



2020-2025 Country Development Cooperation Strategy Frequently Asked Questions

What is USAID's new CDCS?

USAID has released its Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) for 2020-2025, which serves as the strategic roadmap for how USAID will design and implement its projects and activities in Armenia for the next five years. To develop the CDCS, USAID conducted a rigorous process to examine past programming, incorporate the national capacity and commitment measures detailed in the Journey to Self-Reliance Roadmap, assess USAID's impact to date, and consult with key stakeholders, including Government of Armenia counterparts, the donor community, Implementing Partners, and regional beneficiaries. This new CDCS is designed to support Armenia on its journey to self-reliance.

Will the CDCS or USAID projects be affected by the recent 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh conflict?

The new CDCS was developed prior to the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh on September 27, 2020 and the subsequent ceasefire agreement on November 10, 2020. The conflict may have repercussions on the development outcomes outlined in the strategy and on projects; however, the strategy and USAID policy allow for a wide degree of flexibility for us to respond to urgent humanitarian needs when they arise. In the days following the outbreak of fighting in the autumn of 2020, USAID responded to Armenia's immediate needs by redirecting certain existing programs and securing additional resources to meet emerging challenges, and support government priorities. This assistance, totaling more than \$4 million (as of December 2020), supports humanitarian and health needs, helps displaced persons, and supports local governments and ministries to respond to citizens' needs during the crisis.

While USAID is confident that our programming and the CDCS can respond to unexpected changes and urgent needs in Armenia, the Mission will continue to monitor its potential impact and if needed, re-evaluate the strategic approach and make adjustments as necessary and relevant, in order to assist Armenia post conflict.

Will USAID provide support to respond to the COVID-19 crisis?

The U.S. Government has brought to bear additional resources to support the Government of Armenia's response to COVID-19, including additional funds for immediate response support in the health sector, programs that will strengthen the Government's capacity to control COVID-19 and other communicable disease outbreaks and emergencies of potential public health concern, and activities to address the social and economic impacts of the pandemic. USAID is continually assessing and adapting our existing programs to address the impact of the crisis, including developing new activities in order to support and maintain transparent and effective government institutions, address economic opportunities lost as a result of the crisis, and provide immediate care to the most marginalized and vulnerable populations in Armenia. The long-term impacts of COVID-19 are likely to be significant and will be considered as USAID develops programming throughout the new strategy period.

How is the new CDCS different from the previous one?

USAID's goal for the new CDCS is to build Armenia's capacity and further its commitment to self-reliance so that it **seizes the opportunity to strategically transition to a more inclusive, democratic, and economically resilient partner**. The new CDCS aligns with the Government of Armenia's 2050 National Transformation Strategy and directly supports at least six of the Government's sector strategies. USAID will continue to support Democracy & Governance and Economic Growth initiatives, which was a hallmark of its previous CDCS. But USAID will *engage differently*, leveraging the opportunities made possible by the Government's commitment to reform.

Why is the CDCS still relevant given how much has happened in Armenia in 2020?

The CDCS continues to align with Armenia's national priorities and supports Armenia's pursuit of democratic stability, economic prosperity and an engaged citizenry as cornerstones of a peaceful and sovereign nation. Further, the CDCS will be adapted to new development priorities should they arise in the coming months and years. Key priorities, including a focus on **anti-corruption, judicial reform, electoral and political reform, an improved business enabling environment, and key sectors of the economy, workforce, energy and water**, will continue to be critical for Armenia's stability, sovereignty and development.

How did USAID decide which sectors it would focus on?

Developing the CDCS was an 11-month process. USAID analyzed the Journey to Self-Reliance Roadmap (J2SR) to identify gaps in Armenia's Capacity and Commitment measures that would allow for targeted programming; solicited feedback and input from a wide range of partners and stakeholders including the Government of Armenia, partner organizations, NGOs, academia, media representatives, and other donors working in Armenia. We also commissioned external assessments on diverse issues such as [gender](#), [youth](#), [civil society and media](#), [governance](#), [rule of law](#), and [biodiversity](#) in Armenia. With feedback from all these stakeholders, we assessed areas where USAID's support can be most impactful and developed our strategic direction for the next five years: We will continue to support Democracy & Governance and Economic Growth-focused programming, but have adapted our approach to take advantage of the current government's commitment to reform.

What will USAID be working on over the next five years?

The new strategy will work in two main directions: **advancement of democratic transition** and **enhancement of economic security**.

Advancement of democratic transition: USAID will help Armenia strengthen its institutions and processes for accountable and participatory governance while addressing challenges in capacity and resilience to advance the country toward self-reliance.

- Support electoral reforms and political competition
- Support whole of society corruption prevention measures
- Strengthen accountability systems and rule of law
- Empower citizens to engage and participate in governance
- Foster judicial independence and effectiveness
- Strengthen civil society and independent media
- Enfranchise marginalized populations

Enhancement of economic security: USAID will enhance Armenia's economic security by supporting the development of a vibrant and resilient economy, by Armenians for Armenians.

- Partner with Government and private sector
- Strengthen government institutions, policies & systems for increased economic effectiveness
- Promote energy independence
- Bolster export sophistication
- Support improved natural resource management
- Improve the workforce by addressing labor market gaps
- Support regional economic growth through tourism, agriculture and high-tech

How does USAID's new CDCS affect Armenians?

The CDCS seeks to advance the democratic transition set in motion by the new government reform agenda launched in 2018 and enhance Armenia's economic security. Through our new CDCS, USAID projects will support Armenia's Journey to Self-Reliance by strengthening the government's capacity to institutionalize reforms that will positively impact Armenia's governance and economy. USAID programs under the CDCS will work with Armenians at every level, from the national assembly, to government ministries and institutions, local governments, the private sector, community groups, civil society organizations, individuals, media, academic institutions, agricultural partners... and others. Armenians may be exposed to fair and balanced media, expect transparent voting processes and institutionalized anti-corruption measures; see more economic competition and an improved business enabling environment; be exposed to workforce development opportunities, and improved natural resource management; and have access to increased opportunities for civic engagement.

Will USAID be finishing its programming in Armenia in 2025?

No. USAID is required to assess its strategic approach and develop a new strategy every five years. Under this new CDCS, USAID does not anticipate any reduction in effort, resources, or staffing.

Does a new CDCS mean the U.S. will be providing Armenia with more money?

Since Armenia's 2018 peaceful transition of power, USAID assistance to Armenia increased by 88%, with annual budgets growing from \$16 million in 2017 to \$30 million in 2018. This new strategy will build on the government reforms implemented since then. Throughout the next five years, USAID will work with the Government of Armenia to identify ways to expand and sustain democracy, rights, and governance engagement; strengthen the economy and economic participation by citizens; promote greater energy independence; bolster export sophistication; cultivate a qualified workforce to fuel Armenia's key sectors; build national administrative capacity to realize reform; strengthen the rule of law; and prevent corruption, with the intention of transitioning out of specific sectors where the Government and Armenia as a whole is no longer in need of U.S. support.

How can I partner with USAID under the new strategy?

Institutions, organizations and individuals interested in collaborating with USAID on activities implemented under the new CDCS should contact USAID/Armenia. Visit www.usaid.gov/armenia for more information.

Where can I find more information on the CDCS and/or USAID programming?

For more information on the CDCS and USAID programming, visit USAID/Armenia's [website](http://www.usaid.gov/armenia) where the CDCS is [linked](#) (www.usaid.gov/armenia/cdcs), along with other relevant documents. News, press releases and success stories describing USAID's work in Armenia can also be found on the site. Follow [USAID/Armenia's Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) for up-to-date information on USAID's programs and activities in Armenia.