



Active in more than 70 countries around the world, the Open Society Foundations support justice and human rights, freedom of expression, and access to public health and education.

In This Issue

HUMAN RIGHTS AND CIVIL SOCIETY

- U.S. Embassy Recognizes Amalia Kostanyan as Woman of Courage in 2011
- Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Vanadzor Office Celebrates 13 Years of its Activity
- Partnership Presents Civil Society Perspective on European Neighborhood Policy Implementation in Armenia in 2010
- Partnership and OSCE Organize Discussion on Human Rights in the Army and Civic Oversight
- Minister of Justice Pledges to Revise the Draft Law on Religious Organizations
- Civil Society Learns Lessons from Elections in Estonia
- Representatives of NGOs Working with Parents of Disabled Children Exchange Experience with Kyrgyz Colleagues

MEDIA

- Partnership for Open Society Initiative, OSCE and Council of Europe Organize a Conference to Reflect on Challenges for Media in 2010 and Trends for 2011
- Committee to Protect Freedom of Expression Presents Results of Monitoring of Transparency and Accessibility of Government Websites and Monitoring of Press Conferences
- "A1+" Website Wins 2011 Free Press of Eastern Europe Prize

PUBLIC HEALTH

- Pain Relief for Palliative Care is Still Not Accessible in Armenia

EDUCATION

- OSF-Armenia Supports University Departments to Tune Study Programs

EMERGENCY FUND

- Mitigating Child Poverty in Kotayk Region
- Supporting Day Care for Disabled Children in Chambarak
- Providing Opportunity to Children in Artamet Community to Attend Kindergarten
- Supporting Needy Families with Newborns
- Emergency Fund Continues Supporting Orran's Center in Vanadzor

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Policy Fellowship Competition
- Call for Preparation and Broadcast of TV Programs

HUMAN RIGHTS AND CIVIL SOCIETY

U.S. Embassy Recognizes Amalia Kostanyan as Woman of Courage in 2011

On March 15, 2011, the U.S. Embassy in Yerevan honored the memory of Amalia Kostanyan, recognizing her as the Woman of Courage in 2011. Amalia Kostanyan was not only the founder and Chair of the Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center, but also a leading civic activist. Amalia served on the OSF-Armenia Board as a member from 2006 and then as the Board Chair from 2008 until her untimely death in September 2010. The award was received by Amalia's brother, Hovik Kostanyan. Amalia's colleagues and friends, counterparts in international organizations, civil society and the government joined the U.S. Embassy that day to recognize Amalia's work and her dedication as a professional, civic activist and a citizen. ■



U.S. Ambassador Yovanovitch hands the Courage Award to Amalia Kostanyan to Amalia's brother, Hovik Kostanyan, March 15 (photo courtesy of the U.S. Embassy in Yerevan)

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Vanadzor Office Celebrates 13 Years of its Activity

OSF-Armenia congratulates the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Vanadzor Office (HCAV) on the occasion of celebrating 13 years of the Office's activities. HCAV has been a long-term partner of OSF-Armenia, doing vital work in the human rights area. The dedication of the staff and its leader is commendable and an example to be followed by new and existing organizations in the field. We at OSF-Armenia wish HCAV many years of productive work in their effort to see human rights better protected in Armenia. ■



HCAV staff, March 2011

Partnership Presents Civil Society Perspective on ENP Implementation in Armenia in 2010

On March 9, 2011, the “Partnership for Open Society” Initiative, representing more than sixty civil society organizations, presented the 4th report on the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) Implementation in Armenia at the Ballroom of the Congress Hotel.

The event was the first in a series of annual events dedicated to the memory of Amalia Kostanyan, the founder and the Chair of Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center and a remarkable civil society leader. OSF Acting Board Chair Dr. Hrayr Ghukasyan in his opening remarks spoke of Amalia’s enormous enthusiasm and working capacity, who with her determination and civic activism was one of the architects of civil society in Armenia, paving the way for future generations.

The conference was well attended by diplomatic corps, representatives of national and international organizations, as well as on-line and print media. Unlike the previous years, reflections on the implementation of the ENP in 2010 were made not only by the civil society and the EU Delegation in Armenia, but also by some government representatives. The assessments were strikingly different and showed the deep dissonance in expectations from ENP implementation and, therefore, the assessment of the situation in the country in the context of ENP implementation.



Keynote speakers at the conference on ENP Implementation in Armenia, March 9, 2011

The Head of the EU Delegation in Armenia, Ambassador Raul de Luzenberger, in his opening remarks encouraged civil society to continue providing critical comments and challenging the government. He also spoke of positive developments in the implementation of the European Neighborhood Program, saying that Armenia was much closer to Europe at present than at the beginning of the Program. “Civil society often wants us to urge reforms. But that isn’t our goal,” he said. Jacqueline Hale, Senior Policy Analyst-EU External Relations from the Open Society Foundations-Brussels challenged the positive assessment by Ambassador Luzenberger. “Though there is a need to recognize small steps, still more needs to be done,” emphasized Jacqueline Hale. “There are few if any improvements, and the overall political trend is towards declining standards in terms of rule of law and democracy, so called ‘European Standards’ to which Armenia is committed at the Council

of Europe. In particular, challenges to freedom of media and expression, concerns about the electoral code and its implementation, political prisoners and a government decree, which could increase government interference in the work of NGOs, are all worrying developments,” she added (the full text of Ms. Hale’s presentation can be found on www.partnership.am).

Boris Navasardyan, President of the Yerevan Press Club, emphasized that the situation in the field of media greatly deteriorated in 2010. He especially focused on the broadcast law, the frequency tender, as well as libel and slander cases against print media. Haykuhi Harutyunyan, Project Director of Helsinki Citizens’ Assembly Vanadzor Office, spoke about the degrading human rights situation since 2008. Siranush Sahakyan, Rights Protection without Borders NGO, gave an assessment of the implementation of the judicial reforms in 2010. Varuzhan Hochtanyan and Sona Ayvazyan from the Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center spoke about corruption and non-sustainable use of natural resources in the country. Mr. Hochtanyan presented data from a survey by Transparency International that showed that 50% of respondents claimed that corruption had worsened and 53% found that the government steps were insufficient. Mr. Hochtanyan also discussed the root causes of corruption in the country and the role of international and foreign donor organizations in fighting corruption in Armenia. Ms. Ayvazyan highlighted the worrisome trends of development of the mining sector and destruction of forests accompanied by corrupt behavior of high level officials. In her presentation, Ms. Ayvazyan touched upon cases when contracts for cleaning up toxic waste sites were tendered out to companies under the patronage of the Minister of Nature Protection, and a member of parliament and a regional governor were unlawfully engaged in mining businesses.

Vahagn Ghazaryan spoke about the state of economy and the trends and found it worrisome that Armenian trade legislation had national treatment issues. The government officials invited to speak at the conference were not able to attend due to travel or busy schedule. The Ministry of Finance was represented by Karen Brutyan, Head the Department of Internal Finance Oversight and Public Procurement Methodology, who focused on reforms in public procurement and acknowledged the civil society input in the process.

The keynote speakers, who also authored the main parts of the Report, also spoke of the missed opportunity in the 4th year of ENP implementation to produce discernible and conclusive advances in both democratic and economic reform.

The presentations were followed by lively discussion. Interestingly, even a presentation on the situation in the country in such diverse areas did not interest broadcast media, with the exception of A1plus. The full text of the report can be found on www.partnership.am. ■

Partnership and OSCE Co-organize Discussion on Human Rights in the Army and Civic Oversight

The OSCE Office in Yerevan and the «Partnership for Open Society» Initiative organized a roundtable discussion on Human Rights in the Army and Civic Oversight over the Armenian Armed Forces on February 22, 2011. The event brought together representatives of the diplomatic corps, international organizations, civil society rep-

representatives, government officials, international experts, lawyers, media representatives, students and other interested parties. Deputy Minister Ara Nazaryan read out the Minister's address voicing concern over human rights issues in the country.

"The ministry is undertaking active efforts towards enhancing the human rights protection mechanisms in the Armed Forces. Active measures are taken towards prevention of illegalities and the establishment of law and order," said Mr. Nazaryan. The Deputy Minister also said the army paid much attention to enhancing servicemen's level of education as a measure to combat crime in its subdivisions.

At the roundtable the keynote speakers reflected on Armenia's international commitments vis-à-vis human rights in the armed forces, issues regarding alternative service and conscientious objectors, and highlighted the need for civic control over the armed forces.

Referring to incidents in the army, lawyers Tigran Muradyan and Edmon Marukyan, both dealing with death cases in the army within the Strategic Litigation Program at OSF-Armenia, indicated that the involvement of the Ministry of Defense in these cases was far from sufficient.

David Amiryan from OSF-Armenia called upon the conference participants not to shy away from seeing the problems, but instead to recognize that they are many, take the reforms more seriously and make every effort to implement real reforms in the army, "because after all we deal with young people's lives," he added.

Sergey Kapinos, Head of the OSCE Office in Yerevan, said: "We share all the concerns raised by the public and are ready to help prevent tragic incidents." He also emphasized the need for human rights education and public oversight over the army.

Arthur Sakunts from the Helsinki Citizens Assembly Vanadzor Office reminded that the army must be an apolitical structure, while in Armenia it is used for political purposes. He also talked about difficulties in receiving information requested from the Ministry, as any kind of information, such as the number of recruited soldiers, names of companies supplying food, clothing, etc., was labeled a state secret and refused.

Ms. Andrea Vesa, Human Rights Officer from OSCE/ODIHR speaking about conscientious objection said that it was more than just based on religion. "It's based on ethical, philosophical and other grounds, and some countries do have it. It's a right and should be



Discussing problems in the army, February 22, 2011

protected," she said. She also pointed out that the alternative service should not be more than 1,5 times of normal service, i. e. 36 months in Armenia's case, compared to the 48 months stipulated by the current law.

The participants urged the Ministry of Defense to take appropriate

measures towards solving the issues raised. A policy brief, based on the discussion, was developed by OSF-Armenia and can be found on www.partnership.am. A more detailed account of the event can also be found on www.partnership.am. ■

Minister of Justice Pledges to Revise the Draft Law on Religious Organizations

Freedom of Conscience is among the most discussed and controversial spheres in the past few years. While current legislation on religious organizations needs major improvements, the changes that were introduced in two consecutive efforts, first in 2009 and then in 2011, would make the situation even worse, as they go against liberalization, against securing separation of the state and the church, provision of equal opportunities for all religions and denominations and protection of rights of all individuals.

Despite criticism by the civil society of the first legislative package, the current one was developed and submitted to the parliament without any civil society participation.

To uncover the atmosphere of secrecy surrounding the legislative developments, the Partnership for Open Society organized an event in February 2011 to bring all the stakeholders, including the authors of the opinions received to date. Minister of Justice Hrayr Tovmasyan, who attended the conference and made opening remarks, pledged a tolerant and democratic lawmaking process with participation of civil society. Furthermore, a commitment was made to further amend the Draft Law taking into consideration criticism and comments by civil society and international experts and that the new draft would be made public and open for critical remarks before sending it for review by international organizations.

Commenting on the situation with the freedom of religion, Mr. Danielyan, the Head of the "Collaboration for Democracy" NGO said, "There has been a growing tendency in state policy towards limitation of religious groups' rights during the last years. It is obvious that Armenia is steadily adopting a path of becoming a non-secular state where the Orthodox Church is invading into public life and taking control over its main domains such as education." The Venice Commission expert Ms. Flanagan reflecting on registration of religious organizations said: "...Compulsory registration limits freedom of association. The law is to provide freedom and not to limit [it]." Ms. Flanagan further mentioned that care must be taken to ensure that minorities were not oppressed, and reminded that the Constitution of Armenia protected freedom of religion and the right to change religion.

A policy brief developed by OSF-Armenia and a more detailed account of the event can be found on www.partnership.am. ■

Civil Society Learns Lessons from Elections in Estonia

Representatives of Armenian civil society organizations, along with representatives from Estonia, Latvia, Moldova, Georgia and Slovakia, participated in an interesting program from March 3-9, 2011 in Estonia, where they observed the Estonian parliamentary elections, exchanged experience and expertise in election observation, monitoring activities, and participated in seminars on e-voting and election monitoring. The Armenian representatives had a unique opportunity to observe dramatically different elections in a country with the same Soviet background.

“I saw the political will to organize free and fair elections, something that we have not had the fortune to see here. It is largely thanks to the political will that Estonians have registered such success,” said Levon Barseghyan, Chairman of Asparez Journalists’ Club, who participated in the program. “The biggest violation that I personally witnessed having observed the elections in Tallinn and Tartu and nearby villages was that two of the precincts in the villages did not have their numbers on the doors... In Estonia I witnessed the result of coming together of internet technologies, the political will and democracy.”

“It was particularly interesting to see how they use the e-voting system in their elections and the amazing part was how fast they could calculate the result of the elections. It took them literally one hour to come up with final results” said Haykak Arshamyan from the Yerevan Press Club, who also participated in the election observation.

The project was also a good way to establish a network of civil society and state actors from the six countries working on transparency of electoral processes.▪

Representatives of NGOs Working with Parents of Disabled Children Exchange Experience with Kyrgyz Colleagues

Representatives of "Astghatsolq" NGO working with parents of disabled children and the children themselves took part in a three-day international conference held in March in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, which brought together about 100 participants from various organizations and countries, experts from Eastern Europe and Central Asia. It is noteworthy that all of these NGOs were established and run by parents of disabled children.

The Conference aimed to present various approaches to providing support to children with special needs and their families, share experience and create opportunities for cooperation among participants.

“It was an amazing experience for us, meeting so many experienced organizations working with children with special needs. We shared our experiences, especially related to fundraising,” said Irina Hovhannisyanyan, the president of "Astghatsolq" NGO. Thanks to the conference, the NGO established contacts with a UK based HealthProm organization, which was looking for a partner in Armenia for possible joint projects in the future. HealthProm works with local communities in Eastern Europe and Asia to improve health and social care for vulnerable women and children.▪

MEDIA

Partnership for Open Society Initiative, OSCE and Council of Europe Organize a Conference to Reflect on Challenges for Media in 2010 and Trends for 2011

The «Partnership for Open Society» Initiative, representing more than sixty civil society organizations, in cooperation with the OSCE Office in Yerevan and the Council of Europe in Armenia, organized a conference on January 27, 2011 in Yerevan to reflect on challenges for mass media and freedom of speech in the country in 2010, including legislative initiatives, the actual practice and future trends.

At the conference, Levon Barseghyan, Chairman of Journalists' Club "Asparez" spoke about the attempts of the authorities to regulate the content of the mass media through initiatives, such as adoption of an Ethical code by the Public Council, which eleven TV companies immediately signed. Meanwhile, none of them was in a hurry to join the self-regulation initiative started by media organizations. Mesrop Harutyunyan from the Committee to Protect Freedom of Expression and Anna Israyelyan from “Aravot” Daily spoke about the fictitious nature of the frequency tender, particularly as the results of it were long predetermined. Ashot Melikyan, Chairman of the Committee to Protect Freedom of Expression, talked about violence against journalists stating that the number of violations had increased, while Artak Zeynalyan, a strategic litigation expert, reflected on court cases on freedom of expression in Armenia, litigation and implementation of court decisions. He reminded that the decision made by the European Court of Human Rights regarding «A1+» TV Company had not been implemented by the Armenian authorities so far.

Armen Ter-Tac hatyan, a lawyer, a member of the Public Council and of the Ombudsman-led working group drafting amendments to the broadcast legislation, speaking about the digitalization process in Armenia, stated that the principles of formation of the National

TV and Radio Commission and the Public Television Board should be revised, the process of licensing should be clearer, reasons for allocation and denial of broadcasting licenses should be well-grounded and presented in written form and attention should be paid to proper use of language.

The foreign expert invited by the OSCE Office in Yerevan Dr. Andrei Richter, Professor and Head of the Media Law Department of the Lomonosov Moscow State University who has reviewed Armenian media legislation and provided his expert analysis, simply stated that the new Law on TV and Radio did not correspond to European standards. He stated that the law was not conducive to development of democracy and protection of human rights in the country and stressed that civil society recommendations had not been taken into consideration. He was also surprised that the digitalization process instead of bringing about an increase in TV channels had curbed their number. Christian Moeller, Council of Europe expert, consultant at theinformationsociety.org shared Dr. Richter’s concerns and emphasized that all interested parties should have been involved in the discussion. He also said: “The licensing body should have independence from the state, termination of the license should be considered as means of the last resort and the law should prescribe also other - softer - sanctions.”

It is interesting to note that none of the TV companies (except A1+) came to the event either to participate or to provide coverage. An impressive number of government officials, representatives of international and national organizations and experts participated in the event.

A policy brief developed by OSF-Armenia and a more detailed account of the event can be found on www.partnership.am.▪

Committee to Protect Freedom of Expression Presents Results of Monitoring of Transparency and Accessibility of Government Websites and Monitoring of Press Conferences

In January 2011, the Committee to Protect Freedom of Expression (CPFE) presented the findings of its monitoring of transparency and accessibility of government websites. In February the organization presented to the public the findings of the monitoring of press conferences.

Government websites serve a distinct function - to make information public. The aim of the monitoring was to find out the current level of information accessibility from state bodies. "We rated the government bodies according to the degree of their openness, based



Keynote speakers at the media conference, January 27, 2011

on the monitoring of the websites," said Ashot Melikyan, CPFE Chairman. "We hope the ratings will create a competitive environment in the field, and will be an incentive for government bodies to become more transparent and publicize the information that should be open for the public."

CPFE monitored the TV coverage of press-conferences by politi-

cal and public figures in the press clubs of Yerevan from May to September 2010. The aim of the monitoring effort was to see which press conferences were covered and which were not, and if they were covered, then how.

The monitoring showed a clear bias towards covering pro-governmental public and political figures. The full text of the report is available on www.partnership.am/publications and on www.khosq.am

The monitoring was conducted within a program supported by the Open Society Foundations – Armenia.▪

"A1+" Website Wins 2011 Free Press of Eastern Europe Prize

In March 2011, the Fritt Ord Foundation, Oslo, Norway, and the Ebelin and Gerd Bucerius "ZEIT" Foundation, Hamburg, Germany, announced the winners of Prize Free Press of Eastern Europe for 2011. The prize went to "A1+" TV company and four journalists from Russia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine and Belarus.

The Open Society Foundations-Armenia has been supporting "A1+" TV Company since it was taken off air in 2002, being also the first and continuous supporter of their website. In 2010, with the Foundations' support, "A1+" started the first on-line TV in Armenia.▪



"A1+" website wins 2011 Free Press of Eastern Europe Prize

EDUCATION

OSF-Armenia Supports University Departments to Tune Study Programs

OSF-Armenia supported revision of study programs for two departments at the Yerevan State University. The departments were selected through a competitive process. The department of Biology will initiate a revision of its bachelor program on Bioinformatics, allowing the faculty to tune their program towards developing the necessary competencies for the students. The program profile, specifications, courses and modules, as well as teaching and assessment methods will be revisited and restructured. "The revision of the program according to the tuning methodology allows us to teach what the students will eventually need and be able to do in their professional life rather than what the teachers can read as a course," says Nelli Hovhannisyanyan, an instructor at the department and project developer.



Biology department team gathers to discuss project plans, February, 2011

The Department of Physics will start a new Masters Program on Physics of Quantum Technologies to prepare specialists in the areas of nanotechnologies, higher technologies, quantum technologies and related fields. "This will enable the department to offer a program according to the local and international market needs. This will be the first experience of the department to also teach management and marketing principles to the students," says Atom Muradyan who heads the project.

The development of the programs will be based on an earlier project supported by OSF-Armenia in 2009 and implemented by the National Center for Strategic Research in Higher Education NGO. The NGO worked towards adapting the European Tuning methodology to the Armenian context, as a result of which a Handbook was developed on Design and Implementation of Competency-based Study programs. The electronic version of the Handbook is accessible on <http://osi.am/links.asp>. ■

PUBLIC HEALTH

Pain Relief for Palliative Care Still Not Accessible in Armenia

Healthcare institutions should be places where patients could afford treatment and care based on human rights. Yet, due to the social vulnerability of many patients and underdeveloped health care programs patients are often neglected and subjected to inhuman treatment. People with HIV, sexual minorities, people who use drugs, people with intellectual disabilities, people who suffer from severe pain because of absence of pain relief medications are especially vulnerable. The World Health Organization's (WHO) Constitution says "the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is a fundamental right of every human being without distinction or race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition."

Denial of pain relief for palliative care and other essential medical purposes is a big concern and this is due to absence of palliative care and pain relief policy and services. Narine Movsisyan, a physician from the "Muratsan" university hospital says, "It is the duty of us all to stand up for the rights of people who are in pain by keeping patients comfortable and free of pain, by relieving or stopping suffering. We should make the patients feel safe and secure by showing that he or she will be taken care of, and will not be left alone."

To help mobilize communities to address this important issue in

different countries of the world, the Open Society Foundations' Public Health Program and the OSF International Advocacy Office organized a seminar on "Finding the Critical Path to Change: Planning and Implementing a Successful Campaign" on February 7-11 in Cambridge, UK. The seminar was aimed at teaching the basics of successful campaigning and strengthening participants' knowledge by learning from the experiences of activists who had led successful campaigns on public health and human rights issues at international and national levels.

OSF-Armenia tries to address the problems related to lack of policies and capacity by providing technical support to the Ministry of Health in Armenia to finalize the Concept Paper on Palliative care and the Action Plan, and supports specialists in developing educational packages on pain relief and palliative care to build capacity in this area. The training programs will also be open for larger groups of specialists interested in the field. Foundations-Armenia is now negotiating the accreditation process with the Ministry of Health and future institutionalization of the training programs. ■

EMERGENCY FUND

OSF-Armenia Emergency Fund supported a number projects to reach out to disadvantaged children. The projects were particularly timely in their prompt response, especially against the background of the statement by UNICEF in December 2010 voicing concern over the stark increase in poverty rates as a result of the financial and economic crisis. The organization was especially alarmed at the level of child poverty rate in Armenia, alerting that 38% of children in the country live in poverty and 4.5% of them below the extreme poverty line, and this is according to the data from the National Statistical Service.

Mitigating Child Poverty in Kotayk Region

OSF-Armenia and the Children's Support Center Foundation (CSCF) initiated a project to support children from socially vulnerable families in Kotayk marz. OSF-Armenia made a \$38,700 contribution towards CSCF's available \$37,440 in-kind and in-cash contribution for the project, addressing the problem of child poverty that began to grow in 2010 due to the financial and economic crises. The project specifically envisions targeted and professional assistance to children in difficulties and at risk as well as their families.

Among the project beneficiaries are Tamara and Rudik with their three underage children living in extreme poverty in Bjni, in a shelter of 9 square meters, without electricity & heating. One of their children periodically faints, and the family cannot afford medical examination for the child. "Even if we have something to eat, she cannot eat..." said the mother of the child.

In collaboration with the local government and child protection network, the project will help identify the 50 most critical cases (fami-



EF and CSCF reach out to families and children in dire need from Kotayk marz

lies and children at risk and in difficulties), assess their situation, elaborate assistance packages and provide direct assistance.▪

Supporting Day Care for Disabled Children in Chambarak

Responding to the need to reach out to disabled children deprived of real assistance, OSF-Armenia supported "Astgatsolq" NGO with a \$13,166 contribution towards \$4,956 in-kind contribution enabling the NGO to recommence provision of comprehensive social services to 30 disabled children in Chambarak Day Care Center. The project envisages provision of social and psychological assistance to the children and their families (counseling, feeding, and transportation to/from the Center) as well as tutoring and vocational trainings, and foster care service and trainings for the parents of disabled children attending the Center. Currently more than 30 disabled children attend the Center, the only place where they get education.



Day Care Center for disabled children in Chambarak, February 2011

"Astghatsolq" NGO with the help of USAID, through Social Protection Systems Strengthening (SPSS) program, set up the Day Care Center for disabled children in Chambarak in 2007 within the National Children's Rights Protection Program. The project was funded by USAID up to 2009 and should have been on the state budget according to the initial plan. Yet after 2009 it was deprived of funding due to the crisis.▪

Providing Opportunity to Children in Artamet Community to Attend Kindergarten

The Women's Union named after St. Sandukht came up with an initiative to provide an opportunity to kids from Artamet village (mostly populated by refugees from Azerbaijan) to attend the newly renovated and fully equipped kindergarten in the neighboring Mrgashen village (Kotayk province) and get pre-school education. Towards this end, OSF-Armenia contributed \$10,922 and \$5,000 co-funding was received from with the Ministry of Defense for purchasing a minibus in order to organize regular transportation of the children to the kindergarten in Mrgashen and back.▪

Supporting Needy Families with Newborns

The Emergency Fund supported the Armenian Association of Women with University Education (AAWUE) in 2011 with a \$25,000 contribution matched to \$22,200 co-funding from "Hayastan" All Armenia Fund and private donations to continue the "Ororots" project. The project started in 2009 when OSF-Armenia, through the

Emergency Fund, supported AAWUE to assist newborn babies in border areas of Tavush region by providing them with items of first necessity until the age of one. The packages include a set of clothes, talcum powder, shoes for children above 4 months, soaps for children, feeding bottles, cotton-tipped sticks for cleaning ears, body oil, a blanket and a bag.

In 2011 about 130 socially vulnerable families will benefit from the grant.▪

Emergency Fund Continues Supporting Orran's Center in Vanadzor

In January 2011, OSF-Armenia continued supporting the Children's Center in Vanadzor set up by Orran NGO with the help of the Emergency Fund in 2009. OSF-Armenia made a \$67,647 contribution towards \$20,194 in-kind contribution from Orran NGO to continue helping more than 50 vagrant and socially disadvantaged children and their families at Orran's Vanadzor Children's Center. The project aims to get these children and families out of poverty circle and care for them by providing basic educational and medical assistance, daily meals and development of skills through numerous trainings. It will help avert a possible dropout of children from school. Overall about 200 people are benefiting from the project, including family members and staff.

The project has touched the lives of many families in dire need of help. Heghine, a mother of 3 children, with two elderly in-laws to take care of and no husband, used to come to Yerevan to beg on the streets to support her family. Her family was among those that Orran reached out to. Heghine got a small job as a cleaner and is a volunteer at Orran, while her three children are now at Orran.

Orran has also become a mediator between the government bodies and families who need social assistance as well as between schools and the children trying to find solutions to problematic issues the beneficiaries might have due to their socially vulnerable status.▪



Writers from Lori marz visiting children at Orran, December, 2010

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Policy Fellowship Competition

OSF-Armenia Policy Fellowship Initiative announces a Policy Fellowship competition for policy researchers eager to carry out rigorous and innovative study identifying the most fundamental open society challenges and developing practical solutions by conducting primary research into specific policy issues. Grant proposals should fall within the following research areas: the rule of law and justice; the economic crisis and its effects on Armenia; European integration processes; freedom of conscience and religion; press freedom; development trends in public/social sphere; education reform; national security and human rights; online democracy in the context of technological convergence; Armenian women's struggle for identity.

The Fellowship is intended to attract civil society representatives, university faculty, policy analysts and advisers with an advanced university degree in political science, law, social science, economics, international relations or related fields. Questions on the application process should be send to: adavid@osi.am or annak@osi.am.

The fellowship guidelines and additional information are available at www.osi.am or by phone 53-67-58; 53-38-62. To be considered for the Policy Fellowship, applicants should submit a research proposal in English and supporting materials by 5 pm on April 29, 2010. A complete application package should be submitted to the address: Tumanyan St. 2nd cul-de-sac, House 7/1 and by email to register@osi.am.

For additional information, please attend the Information Session to be held on April 11, at 4 pm, in Congress Hotel, Combined Room.

Call for Preparation and Broadcast of TV Programs

OSF-Armenia Media and Information Programs invite applications from TV companies with a broadcast license, website offering on-line broadcast, production companies and NGOs for preparation and broadcast of TV programs (including online broadcast). The programs should reflect on social and economic, as well as democracy-related issues.

The deadline for submission of applications is April 27, 17:00

Project proposals should be in Russian or English, and should be sent electronically to register@osi.am and delivered in a hard copy (1 original and 6 copies) to OSF-Armenia, address: 7/1 Tumanyan St, 2nd cul-de-sac, Yerevan 0002.

Details and an application form can be obtained from the OSF-Armenia website www.osi.am.

Contact person: Tatevik Melikyan, tatevik@osi.am or David Amiry-an, adavid@osi.am; tel: +37410 533862; 536758.

Address: 7/1 Tumanyan St, 2nd cul-de-sac, Yerevan 0002.



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