

# Armenia Gender project

## Supporting Women to Help Reduce Poverty

### WHAT WE DO

The World Bank Group's Armenia Gender project aims to support women engaged in the wild harvest sector, to help increase productivity, reduce poverty, and spur economic growth. The three-year project (2017-2020) provides advice to improve the regulatory environment in the sector, and helps women engage in more productive activities and improve their market access by fostering better links with buyers and producers.

The Armenia Gender project is implemented by IFC—a sister organization of the World Bank and member of the World Bank Group.

### WHY IS THE WILD HARVEST SECTOR IMPORTANT FOR ARMENIA?

Since many of Armenia's poorest people rely on the wild harvest for their main source of income, the government has identified the wild harvest value chain as an important area for poverty reduction, especially in mountainous and remote areas of the country.

The vast majority of those employed in the sector are women, who can benefit from gaining new skills to engage in higher value activities. Numerous studies have shown that women's employment is vital to driving economic development, so supporting women's participation in the labor market is a "win-win" for Armenia.

### WHAT IS THE CHALLENGE?

Wild harvesting has the potential to become a well-developed and profitable value chain in Armenia, with more effective participation by women. There are significant challenges, however. The value chain is poorly developed, with low turnover, income, and profits. The sector is characterized by instability on the supply side and little information about demand. The lack of business knowledge and marketing activities to promote products both locally and beyond are among the key reasons for low productivity in the sector. There are also policy and regulatory constraints.



*As Lilit Asatryan, Chairwoman of the Armenian Young Women's Association, says, "Income generated through wild harvesting primarily contributes to meeting domestic needs, so developing the sector's value chain has real potential to improve the lives of many in Armenia's remote areas. For that to happen, the currently disjointed system needs to be mechanized and made more efficient, with standardized collecting procedures, and improved links to buyers and markets."*



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## OUR APPROACH

The Armenia Gender project aims to support women engaged in the wild harvest sector in two ways. Firstly, the project will help build women workers' and entrepreneurs' knowledge and skills, so they can engage in higher value activities and improve their links to producers and new markets, helping to generate better incomes. To this end, the project will work with the Armenian Young Women's Association to train women in better product collection methods, storage and packaging, and help them improve their marketing skills to enhance their links with buyers and producers.

Secondly, the project will work with the government to develop a strategy to boost the development of the sector and remove regulatory constraints. The aim is to help increase productivity and generate more income for women, which, in turn, will help spur economic growth and reduce poverty. To ensure the efficient implementation of regulatory reforms, more women need to be involved in the formal decision-making process, through public-private dialogue. To that end, the project will also foster better coordination among key stakeholders, including women's business associations, buyers, industry networks, and the government.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

The project is expected to:

- Help adopt regulations and policies favorable for the development of the wild harvest sector and remove obstacles;
- Increase the productivity of women employed in the wild harvest sector; help reach new markets;
- Create new jobs for women.

## Donor partners

*The Armenia Gender project is funded by Austria's Federal Ministry of Finance and the World Bank's multi-donor Umbrella Facility for Gender Equality.*

*For more information about the project's donor partners, please visit:*

*The Ministry of Finance of Austria: <http://english.bmf.gv.at>*

*World Bank's Multi-Donor Umbrella Facility for Gender Equality: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/umbrellafacilityforgenderequality>*

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