



# Satisfying Hunger in Armenia

Food and water equal life. For many of the world's young and old these things we take for granted can be hard to find.

UMCOR ADVANCE # 982920  
WORLD HUNGER/POVERTY

UMCOR ADVANCE #250225  
ARMENIA EMERGENCY

## UMCOR'S HUNGER PROGRAMS

UMCOR provides long-term solutions to bring hope to hungry people and empower them to self-sufficiency. Ministries of food, clothing, and medical supplies supplement programs in such areas of work as sustainable agriculture and clean water that help poor countries move forward with development.

These are cooperative ministries—no agency can “go it alone.” So UMCOR not only takes seriously the hunger resolutions of our own United Methodist General Conference but also joins ecumenical partners to multiply United Methodist impact. Working together on global hunger and poverty we promote connections and act in the political sphere. UMCOR's programs nourish impoverished people and the working poor—especially women and children—so they can improve their lives.

## HOPE ORPHANAGE

The 87 children who live at Hope Orphanage in Armenia truly understand the importance of hope. Most of the children there have one or no living parents. Rouben Markosyan, the founder and director of the orphanage, had lost his children and wife during the devastating earthquake in 1988. This institution became both a home and a family for him. He knows the names, stories and problems of each child.

“This is my chief responsibility to know every child and every detail connected with their lives. If not, then it means I have failed to accomplish my responsibilities and commitments to them,” said Mr. Markosyan. The children's ages range from 2 to 18 years old. In the mornings, the older children leave for the nearby school and the younger ones stay under the care of experienced nurses.

Through UMCOR's Cheese Distribution Program, Hope Orphanage receives 36 kg of cheese each month from the Amasia Dairy Plant. “Funds allocated for food procurement are limited and it is a challenge for the administration to make proper nutritious meals,” explains Mr. Markosyan. “Dairy products are expensive and we cannot provide children with valuable products every day. Hence, this program was of great value providing locally made, qualified products. Children of all age groups eat cheese with pleasure.”

In 2008, Hope Orphanage will receive their own cows and training so they can produce their own cheese and dairy products with the help of UMCOR and the Foods Resource Bank. This will ensure that they have a consistent and reliable food source.

Photo: A young child enjoys a delicious cheese sandwich thanks to UMCOR's Cheese Distribution Program. Zaven Khachikian/UMCOR



A local cheese maker proudly shows his product.  
Paul Jeffrey/UMCOR

## CHEESE DISTRIBUTION

The Cheese Distribution Program in Armenia supplements the diets of 6,816 people who live in 58 institutions. The cheese provides at least 20 grams of nutrient-rich cheese every day, improving their prospects for good health.

## FOOD SECURITY

Out of the Cheese Distribution Program grew an additional food security program in Armenia. It is operated with support from the Foods Resource Bank, a United Methodist-founded organization, which provides schools and other institutions with training, agricultural supplies and cows for milk. Staff members from each institution are trained in caring for the livestock, processing the food and milk from their farms into nutritious food, and how to involve children in this process. Now these institutions are able to grow and process their own food as well as give children life skills for the future.

“Within the framework of the program, children will have an opportunity of learning basic agricultural and other additional skills that will be very helpful for supporting their families after leaving the school” says one school administrator.

The schoolchildren were very happy to have cows in the school barn and they already chose their animals to take care of. Yervand, a 10-year-old boy from a disadvantaged family, was very enthusiastic, “I know the name of my cow and I also know what will be the name of the calf when my cow will deliver.”

## BE THERE. BE HOPE.

It is programs like these that allow your hearts and hands to reach out to vulnerable people through UMCOR’s work. It can be hard to believe that something as simple as a piece of cheese can do so much. It is the simple things we so often take for granted—plentiful food, clean water—that can mean so much.

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