

Armenia Living Standards Survey 1996
Project Completion Report

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Report on the Main Survey

Part I. Purpose of the Survey, Preparation

The RA Department of Statistics, State Register and Analyses carried out the Household Survey on November-December, 1996, by the technical assistance of the World Bank.

The main purpose of the survey was the study of living conditions of Armenian population in transition period and the poverty increase in the country.

1. Work Schedule of Preparation of the Survey on Living Conditions

January- February, 1996	Formation of the data base on households, listing of urban and rural areas of the republic. Rural areas are divided according to three heights: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. up to 1300 metres from the sea level2. up to 1300-1700 metres from the sea level3. 1700 metres and higher
March- April, 1996	Data entry of the listing into computer.
January-April, 1996	Preparation of questionnaires for the Household survey.
June, 1996	Selection of Households for the survey.
July, 1996	Enumerators for fieldwork.
September 2-16, 1996	Fieldwork on pilot survey.
September 16 - October 5, 1996	Data entry of the pilot survey and its analyses.

October 8-21, 1996	Discussion of the pilot survey results with the expert on questionnaires Mr. Gilane.
October 21-November 6, 1996	Preparation works for the main survey. Review of questionnaires. The enumerators' instructions, photocopy of questionnaires and diaries.
November 1-December 25, 1996	Fieldwork on main survey.
November 7-15, 1996	Distribution of diaries on Households.
January 20-March, 1997	Logical supervision and information entry of the main survey.
February, 1997	Selected visits to Households to supervise the enumerators' work.
March-April, 1997	Work out the information.
March, 1997	The World Bank expert's visit for the appraisal of information entry.
July, 1997	Working out of the output tables.
September, 1997	Submission of the materials to the World Bank.

2. List of the Households of the Main Group

The census of the population, which was held in 1989, after the earthquake, has no complete information of the number of Households of the main group, and for working

out the probable selection, it's necessary to have complete list of the Households of the country. That's why it is necessary to have the listing of the Households of the whole Republic. For this purpose the following list of Households was collected (with the owner and the number of members of the Households) through Village Boards, Municipal Boards, and Committees of private living sector:

1. List of the Households of all villages of the Republic
2. List of the Households of all small towns of the Republic
3. List of the Households of private and state sectors in medium and big towns
4. List of the Households on the level of 55 Municipal Boards and 21 private sectors of Yerevan

According to January 1, 1996, in the result of "Listing", the total number of the Households in the Republic is 874812, including 529804 Households in urban areas and 345008 Households in rural areas.

As Armenia is a high-mountainous country and the 90% of its territory is situated on the height higher from the sea level, so the stratification of the rural areas was held due to the height .

According to the level of height, the Households in rural areas are as follows:

1. up to 1300 meters from sea level – 146076
2. 1300m. –1700m. from sea level – 84445
3. 1700m. and higher from sea level –114487

3. Selections

The World Bank expert on selection (Mr. Scott) has worked out the selection, according to which all the Households had an equal probability to appear in the main group. 5040 Households were included in the selection. 100 villages and 28 towns were included in

the survey. In every rural area 20 Households were selected. In 18 towns, with 7000 population, and 40 Households, and in other 10 towns the number of selected Households was depending on the number of population. 1980 Households were selected in rural areas and 3060 in urban areas.

Below is given the table of questionnaires, selected villages, towns of the republic and the number of them.

Marzes	Quantity of Villages	Number of Questionnaires	Quantity of Towns	Number of Questionnaires
Aragatsotn	8	160	2	80
Ararat	17	340	2	81
Armavir	17	340	3	152
Gegarkunik	14	280	3	120
Lori	10	200	4	297
Kotayk	9	180	3	185
Shirak	11	200	2	353
Syunik	3	60	3	147
Vayots Dzor	4	80	1	40
Taush	7	140	4	160
Yerevan			1	1445
Total	100	1980	28	3060
Total Number of Questionnaires	5040			

4. Questionnaire

The questionnaire for the survey has been worked out by the World Bank expert Mr. Gilane according to the recommendations on “Survey of Priorities”. It contains 13 parts.

- a) Description of Households, formation, economic status, Health services, living conditions
- b) Income from paid workers
- c) Income from self-employed
- d) State benefits
- e) Other cash incomes
- f) Assistance
- g) Savings, assets, loans
- h) Total economic situation
- i) Land
- j) Food reserves
- k) Expenses for 30 days
- l) Emigration
- m) Social program “Paros”

During one month, 25% of the Households have completed the diary for the purpose of getting complete information on expenses and consumption. Families who had a diary, have not completed point k of the questionnaire.

Main definitions:

- Households. Persons who live together and manage a joint budget.
- Economic Status.
- “Employed” means, that a person works regularly, or according to the contract with a lessee.
- “Self-employed” means, that the job is being implemented for the own profit.
- The person considers to be employed, if during the last week more than an hour of his activity has been paid or had a profit.

- State and Private transfers:
 - State:
 - Pension
 - Disability Benefit
 - Child Benefit
 - Single Mother Benefit
 - Unemployment Benefit
 - Scholarship
 - Private:
 - Assistance from relatives living in Armenia
 - Assistance from relatives living not in Armenia
 - Assistance from organizations rendering humanitarian aid
 - Charity
- Branches of Economy
 - Industry
 - Agriculture
 - Construction
 - Transport
 - Communication
 - Trade and public catering, material and technical supply, sale, purchase
 - Computer service
 - Housing and communal services
 - Health, physical culture and social security
 - National education
 - Culture
 - Art

- Science and scientific service
- Crediting and state insurance
- Bodies of state and industrial departments, NGOs
- Property Types
 - State enterprise
 - Private enterprise
 - Budget organization
 - Joint venture
 - Foreign organization or enterprise
 - Other

Current Expenses

In current expenses are included:

- monetary expenditures for buying food,
- goods and services,
- the price of the food of the home production,
- as well as assistance of relatives,

Are excluded:

- humanitarian aid from benevolent organizations
- expenses for purchasing goods for long use.

Total Expenses

The total expenses consist of expenditures for food, goods and services including goods for long use, expenditures for business and agriculture, use of goods of home production, assistance from relatives, humanitarian and benevolent organizations.

Part II. Organization of the Survey

1. Pilot Survey

For the preparation of the main survey, pilot survey for two weeks was held from September 2 to 16, 1996, and 150 families of urban and rural regions were included in the survey according to scheme suggested by Mr. Gilane:

1. Main questionnaire+diary+bounding
2. Main questionnaire-long version
3. Main questionnaire-short version

Types of Households according to economic activity

1. Business
2. Farmers
3. Individual economic activity
4. No business/ farmers

19 enumerators have gathered data 5 days till the survey. The pilot survey included:

110 Households in Yerevan

16 Households in village Horom of Shirak Marz

24 Households in village Parpi of Aragatsotn Marz

In September the information of the pilot survey results has been put into computer. The data base was analyzed for the purpose of discovering certain economic connections. In the result of the pilot survey, there were some shortcomings, which were discussed with Mr. Gilane in October, 1996, in Belfast. On the basis of discussions there were some changes in questionnaires and diary for managing the current expenses.

It was determined that the main questionnaire works better under Long version.

Remarks on main questionnaire:

The period and cause of the absence is summarized in question 1.

The question on the education level was discussed.

In point c) the question on “income of the self-employment” has been edited and instead of payment or profit from the self-employment the following question is given: “What was the main pure income (excluding the taxes) of the self-employment for each person for the last 30 days?”.

The graphic was added in the table 4 on the registration of the business.

In point d) on the “State Benefits”, the question on the delay of the payment of the benefit was added.

In point e) “Other cash incomes” the size of any other cash incomes for 30 days is inquired.

In question F 1 the oil is added.

In point “Food reserves”, the list of food has been expanded.

Remarks on the Diary:

The diary should be for the whole Household, but not for each member.

The part “Food Consumption” is added, as the expenses on food do not affect any real consumption.

2. Main Survey (fieldwork)

The fieldwork on main survey was held from November 1 to December 25, 1996. The instructions began from November 1, 1996. The instructions for completing the diaries of the current incomes were organized in Yerevan and in 10 marzes. The diaries of the Households were distributed from November 7 to 15, 1996. The instructions of the enumerators of Yerevan on completion and distribution of questionnaires was done on

December 2, 1996. The instructions and distribution of questionnaires with the enumerators was done in Gyumri, Vanadzor, and in marzes of Shirak and Lori on December 7. The last instruction and distribution of questionnaires was in Tavush. For the above-mentioned activities, the employees of the department, as well as the involved persons went to central towns of 10 marzes.

Below is given the schedule for the supervision of fieldwork due to December 18, 1996.

	Marzes	Date for the Distribution of Diaries	Number of Distributed Diaries	Number of Diaries Completed for Dec.18	Date for the Distribution of Diaries	Number of Distributed Diaries	Number of Question. Completed for Dec.18
1	Aragatsotn	13-XI	60	60	13-XII	240	216
2	Ararat	14-XI	105	105	12-XII	421	378
3	Armavir	15-XI	123	123	9-XII	492	443
4	Gegharkunik	11-XI	100	100	12-XII	400	372
5	Lori	9-XI	124	124	7-XII	497	462
6	Kotayk	12-XI	91	91	9-XII	365	332
7	Shirak	8-XI	139	139	7-XII	553	509
8	Syunik	7-XI	52	52	11-XII	207	186
9	Vayots Dzor	7-XI	30	30	10-XII	120	108
10	Tavoush	10-XI	75	75	15-XII	300	240
11	Yerevan	7-11-XI	369	369	2-7-XII	1445	1440
	Total		1268			5040	4686

234 enumerators were involved in the survey – 94 of them were from rural regions, and 140 from urban regions. 70 enumerators were involved in Yerevan. The employees of the department were often on a mission in towns and villages of the republic to supervise the activities of enumerators.

According to the survey results 4920 questionnaires were received, there were 120 rejections, which is the 2.4% of the total. 908 addresses were used from the reserve (18%).

In the result of searching the addresses, the contact in 583 cases were not done as the apartments were closed. In 237 cases (40.6%) - the inhabitants were within Armenia, in 292 (50.1%)-were outside the country, in 54 (9.3%)- wasn't famous.

In 325 (6.4%) cases, the address was not true., from which:

76-the apartments are free

73-the house was left

132-the address was not found

28-the house was damaged

9-constructive works

5- institutions

2-cottages.

3. Supervision of Quality of the Data Entry and Information Adjustment

The World Bank expert Mr. S. Rid was in the Department of Statistics from December 11 to 21, 1996. The main purpose of the visit was to control the complex programs of data entry, as well as organization of the Main group for the supervision of the entered information.

Since January, 1997 the logical supervision and data entry was implemented, which was completed in March. The logical supervision was implemented by 10 supervisors, and the data entry by 14 operators. 12 computers were used for data entry. According to the appropriate schedule the enumerators' activity 1% was checked in February, 1997.

The supervision of the information was done in 3 stages:

Stage 1.

Parallel to the data entry, there was a special module of supervision, which analyzed and revealed the mistakes of data entry. This information was analyzed by the operators or logical supervisors, and according to the type of mistakes, a respective decision was made. There were mistakes in this category, which have violated the logical transitions of the questionnaires, or the information was not complete (Eg. The wrong code of the goods was entered, the price was mentioned, but the foreign currency was not mentioned, or the quantity was mentioned, but the unit of measure was not mentioned and etc.). The mistakes of this stage were localized and corrected in the framework of one questionnaire.

Stage 2.

After the completion of the entry of all questionnaires and its unification in a certain data base, a testing program was worked for revealing the mistakes, which could not be revealed during the first stage.

The information of the point k) questionnaires and the whole information of diaries was supervised.

a) for the point k), for the whole types of food, goods and services, the sum of expenses was changed into dram (respective to the foreign currency rate). For each of those types a list of sorted sum of expenditures was compiled and extreme significance was revealed. Later all the suspicious meanings were analyzed separately and was made a decision. It was cleared up, either it was the mistake of the entry (Eg. the foreign currency was mentioned wrong), or the information was checked with the initial data of the questionnaire and after all these, a respective correction was done.

During the supervision of the diaries, besides the methods described in point a), a deep analyses and supervision was carried out. On the basis of the information of all diaries of the main group, average prices were calculated for each type of food, goods and services and the respective experimental meanings were discovered. When revealing

the extreme significance of average prices of goods and services, received on the basis of database, the initial information was raised (concrete form or diary) and the mistakes of input or logical control were corrected. Mainly the mistakes refer to the sums, or foreign currency. After the first cycle of the correction of mistakes, average prices for goods and services were counted again, and comparisons were repeated.

In the second stage of the correction the elements for the analysis of the information were used and the whole work was done by the assistant-programmers.

Stage 3.

According to the World Bank standards, while entering the data, 5% of current supervision of data entry was done for clarifying the quality of work of each operator. That's why equal number of questionnaires and diaries was selected for each operator, and after all (on the display) the quality of the data entry was checked. The mistakes were classified into two groups: a)logical mistakes and b) mistakes of the operator. On the basis of the mistakes, additional activities were done with operators and with logical supervisors. The current review was done during the whole process of data entry. From all questionnaires(4920) 261 were checked (5.3%).

The World Bank experts J. Gilane and S. Rid visited the Department of Household Survey from March 22 to 28, 1997. The purpose of the visit was:

1. Introduction with data entry
2. Testing of the data assessment including the format, structure and content of files
3. Preparation for the analyses of incomes and expenses
4. Instructions on admitting the system of SPSS

4. Formation of Output Tables

The RA Department of Statistics invited Head of the Department of Household Survey of Belgium Mr. Dinut for the adjustment of the data analyses done on methodological basis, formation of analytical summary tables.

Mr. Dinut worked out the summary tables from July 15 to August 5, 1997.

During the visit he studied the data basis and the following issues were discussed:

- Structure of expenses and its items due to the questionnaires, as well as diaries
- Information on incomes and expenses
- Factual consumption of food
- Expenses per person (per capita)
- Total and current income and its separate items
- Economic status of households
- Employment

5. Training on Poverty Analyses

On February 24, 1997, 9 specialists (including 2 translators) were trained in Myunkhen according to following program:

1. Policy on reduction of poverty
2. Measurement of living conditions
3. Questionnaire on Household Survey
4. Poverty Line
5. Poverty indicators and its calculation
6. Description of the poor
7. Poverty Analyses
8. Poverty profile

9. Comparison of Poverty due to the time
10. Use of the social-economic information on the results of the Household survey
11. Data collection from non-formal sector
12. Strategy of the Survey
13. Main concepts of the Household Survey

Part III. Total Assessment of the Survey

1. Main Results of the Survey

The group of survey specialists was in Washington in September, 1997 and the main purpose of the visit was to submit the data base of the survey to the World Bank for discussion.

The calculation of the minimum food basket (on the basis of factual food consumption) was held in London by the food specialist (Ms. Catherine Jesler) to determine the poverty line.

36 output tables have been prepared with the help of the World Bank analyst Mr. Yemtsov, characterizing the poverty level of the republic and marzes (the list of tables is attached).

The brief report on the poverty survey results was submitted to the international seminar of social indicators (November, 1997), organized by the UNDP. The international organizations, as well as representatives of executive bodies, scientific sphere of the country (the Parliament, Government, Ministry of Social Security, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, the Academy of Sciences, the State University, the Scientific-research Institute, Ministry of Finance and Economy, Committee of Refugees) participated in the seminar.

According to the results of the main survey, the draft of national report on “Improving Social Assistance in Armenia” was prepared, the preliminary discussions of which were in the RA Ministry of Statistics, in May 26, 1998.

The draft of the national report was discussed in the RA Government, in May 30, 1998. The discussion in the Government was illuminated in local press and TV. Besides, the draft of the national report was sent to the Government for comments and suggestions.

2. Lessons Learnt

For many years the statisticians were carrying out a survey on family budget for the purpose of studying the living conditions of the population.

The survey was organized due to the methods of selection. The selection of the families was carried out in two stages, at first the enterprises were mentioned, then the workers were selected, families where the survey on budget was carried out. Approximately one thousand families were involved in the survey on budget. The method of selection and the permanent net of the families have their problems.

Firstly, during the selection, the following entities were not included in the main group: some ministries (Ministry of National Security, Ministry of Internal Affairs Ministry of Defense), private and co-operative enterprises, as well as families, which members are unemployed.

Secondly, constant budget network could not be representational as required, as being systematically observed by families, owing to keeping the regular track of incomes and expenditures, they were gradually becoming more “organized” and thus lost their representational character.

Thirdly, the balance method of the supervision of data of incomes and expenses was used in the survey.

The experience of the international method on the household survey (November-December, 1996) gave the possibility of using appropriate international standards.

The purpose of the survey on expenses and incomes of households in Armenia was to get economic-statistical information on living conditions of the population. The data of this survey are significant in studying regularity influence of new social processes of living conditions of the population.

Main principles of selected survey:

1. The selection of the survey should be on republic level
2. It's necessary to use short period for the questionnaires, as in conditions of non-stable economic situation and high inflation, it's difficult for the population to remember the quantity of their incomes and expenses.

At the end of the survey month, the members of the households at the age of 16 and more, were asked on their employment and incomes.

Main purpose of the survey is to:

1. study the profits structure and expenses of the population;
2. study the consumption structure of food;
3. study the living conditions of the population.

Main users of data of the survey

1. Department of the national accounts and macroeconomic indicators in the Ministry of Statistics

1. Department of price statistics of the Ministry of Statistics - structure of consumption expenditures for estimate of index of consumption prices

3. Department of Employment in the Ministry of Statistics for counting the number of unemployed

4. Ministry of Social Security

Plan of the Selection

The size of the selection is 1075 households.

All the population take part in the survey, except;

1. persons being in complete state security
2. military employees living in close territories.

The plan of the survey done in two stages. In the first stage, towns and villages were selected, in the second stage-the households of the main group. 15 towns were involved in the selection, 725 households in it, from which the 325 households in Yerevan and 14 villages with 350 households.

They are defined with the help of the computer and each household has the same probability to be selected in the survey.

Conclusion

By means of the households it would be possible to study the economic and social problems:

1. Employment of the Population
2. Health of the Population
3. Education Problems
4. Problems of Birth Reduction and Women's Reproductive Behavior
5. Latent Criminality and etc.

The selection volume for 1999 is projected to be raised up to 3000 households, and in 2001- up to 5000 households with quarterly rotation, which will provide trustworthiness of data within the republic and marzes.

Towns and Villages Included in the Survey

Towns:

Yerevan, Ashtarak, Talin, Artashat, Metsamor, Armavir, Echmiadzin, Gavar, Sevan, Vardenis, Alaverdi, Spitak, Tashir, Vanadzor, Abovyan, Charentsavan, Hrazdan, Artik, Gyumri, Kapan, Dastakert, Sisyan, Yeghegnadzor, Ijevan, Noyemberyan, Berd, Dilijan.

Villages:

Bazmaghbyur, Ohanavan, Parpi, Voskevaz, Artavan, Tsilkar, Yeghnik, Ashnak, Paruyr, Sevak, Armash, Noyakert, Pokr Vedi, Vosketap, Ararat, Berdik, Jrashen, Burastan, Berin Dvin, Vostan, Shahumyan, Ghukasavan, Dzorak, Geghanist, Nor Kcharberd, Ayntap, Araks, Dzerzhinski, Nor Artages, Hatsik, Pshatavan, Nalbandyan, Bambakashat, Baghramyan, Myasnikyan, Aygek, Mrgastan, Artimed, Taronik, Mertsavan, Aragats, Samahar, Parakyar, Gegharkunik, Noradus, Sarukhan, Dprabak, Artsvanist, Vaghashen, Yeranos, Tsovanr, Nerkin Getashen, Vardenik, Norashen, Tsovagyugh, Shatvan, Mets Masrik, Antaramut, Lernapat, Karkot, Dsegh, Odzun, Saramej, Mets Parpi, Katnaghbyur, Kurtan, Lernahovit, Zar, Mayakovski, Dzvezh, Garni, Kaghsi, Alaparz, Getamej, Argel, Kasagh, Getq, Vahramaberd, Marmarashen, Akhurian, Komghut, Getashen, Bagravan, Gogahovit, Getap, Horom, Panik, Khndzoresk, Verin Khotanan, Horayg, Hermon, Agarakadzor, Gladzor, Herher, Khashtarak, Getahovit, Aygehovit, Haghtanak, Koti, Tsaghkavan, Paravakar (the map is attached).

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