

 Early Warning System

ADB-58358-001

Seismic Safety Improvement Program 3



Quick Facts

Countries	Armenia
Financial Institutions	Asian Development Bank (ADB)
Status	Proposed
Bank Risk Rating	B
Borrower	Government of Armenia
Sectors	Education and Health, Infrastructure
Investment Type(s)	Loan
Investment Amount (USD)	\$ 293.00 million
Loan Amount (USD)	\$ 293.00 million



Project Description

As stated by the ADB, the Republic of Armenia is located at the intersection of major tectonic faults, making it highly prone to seismic activity. The devastation of the 1988 Spitak earthquake claimed about 25,000 lives, including 6,000 school children; left 517,000 people homeless, destroyed 190 schools and many urban infrastructures; and incurred direct economic losses of \$15 billion-\$20 billion. The recent 7.8-magnitude earthquake in neighboring Turkiye and Syria in 2023 is a wake-up call for Armenia, posing a significant threat to the country.

Since 2015, ADB has partnered with the government of Armenia to enhance the seismic resilience of its schools through the School Strengthening and Renovation Program (SSRP). To date, ADB has processed two loans (SSIP and SSIP-Additional Financing), both of which have significantly contributed to government efforts. Based on this successful partnership and good program implementation track record, the government is in discussion with ADB for a new loan, SSIP-3, as a continuation of the first two SSIP loans. A Japan Fund for Prosperous and Resilient Asia (JFPR) grant funded project, Seismic Safety Enhancement Project, which aims to further improve Armenia's resilience to disasters by sharing international best practices, is being processed with approval scheduled in Q3 2024. Over the years, at least 16 ADB board members, as well as the ADB President, have visited SSIP schools and supported ADB's leadership and ongoing partnerships to strengthen Armenia's safety and disaster resilience.

Most public buildings, particularly schools from the Soviet Union, were poorly designed to withstand earthquake with substandard construction and maintenance increasing vulnerability. Armenia has about 1,400 public schools, of which about 1,000 need retrofitting or reconstruction; including over 430 at high risk of collapse even in a moderate earthquake. Demographic decline over 30 years, has left half of the school buildings empty, resulting in inefficient public education spending. Armenia also faces significant urban challenges, include a very limited waste recycling, high air pollution levels, and insufficient green spaces. Racing against time, the next major earthquake could strike Armenia at any moment, and over 1,000 schools and other critical infrastructures remain vulnerable against earthquake. Quick, efficient, and timely program processing are critical. In 2021, new state educational standards were approved. However, climate education and disaster awareness remain a challenge, as many teachers lack the knowledge, and skills needed to enhance youth's sensitivity to climate and disaster awareness.

PROJECT RATIONALE AND LINKAGE TO COUNTRY/REGIONAL STRATEGY

The government has been implementing the original SSIP for close to 10 years since 2015. There is a great opportunity to update the program scope with new technologies, innovations, and good practices into the proposed SSIP-3. As schools play an important role in increasing education quality and improving urban challenges, and livability in Armenia, the SSIP-3 will introduce several new initiatives such as Recycling Stations and Environmental Education Hubs to promote waste separation and environmental awareness, Urban Agriculture and Edible Gardens to integrate sustainable food production into school environments, Smart Urban Furniture with solar-powered charging stations and air quality sensors, and a Waste-to-Build Initiative that repurposes construction debris into new building materials. These initiatives will transform schools into vibrant, sustainable centers that enhance both education and urban livability.



Early Warning System Project Analysis

The ADB categorized the project E&S risks as follows:

Environment - B

Involuntary Resettlement - B

Indigenous Peoples - C



Investment Description

- Asian Development Bank (ADB)



Contact Information

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ACCESS TO INFORMATION

You can submit an information request for project information at: <https://www.adb.org/forms/request-information-form>

ADB has a two-stage appeals process for requesters who believe that ADB has denied their request for information in violation of its Access to Information Policy. You can learn more about filing an appeal at: <https://www.adb.org/site/disclosure/appeals>

ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM OF ADB

The Accountability Mechanism is an independent complaint mechanism and fact-finding body for people who believe they are likely to be, or have been, adversely affected by an Asian Development Bank-financed project. If you submit a complaint to the Accountability Mechanism, they may investigate to assess whether the Asian Development Bank is following its own policies and procedures for preventing harm to people or the environment. You can learn more about the Accountability Mechanism and how to file a complaint at: <http://www.adb.org/site/accountability-mechanism/main>.



Other Related Projects

- ADB-49078-002 School Seismic Safety Improvement Program
- ADB-49078-001 Seismic Safety Improvement Program
- ADB-49078-003 Support and Validation of Seismic Safety Improvement Program Indicators
- ADB-58358-002 Preparation of Seismic Safety Improvement Program 3