
New Area Development Programs For Armenia.

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In 2007, World Vision Armenia is to launch two Area Development Programs (ADPs) in Gavar, East of Armenia and Alaverdi in the North, bringing hope and new opportunities to 20 more communities.

Gavar and Alaverdi were selected as locations for the new ADPs taking into consideration the difficult social and economic conditions of the regions. Up to 50% of the population in Gavar and Alaverdi is not able to meet their basic needs, and 10% of children live in extreme poverty.

'We have a chance to serve new communities across the country.

Working with communities enables us to represent them with authority and knowledge to regional and national level government,' said World Vision Armenia's National Director Mark Kelly.

Both districts face major problems with infrastructure. Most water reservoirs and internal systems are currently not functioning; as a result, some villages are completely deprived of irrigation and depend on rainfall and snow to irrigate their arable lands. Along with the infrastructure problems, land cultivation in Gavar and Alaverdi is also complicated by the lack of agricultural machinery.

The majority of families for whom agriculture is the main source of income struggle to provide their children with daily bread. The focal problems of the rural communities also include poor community roads, sewage and drinking water systems, health and educational facilities.

All previously operating factories and production plants of Gavar and many of Alaverdi are no longer in operation, resulting in a high rate of social vulnerability and migration to find employment.

In January 2007 assessments of the current situation, identifying opportunities, vulnerabilities, and capacities, and creating a basis for designing the future interventions of the ADP were all started.

The assessment was conducted in close cooperation with the future stakeholders, including government officials, community leaders, NGOs, churches and the general population.

'Assessment is an essential step in the development of a new program.

A good assessment also enables communities to better understand their own reality and its implications,' said Astghik Movsisyan, World Vision Armenia Program Officer.

Interventions in Gavar and Alaverdi will include sectors where World Vision Armenia has extended experience, in particular; economic development, health, education, child protection, Christian Commitments and Community Partnership as crosscutting themes to all the above. World Vision Armenia is likely to consider environmental protection as a priority sector of intervention.

[Any views expressed in this article are those of the writer and not of Reuters.]
