armenia is prone to a variety of natural disasters, which places 80 percent of its inhabitants at high risk of exposure to catastrophic events. Uncontrolled logging that took place in the early 1990s has led to deforestation, erosion and soil degradation, placing further strains on the agricultural sector. Unsustainable practices and use of natural resources continue.

As with many other countries, Armenia is also at risk to global climate change, being classified as a highly vulnerable country. An increase in temperatures and a decline in precipitation has already been observed, which contributes to desertification and forest fires. This, in turn, will result in the decline of agricultural productivity and loss of vegetation and wildlife.

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Mandate
The mandate of UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is to support members in their efforts to ensure that people have regular access to enough high-quality food. We can help by supporting policies and political commitments that promote food security and good nutrition and by making sure that up-to-date information about hunger and malnutrition challenges and solutions is available and accessible.

FAO in Armenia
In the framework of Country Programme Framework for 2016-20 period, the Government of Armenia and FAO have agreed to work together in three priority areas:

- Sustainable use of natural resources, disaster risk reduction and management;
- Animal health, plant protection and food safety;
- Food and nutrition security and poverty reduction.

These priority areas will increase the competitiveness of farmers, foresters and fisher folks and improve rural livelihood. It addresses technical, social and economic aspects, recognizing and addressing the needs of women and men at different stages of life, and the needs of the most disadvantaged.

Achievements/interventions for 2017

ENPARD Technical Assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture
Within the framework of ENPARD project, FAO is providing technical assistance to Armenia in four key areas:

- Institutional development and policy harmonization support
- Agricultural production and sustainable natural resource use and management
- Improving rural capacities and infrastructure
- Agricultural census and statistical development.

The project supports access to available and affordable food by sustainably increasing agricultural productivity as well as by more effectively managing natural resources. Under this component, the project has established 6 demonstration farms on conservation agriculture and organized workshops on zero tillage/conservation agriculture. Within the project 51 training courses on business-oriented cooperation have been organized in 122 communities.

Technical and Institutional Support to Veterinary Services in Armenia

In the framework of the pilot project 40,534 heifer calves and 154,568 sheep and goats have been vaccinated in 109 communities of the Syunik region of Armenia. The result of coverage survey among the vaccinated small ruminants indicates that the vaccination campaign was thoroughly implemented and vaccinated animals have sufficient level of immune response. The project has identified a more efficient system of controlling brucellosis in animals, which will lead to limitation of the infection risk in humans, in addition to serving as a useful model for a future sustainable National Brucellosis Control Programme.

Apricot and Grape Collection Orchards

FAO has supported Armenia in establishing apricot and grape collection orchards on six ha of land pertaining to more than 80 varieties of apricots and 285 varieties of grapes to conduct demonstration orchards in regions throughout the country. Besides collecting and conserving the genetic resources, the project fosters the sustainable basis of the fruit production in the country. Phylloxera-resistant rootstocks cuttings were imported from Italy as well as cuttings of European grape varieties and new mother vineyard and nursery were established. The collection orchards will be open to all scientists and researchers as well as producers. The application of the new agricultural technology, which includes a drip irrigation system and hail prevention net, also increase farmers’ incomes and create a sustainable basis for the implementation of future selection activities. The project contributes to the sustainable development of agriculture in the country through establishing the basis for improvement and modernization of the grape and apricot production sector with possible future significant output to food security, employment opportunities and income generation.
Mandate

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is a UN specialized agency which seeks the promotion of social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights. The ILO was founded in 1919 and became the first specialized agency of the United Nations in 1946. ILO Headquarters are located in Geneva, Switzerland.

The ILO has four principle strategic objectives:

- To promote and realize standards and fundamental principles and rights at work;
- To create greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment;
- To enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all;
- To strengthen tripartism and social dialogue.

The ILO has a unique tripartite structure in the United Nations, in which employers’ and workers’ representatives – the “social partners” of the economy – have an equal voice with those of governments in shaping its policies and programmes. Similarly, the ILO encourages tripartite cooperation at the national level. National tripartite social dialogue brings together government, workers and employers to discuss public policies, laws and other decision-making that affect the social partners.

ILO in Armenia: recent developments

The ILO activities in Armenia are coordinated by the ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (the Office is located in Moscow). They are supported by the ILO National Coordinator in Yerevan. Apart from Armenia, the Office covers nine other countries of the region. Priorities for the cooperation between the ILO and Armenia have been formulated and agreed upon by the ILO and its constituents - government, employers’ and workers’ organizations. The priority areas of cooperation are improvement of employment policies, labour relations regulation and social partnership. Armenia has ratified 29 ILO Conventions, including all 8 Fundamental Human Rights Conventions.

The ILO provides continuous support to the Government in development and implementation of active programmes boosting employment, in better matching labour market needs and skills development. Methodological support has been provided on monitoring and evaluation of public employment programmes. Voluntary peer review on Youth Employment Policies of Armenia was conducted by the Russian Federation relevant bodies based on the National report on Youth Employment, resulting in policy recommendations. Training of 75 employment specialists on conducting needs assessment of people with disabilities was organized. Discussion on opportunities for skills upgrade in relevance with existing job opportunities was held.

In order to help the Armenian authorities in a reform of its public wage policy system, ILO has elaborated a sound public pay policy paper, which aims at providing a comprehensive analysis of the current public pay practice by examining the wage levels and structures. Methodological support was provided on development of premiums and bonuses system for public servants.

Through the implementation of the methodology Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises (EESE), the ILO has assessed the business climate in Armenia. As a result, the National EESE report has been published, providing recommendations and guidelines for further support policy development on EESE and enterprise development involving key actors in Armenia, such as Government bodies, employers’ representatives, business sector and trade unions.

Armenia has actively supported ILO Centenary Future of Work Initiative, having conducted tripartite plus national dialog and contributed with a research paper on Future of Work.

Development of the new Decent Work Country Programme between the ILO and Armenia is currently under discussion.
Mandate
Established in 1951, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) (UN Migration Agency since 2016) is the leading international organization in the field of migration. With 166 member states, and states holding observer status, IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. IOM works to promote international cooperation on migration issues, to assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people.

IOM works in the four broad areas of migration management: (i) Migration and development; (ii) Facilitating migration; (iii) Regulating migration; (iv) Forced migration.

IOM in Armenia
The Republic of Armenia became an IOM Member State in 1993. Since then IOM has been playing an important role in reforms of migration management in Armenia through extensive capacity building, advising and shaping policy, research, technical assistance, public awareness as well as direct assistance to various categories of migrants.

IOM has been offering advisory services migration-related issues to the RA Government to assist it in development, implementation and management of migration policy and legislation.

Within the overall context of managing migration IOM also supports member states in their fight against trafficking and provides direct support to the victims.

In Armenia, IOM supported the legislation development, training of state officials, lobbied for the inclusion of an article criminalizing human trafficking into the Criminal Code, for ratification of the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols. Thanks to IOM support counter trafficking theme is part of the high school curriculum and teachers in all schools of Armenia are trained to teach the topic using modern training techniques.

The IOM approach to international labour migration is to foster the synergies between labour migration and development, and to promote legal avenues of labour migration as an alternative to irregular migration, support the governments to promote safe labour migration practices. In this context, both, IOM and the Armenian Government are keen to improve outreach to migrants and ensure timely, up-to-date information.

To this end, since 2010 IOM supported State Employment Agency of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in establishment of the Migration Resource Centers, development of the information sharing policy and migrant outreach tools, such as “iMigrant” multidimensional portal, to protect migrant workers and to optimize the benefits of labour migration.

Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration is indispensable part of a comprehensive approach to migration management aiming at orderly and humane return and reintegration of migrants. It requires the cooperation and participation of a broad range of actors, including the migrants, civil society and the governments in both host and transit countries and countries of origin. The partnerships created by IOM and a diverse range of national and international stakeholders are essential to the effective implementation of AVRR – from the return to successful reintegration. About 2,000 migrants from more than 15 countries were assisted with the return and reintegration in Armenia.

Socio-economic inclusion of migrants and local vulnerable groups is a priority direction for the IOM. In Armenia, more than 3,400 persons have completed training in micro-business management and business planning; over 9,900 loans, amounting to more than USD 8.5 million have been extended; this has served 5,500 direct beneficiaries, loan recipients as well as persons employed; 3,600 businesses (out of which 55 per cent are women-run businesses) have been supported.
UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Mandate

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) was created in December 1991 by General Assembly Resolution 46/182. OCHA improves levels of preparedness through early warning and contingency planning, ensuring the inclusion of all relevant key humanitarian partners. OCHA makes sure that the entire humanitarian community is well prepared for slow- or sudden-onset emergencies and joins efforts to assist affected people.

In slow- or sudden-onset disasters or crises, OCHA provides specialized support to country offices and partners within its areas of expertise, including surge teams, emergency response coordination, information management, advocacy and resource mobilization.

UNOCHA Regional Office for Caucasus, Central Asia and Ukraine

The OCHA Regional Office for the Caucasus, Central Asia and Ukraine (ROCCA) is based in Almaty, Kazakhstan. It covers nine countries highly exposed to natural and man-made disasters including Armenia.

In 2011, OCHA ROCCA assumed monitoring role in the Caucasus. In 2012, the office expanded to fully cover the region, including Armenia. In February 2013, OCHA ROCCA National Disaster Response Adviser position was established in Yerevan. Since then, OCHA has actively engaged the in country humanitarian community consolidated within the frames of Disaster Management Country Team (DMCT), facilitating the inter-agency emergency response preparedness process and related follow-up activities.

Activities and Achievements in Armenia

OCHA in Armenia supports the United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC) in her/his role of the Chair of DMCT. OCHA ensures constant consultancy and information flow with national disaster management authorities on disaster related information and DMCT performance.

OCHA facilitates coordination of partners mandated with humanitarian assistance at national and international levels, and raises awareness among NGOs, the UN, components of Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the Government of the tools, services and coordination mechanisms available for emergency preparedness and response.

Strengthening DMCT Response Preparedness and Response Capacity

OCHA supported the roll-out of inter-agency Emergency Response Preparedness (ERP) framework in Armenia aimed at enhancing emergency preparedness and response capacity of in-country humanitarian community including:

- establishment of regular risk analysis and monitoring system
- ensuring DMCT minimum response preparedness capacity
- enhancing DMCT information management capacity through creation of Armenia Common Operational Data (COD) set and introducing country specific humanitarian needs assessment methodology
- application of sector (cluster) based coordination mechanisms and procedures
- mapping DMCT emergency response capacity and standing mechanisms.

Facilitating Government's Emergency Management Capacity Building Efforts

With OCHA support the Armenia Government succeeded in enhancing its emergency management capacity by introducing international disaster relief standards and joining international response coordination mechanisms:

- In 2015 the rescue team of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of Armenia passed the external classification and joined the INSARAG (International Search and Rescue Advisory Group) community.
- In 2016 Armenia joined the UN-Government customs model agreement on the simplification of customs procedures for humanitarian action.
- Provisions of International Disaster Relief Law (IDRL) integrated into the newly developed and endorsed by the Government National Disaster Risk Management (NDRM) strategy and implementation plan.

Emergency response

In response to Armenia Government request for emergency assessment mission OCHA facilitated the deployment of international experts' team at the Nairit chemical plant. In the view of recent fairs which triggered the Government's request experts assessed the situation with big quantity of hazardous chemicals remaining in the Soviet time chemical giant providing recommendations for the prevention / mitigation of risk of possible major disasters.
UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

Mandate
The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) represents the world’s commitment to universal ideals of human dignity. It has a unique mandate from the international community to promote and protect all human rights.

The High Commissioner for Human Rights is the principal human rights official of the United Nations.

The High Commissioner heads OHCHR and spearheads the United Nations’ human rights efforts. OHCHR offers leadership, works objectively, educates and takes action to empower individuals and assists States in upholding human rights.

OHCHR is part of the United Nations Secretariat with headquarters in Geneva.

OHCHR in the Southern Caucasus sub-region
A strong understanding has been reached with the UN Country Teams of the Sub-region on the necessity of firmly incorporating human rights concerns within the country programming. To facilitate this process in 2006, a Senior Human Rights Adviser has been deployed within the UNCT in Georgia to work on all three countries in the South Caucasus region.

The work of the Senior Human Rights Adviser will be centered around the following areas:

- Activities will take place in the framework of the implementation of recommendations of the relevant international human rights mechanisms as well as targeted through technical advice for the amendment of legislation or the design of policies and implementing strategies. Priority areas include the administration of justice, support to National Human Rights Institutions and the protection of vulnerable groups.
- A comprehensive assessment of national development plans/ poverty reduction strategy papers, as well as of UNCTs’ programmes will be conducted. On the basis of this assessment, activities will be designed to further incorporate human rights-based approaches into poverty reduction and economic development strategies.
- At request of Governments, capacity to address human rights issues will be strengthened through trainings and workshops.
UN Programme on HIV/AIDS

Mandate
The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) leads and inspires the world to achieve its shared vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths. UNAIDS unites the efforts of 11 UN organizations – UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, UN Women, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank – and works closely with global and national partners to maximize results for the AIDS response.

UNAIDS has a polite vision: zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination, zero AIDS-related deaths.

Mission
UNAIDS objectives are:

- Provide global leadership in response to the epidemic;
- Achieve and promote global consensus on policy and programmatic approaches;
- Strengthen the capacity of the United Nations system to monitor trends and ensure that appropriate and effective policies and strategies are implemented at the country level;
- Strengthen the capacity of national Governments to develop comprehensive national strategies and implement effective HIV/AIDS activities at the country level;
- Promote broad-based political and social mobilization to prevent and respond to HIV/AIDS within countries, ensuring that national responses involve a wide range of sectors and institutions;
- Advocate greater political commitment in responding to the epidemic at the global and country levels, including the mobilization and allocation of adequate resources for HIV/AIDS-related activities.

In fulfilling these objectives, the UNAIDS collaborates with national Governments, intergovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations, groups of people living with HIV/AIDS, and United Nations system organizations.

UNAIDS in Armenia
AIDS response as a priority area for the UN system since 2004, and HIV continues as a priority in the new five-year UN Partnership for Development Framework 2016-2020 for Armenia.

UNAIDS provides technical support and policy advice to accelerate a multi-sectoral, comprehensive and inclusive response to HIV/AIDS in Armenia. Closely cooperating with national institutions, civil society and other international organizations, UNAIDS assists Armenia in achieving Universal Access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support, and contributes to the attainment of its Sustainable Development Goals. UNAIDS aims at helping Armenia to achieve the most effective and efficient use of resources, to ensure rapid action and results-based management and to strengthen national ownership of the response.

UNAIDS assisted Armenia to:

- Collect and use information on the epidemic and response to produce results. Improved information guided use of resources from the Global Fund to Fast-Track action and ensure programmatic sustainability.
- Revise and adopt legislation on human health rights which repealed travel restrictions for HIV living people, removed mandatory testing and work related limitations.
- Eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV as a public health problem.
- Conduct allocative efficiency analysis to reduce costs and enhance the reach and impact of HIV prevention, treatment, care and support activities.
- Access and make the best use of Global Fund resources in support of accelerated national HIV responses (including through strategic information and convening country dialogues).
- Assess the transition readiness of the country and mobilize necessary domestic resources.
- Develop and use innovative HIV prevention technologies, promote community awareness of and support for new innovations, and examine broader HIV testing methods, such as peer-assisted testing and self-testing.
- Increase the access of young people and migrants to HIV information and prevention services.
United Nations Development Programme

Mandate
UNDP helps countries to develop policies, leadership skills, partnering abilities, institutional capabilities and build resilience to sustain development results.

UNDP in Armenia
UNDP has been working to accelerate the development of Armenia for almost 25 years. It works at the upstream policy level, advising on legal and policy frameworks, and implements downstream initiatives, turning projects into policies and policies into actions. UNDP also has enormous reach across the country - in rural and urban areas and amongst a growing network of youth, innovators, and social entrepreneurs.

Vision
UNDP’s vision for Armenia’s development includes a reform-oriented Government keen to adopt and implement policies in line with the global Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development, including the national adaptation and implementation of Sustainable Development Goals; a diversified economy with a focus on agricultural sector; climate resilient infrastructure with application of energy-efficient practices; and an open governance system with effective implementation of human rights legislation.

Achievements
Helped increase transparency of voting in polling stations during April 2017 election: With the support of the EU and the Governments of the US, UK, Germany, and Armenia, UNDP procured 4,000 voter authentication devices and helped to develop software, which was used during 2017 National Assembly and Yerevan City Council elections in all polling stations.

Launched the first social innovation lab in the region: EU funded Kolba Innovations Lab, through its flagship incubation project, has received 730 ideas, and incubated 40 startups, 16 of which have generated a social impact within government, the civic and business sectors in Armenia.

Upgraded and modernized three Armenia-Georgia border crossing points: With the generous financial support of the EU and the EIB, UNDP ensured simplified procedures and reduced waiting times for travellers and secure movement of goods across borders.

Co-organized the very first global summit on impact investment for development: In partnership with INSEAD’s Social Impact Initiative, UNDP hosted 230 impact business leaders, social entrepreneurs, venture philanthropists, development organizations, government and academia representatives from 34 countries, creating a new platform for collaboration between all stakeholders.

Supported sustainable income for over 75,000 beneficiaries in more than 150 communities: Through UNDP projects, residents have access to new income-generating initiatives in sectors, such as agro and food processing, tourism, and construction industries, resulting in more than 20 present increase in their overall income.

Pioneered e-governance projects: In 2003, UNDP with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched the eVisa portal, the second such portal in the world at a time, and created an online payment system for public utilities, which is still in use.

Modernized street lighting in 12 cities of Armenia, including Mashtots and Isakov avenues in Yerevan: The new energy efficient system generated 1300MWh annual energy savings, averaging 60 percent cost efficiency. Revolving municipal funds were established in each city to ensure transparent and targeted use of savings for expansion of similar activities under the cities’ ownership.

Spurred energy efficiency in public and residential buildings: UNDP supported the Government in promoting energy efficiency in buildings through amendments of 2 laws, 2 new building codes and 8 national standards.

Helped establish national and local 911 centers: UNDP supported the development of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy and Action Plan, as well as provided various grassroots assistance, such as installation of 88,000 square meters of anti-hail nets in two regions.

Turned hundreds of innovative green economy ideas from communities and NGOs into action: UNDP rehabilitated over 7,000 ha of farmlands and grasslands, increased the reuse of more than 4 tons of plastic waste and reduced CO2 emissions by 120 tons annually, as well as protected 64 endangered species, through the GEF Small Grants Programme in Armenia.
Mandate
UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is the lead UN agency for delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, and every young person’s potential is fulfilled.

UNFPA in Armenia
UNFPA has launched its activities in Armenia in 1999, concentrating its assistance in following three mandated areas: reproductive health and rights, population and development strategies, and gender equality. UNFPA pays special attention to the issues of young people, working also through Y-PEER Armenia network.

Partnerships
Among its main counterparts are the Government ministries and agencies, the National Assembly, the National Statistical Service, medical and educational institutions, faith-based and civil society organizations, academia, and the donor community including other UN Agencies, EU, USAID, OSCE, British Council, World Vision and others.

The vision for 2016-2020
- ensure uninterrupted progress in regards with International Conference on Population and Development/Sustainable Development Goals agenda in four key areas:
  a) sexual and reproductive health;
  b) adolescents and youth;
  c) gender equality and reproductive rights; and
  d) population dynamics;

in a context of:
- lower-middle-income country still with high levels of poverty (30 per cent) and income distribution inequality (Gini index of 31.5);
- in a politically and security-wise unstable region;
- with shrinking resources and donor base;
- using three key strategies:
  a) advocacy;
  b) policy dialogue/advice;
  c) generating evidence for policy development;

Major achievements in 25 years
- Identification, study and wide scale advocacy against prenatal sex selection in Armenia leading to adoption of national program to combat prenatal sex selection. Since the time of intervention, the sex-at-birth ratio has dropped from 114 boys/100 girls to 112 boys/100 girls.
- Establishment of “Traveling Gynecologist” and “Rapid Response System” in the country for hard-to-reach and poor areas and introduction of evidence-based guidelines on maternal care contributed to decrease of maternal mortality ratio from 43.2 per 100,000 live births (1999-2001) to 19.6 (2013-2015).
- Establishment of 75 family planning units in the country, which provide medical counseling service and modern contraceptives that supported: the increase of the modern contraceptive prevalence rate from 22 per cent (2000) to 28 per cent (2015-2016); and decline of the abortion rate from 81 abortions per 1000 women aged 15-44 (2000) to 21 (2015-2016).
- Ensuring implementation of Armenia Population Censuses
- Training of more than 1000 obstetrician-gynecologists and midwives to provide up-to-date and quality maternal care services to women in Armenia.
- Development of the RoA law on Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights
- Supported the implementation of Demographic and Health Survey in 2005 and 2010.
- Supported development of a number of policy instruments and institutional mechanisms for promoting gender equality and combating GBV in Armenia.
- Reached more than 19,000 boys and men, girls and women, 3,400 newly-weds and 4,700 soldiers of army and sensitized them on issues of gender stereotypes, gender norms, gender-based violence and family values in the framework of faith-based organizations-UNFPA collaboration.

Conducted several important and unique studies/researches for guiding state policy in gender field.
The Representation of the UNHCR established its presence in Armenia in December
1992 in response to the request from the Government of Armenia to assist with the
mass influx of 360,000 ethnic Armenian refugees from Azerbaijan who fled to Armenia
due to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. While some of them left Armenia for other
countries, the majority of the refugees acquired Armenian citizenship and were largely
able to rebuild their lives in Armenia (some 1500 displaced from this group still hold de-jure refugee status). In the early years of its operation, UNHCR’s work concentrated on meeting the vital assistance needs of the refugees from Azerbaijan, such as, housing and infrastructure. However, some gaps remain as to durable housing solutions. Subsequently, the office engaged in capacity building and the development of an effective asylum system in Armenia. Nowadays, the office also engages in the development of projects aiming at the social and economic integration of refugees through strengthening of their self-reliance by way of vocational and ‘how to do business in Armenia’ training, promotion of employment and social entrepreneurship, as well as provision of income generation grants and micro-credits. These integration efforts are complemented by assistance projects providing rental subsidies, one-time allowances to address specific needs (e.g. for relocation to private housing market or winter specific needs) and complementary health/elderly care. Since 2004, Armenia has received hundreds of primarily ethnic Armenian refugees from Iraq and small numbers of asylum-seekers and refugees from other countries in the Middle East, Africa and Asia. The tragic conflict in Syria has resulted in the displacement of over 22,000 primarily ethnic Armenians from Syria to Armenia of whom at the beginning of 2017, about 15,000 remained in the country. Most of these refugees bring with them good education and handicraft skills, entrepreneurial experience and a well-developed business culture. Thus, they can contribute meaningfully to the further development of the Armenian economy and the society. UNHCR together with other actors, including development actors (such as the German Development Agency ‘GIZ’), Diaspora organisations (such as AGBU, Gulbenkian Foundation, AMAA, ARS, Ani & Narod Foundation/ Armenian Redwood project, IDEA Foundation), and a number of international and local NGOs, is supporting the government efforts to make best use of this potential and to facilitate the multi-faceted integration process of those displaced from Syria. The impact of these efforts can well be noticed in every day’s life as restaurants, cafés, artistic, including jewelry work, and other services operated by displaced Syrians have widened Yerevan’s cultural, service and culinary scene and significantly contributed to the expansion of tourism. Similar integration efforts are undertaken with regard to the about 217 refugees who fled to Armenia due to the conflict in Ukraine and were granted refugee status by the State Migration Service between 2014 to December 2016.

A recent challenge was the displacement of over 2,000 persons in consequence of the escalation of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in early April 2016. UNHCR promptly reached out and initiated a modest and targeted humanitarian response for vulnerable families; 1,429 persons (411 families) benefitted from UNHCR cash-based interventions. Fortunately, about ¼ of the displaced were able to return before the end of the year, while 160 families, primarily from the conflict affected village of Talish remain in Armenia and have been integrated in UNHCR’s general assistance schemes. Future challenges relate (i) to the adjustment of asylum capacities to evolving needs and the creation of a modern reception facility, (ii) to the conclusion of the integration process in particular of those displaced due to the conflict in Syria, while at the same time leaving the return option open for those families who wish to do so and once return would be possible in safety and dignity, (iii) to the mainstreaming of displaced population into future development plans and projects and the national ‘Armenia development strategy 2030’; and (iv) to the refinement of contingency planning and preparedness. Between the years of 1994 and 2016, UNHCR spent some USD 42 million for its operations in Armenia of which over USD 20 million was for shelter activities.
United Nations Children's Fund

Mandate
Active in more than 190 countries and territories, UNICEF is the world’s leading advocate for children. We promote the rights of every child, everywhere, in everything we do. By ‘every child,’ UNICEF means infants and adolescents, boys and girls alike. The UNICEF mandate covers all children below the age of 18, as per the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). In fact, all of our work is guided by the CRC and other relevant UN Conventions.

In 2016, UNICEF celebrated its 70th anniversary - seven decades of working tirelessly to give every child the best possible start in life and overcome the obstacles that poverty, violence, disease and discrimination place in a child’s path.

UNICEF in Armenia
UNICEF works in Armenia since 1994. UNICEF supports the Government of Armenia in the design and implementation of reforms to address gaps in the fulfilment of the rights of all children in Armenia, with a focus on the vulnerable and excluded.

In the past two decades, UNICEF has proudly supported Armenia to:

- Cut under-5 child mortality by half
- Protect children from preventable diseases through 90% immunization
- Eliminate measles, mother to child HIV transmission, and achieve polio-free status
- Eliminate iodine deficiency through universal salt iodization
- Expand access to preschool education
- Advance inclusive education for children with disabilities
- Integrate emergency preparedness in the national education agenda
- Establish foster care services for children without parental care, and
- Decrease the number of children in residential care and correctional facilities by 75 percent.

From 2016-2020, UNICEF will work to ensure that:

- Disadvantaged girls and boys aged 0-6 years and their families have access to quality and inclusive health care and nutrition services,
- Children with disabilities are included in the society and can exercise their right to quality education and rehabilitation,
- Out of school children are integrated in the education system,
- Every child has the opportunity to grow up in a family environment,
- Schools, families, and communities are resilient against disaster risks,
- The judicial system safeguards the best interests of the child,
- There is a child rights monitoring system in the country.

This agenda is built to contribute to Armenia’s Development Strategy 2014-2025 as well as a range of national programmes and strategies on human rights, child rights protection, education, and disaster risk reduction.

As a reliable partner and a strong, independent voice for children's rights, UNICEF promotes the inclusion of the most deprived children in national policies, convening partners around a child rights-based agenda and providing high-level international technical expertise.
Mandate
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) with its Headquarters in Vienna is recognized as a specialized agency in 1985. UNIDO aims to promote industrial development for poverty reduction, inclusive globalization and environmental sustainability.

UNIDO in Armenia
UNIDO Office in Armenia was established in 2005. However, cooperation with the Government of Armenia, particularly with the Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Nature Protection started much earlier with a provision of technical assistance in different areas, including investment promotion, SME development, hazardous waste management, cleaner production. It is worth mentioning that UNIDO was the first UN Agency who came to Armenian immediately after the devastating earthquake in 1988 and in partnership with Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) constructed the Refrigerator for food and agro-products in Gyumri in 1991-92.

UNIDO supports the Government of Armenia to upgrade and modernize the Textile Industry of Armenia through strengthening productivity, competitiveness and collective export capacities of Armenian manufacturing companies operating in the sector, maintain and improve the market share of local textile and clothing industry operators in domestic markets. As a result of this technical assistance, 25 beneficiary companies with over 1300 employees upgraded, over 130 professionals trained, Atex-Burgo fashion school established. high quality “5900 BC” fashion collections created, 50 new jobs created, Light Industry Public-Private Partnership model prepared.

Technical assistance was provided by UNIDO for productive activities of young entrepreneurs and start-ups in the context of SMEs development and job creation through providing financial and non-financial services. As a result, over 117 jobs created, high rate of repayment of loans and a positive revenue growth rate demonstrates that youth are credit worthy and capable of turning loans into profitable businesses.

UNIDO jointly with UNDP provides support to the development of the value chains through support of Agro-Processing Producer Groups for developing high value field crops, cheese, non-traditional vegetables, berries/fruits, and establish agro-processing and production capacities in remote and marginalized regions. First time in Armenia wide-scale buckwheat cultivation was initiated, 4 tunnel greenhouses with drip irrigation system were installed in Lori, two buckwheat hulling factories established in Gegharkunik and Shirak marzes.

UNIDO supports the Government of Republic of Armenia to implement the Stockholm Convention on the Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). It provides assistance to the Government by preparing National Reports for the Secretariat, and introducing Best Available Techniques and Best Environmental Practices (BAT/BEP) for the reduction of POPs from open-burning sources.

UNIDO provides support to the implementation of the Montreal Protocol on Ozone Depleting Substances by adopting alternative technologies for preservation of ozone layer, as well as strengthening national capacities in ratifying and fulfilling its obligations under the Minamata Convention.

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Inventory of mercury emissions from main sources was performed according to main categories (Fuels, Metals, Minerals, Consumer Products, Devises and Measuring Appliances with mercury and mercury compounds, etc.)

UNIDO has provided technical assistance in the introduction of cleaner production methods in mining, chemical and food industries. Currently, in the framework of the EU-supported Eastern Partnership EAP GREEN initiative, UNIDO is implementing activities aimed at promoting resource efficiency and cleaner production in Armenia, in particular, in the priority industry sectors, such as agro-food processing, chemicals and construction materials. The adopted methodology is one of the most important preconditions in the development of Armenian enterprises and in increasing their competitiveness in the international market. Current cycle of RECP in Armenia is actively working with SME sector in the regions through advancing RECP methodology.
Mandate
The United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI) is the public voice of the UN and the principal source of information about the United Nations system. It promotes global awareness and greater understanding of the work of the UN, using various communication tools including press, electronic and new media.

UNO/DPI in Armenia
The UN Department of Public Information Yerevan Office (UNO/DPI) was established in 1992 and is one of the 63 UN Information Centres, Services and Offices worldwide. Besides its global mandate, UNO/DPI Yerevan cooperates with the UN Country Team (UNCT) advocating its work in achieving the 2030 Development Agenda, promoting the Sustainable Development Goals.

The UNO/DPI acts as the Secretariat of the UN Communication Group (UNCG) aimed at uniting the efforts of the UN system in Armenia in communicating as one. This helps to increase visibility of the UN achievements and to promote its success stories by reaching out to the media, educational institutions and the civil society and bringing the core messages of the UN to the people in Armenia.

DPI achievements during the past 25 years
- Thousands of students (school or university level) have participated in education outreach activities and events, have taken part in commemoration of UN observances and thematic exhibitions and quizzes in and out of the UN House.
- Media partners have regularly received media advisories and press releases on global and local events, Secretary-General’s messages, op-eds, have participated in media contests, trainings locally and at HQ. For 9 years, a special course on UN is being taught for future journalists at YSU.
- Since the year 2000 thousands of young people have simulated the sessions of UN bodies, committees, commissions playing the roles of UN delegates in “Model UN” conferences. This extra-curricular activity is an excellent means to learn about the United Nations, its rules and procedures, improve negotiation and presentation skills and dive into international political affairs.
- National Library of Armenia and Yerevan State University host the UN Depository Libraries, while 17 UN Corners are suitably located in other university libraries and public sights.
- The current bilingual website is the 3rd edition with a bilingual Glossary of over 2,500 entries of terms and phrases, including acronyms, names of conventions and international agreements and a Virtual Library of about 500 electronic versions of locally produced UNCT publications.
- Social media platforms of UN Armenia are maintained and overseen by UNO/DPI. The daily bilingual updates and posts keep the almost 10,000 fans of UN Armenia Facebook page, 37,000 followers of the Tweeter account and 60,000 plus viewers of YouTube Channel up to date with UN Armenia and world UN news and information. A network of “Friends of UN” Facebook group with about 2,000 members is a useful platform to reach out to school and university students, teachers and parents.
- Starting the year 1999 hundreds of young and bright individuals have passed their internship in the Office and served as volunteers. This has provided them a good exposure to the United Nations enhancing their educational experience and gaining practice in the work of the Organization.

Staying loyal to the motto of the Department – “Inform, Engage, Act” the UNO/DPI Yerevan stands dedicated to communicating the ideals of the UN to the people by informing, engaging and acting.
Established in 1962, the World Food Programme (WFP) pursues a vision of a world in which every man, woman and child has access at all times to the food needed for an active and healthy life. Assisting 80 million people in around 80 countries each year, WFP is the leading humanitarian organization fighting hunger worldwide, delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience.

The WFP's Strategic Plan for 2017-2021 aligns the organization’s work to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a primary focus on SDG 2 on achieving zero hunger; and SDG 17, on partnering to support implementation of the SDGs.

WFP in Armenia

WFP's operation in Armenia began in 1993, following economic downturn that the country was going through in the aftermath of the break-up of the Soviet Union, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and a devastating earthquake of 1988. From 1993 to 2010, there were no less than ten emergency and recovery operations that included food assistance to refugees, displaced populations and vulnerable groups, as well as Food and Cash-for-Work, Food-for-Training, Winter Food Preservation projects.

Starting from 2010, WFP has shifted to development assistance with the “Development of Sustainable School Feeding” Project, which is funded by the Russian Federation. The project aims at improving children's access to primary education and establishing the foundations for a sustainable national programme, linking the local production with school feeding. Nutritious school feeding programmes are a long-term investment with strong economic, social and educational returns: for every USD 1 invested in school feeding of Armenia today, there is a USD 7.1 return in the future.

WFP is currently guiding the transition from a WFP-administered to a nationally-owned school feeding programme as it helps to strengthen the Government's capacity to implement and oversee a school feeding programme embedded in national policies and budgets. Since 2014, the Government of Armenia has gradually taken ownership of the programme in four provinces and there is an agreement with the Minister of Education and Science on a full operational handover of school feeding by 2023, at a rate of one province per year.

In the remaining six provinces outside of Yerevan city, WFP continues to provide hot nutritious meals 180 days out of the school year to 60,000 primary school children, which amounts to 80 percent of the primary school children in those provinces. The school feeding programme in Armenia plays a critical role in maintaining primary school students’ regular attendance while providing them with the essential energy and micronutrients they need to develop as productive adults.

The highlights of WFP’s achievements during the last 25 years:

- From 1993 to 2010, WFP implemented food assistance programmes worth USD 110 million covering average 228,000 beneficiaries annually;
- The overall budget of the “Development of Sustainable School Feeding” Project is USD 35.5 million (2010-2018), which brings WFP cumulative food assistance to a total of USD 145.5 million (1993-2018);
- Between 2015 and 2018, WFP will have provided kitchen equipment and school rehabilitation materials worth USD 1.2 million.
- Currently, around 90,000 primary school children benefit from the school feeding programme each year, out of which 60,000 directly assisted by WFP;
- The WFP administered project provides entitlements to 8,500 community members: mostly vulnerable households, whose members are involved in the preparation of food in schools.
- From 2010 to May 2017, more than 12,000 metric tons of food and USD 140,713 cash transfers has been delivered to schools.
- Between 2014 and 2017, WFP handed over the four provinces of Ararat, Vayots Dzor, Syunik and Tavush to the Government of Armenia under the state funded National School Feeding Programme. It is planned to hand over Shirak and Aragatsotn provinces in 2018 and 2019, respectively.
- In order to strengthen the Government’s capacity to oversee the national programme, a Cooperation Agreement worth USD 580,000 was signed between WFP and the “Sustainable School Feeding” Foundation, recently established by the Government.
- 99 school orchards are revitalised on school land plots.
- Over a dozen strategic and operational partnerships are established.
**Mandate**
The World Health Organization (WHO) is a technical organization working to attain the highest possible level of physical and mental health for all people around the world. The organization gives guidance on global health matters, maps and structures global health research agendas, sets norms and standards, and assists countries in considering their evidence-based options for the countries’ policies. WHO is the principle authority in assessing global and regional health trends, and supports countries in conducting monitoring for health situations. It takes the lead in the event of global public health emergencies, such as the H1N1 pandemic in 2009 and heads health clusters in disaster response and recovery.

WHO also amplifies global health concerns while collaborating with countries in voicing countries’ health concerns and messages.

WHO has 194 member countries and territories that shape its actions and policies. Each year, members convene in May to articulate concerns and initiatives in the World Health Assembly (WHA). Global policies and resolutions are decided in this forum, with members’ approval. WHO works to ensure the implementation of global agreements, and translate the resolutions into instruments adopted and implemented in national health programmes.

WHO is aware that health is a multi-sectoral issue and many other sectors – including the social, political and economic sectors – are closely interconnected with health. Therefore, WHO is a global health leader and facilitator that embraces collaborations with as many diverse partners as possible.

**WHO in Armenia**

The WHO Country Office represents the WHO in the country. It supports the Government of Armenia and the Ministry of Health (MoH) in assessing health issues and needs, making policies and strategies, planning, implementing and evaluating programmes. The CO channels all WHO assistance to the country, as well as the country requests, to the appropriate units in WHO Regional Office for Europe and WHO Headquarters in Geneva.

The main WHO partner in Armenia is the Ministry of Health. However, current strategies provide basis for active cooperation with the other ministries, RA National Assembly and other institutions and organizations, as well as educational and research centres, contributing to the health of the population.

In the country, WHO works with the MOH based on Biennial Collaborative Agreement (BCA). For 2016-2017, the BCA addresses the following programme areas:

WHO’s numerous programmes are divided into:
- Communicable diseases (tuberculosis, Hepatitis, HIV/AIDS/STIs, vaccine preventable diseases)
- Non-communicable diseases (mental health, nutrition)
- Promoting health through the life-course (child and maternal health)
- Health systems (public health, health policies, health finance, human resources, medicines, health systems information)
- Preparedness, surveillance and response (international health regulations, epidemic, pandemic disease, emergencies)
- Leadership and governance (partnership, communications)

**Major Achievements**
- Significant achievements were registered in reducing maternal and child mortality. Between 2005 and 2013, the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) declined from 37 to 18.5 deaths per 100,000, and infant mortality and under-five mortality rates dropped nearly two times since 1990.
- WHO validated Armenia’s status of elimination of mother-to-child transmission (EMTCT) of HIV infection.
- With WHO support Armenia achieved and maintained malaria and polio free status and strengthened surveillance of controlled infectious diseases.
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