

FAR



Year In Review

2024



Child Protection

Improved living conditions, hygiene and privacy while providing a conducive environment for psychological and emotional wellbeing for hundreds of children in Armenia.

Child Protection Programs

Activity	Numbers	Impact
Short Term Shelter & Crisis Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75 children • 28 currently sheltered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 41 children (70%) reunited with families • 1 child transitioned to independent living • 5 children – institutionalized
Renovation of the Main Building		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved living conditions • Improved hygiene and privacy • Conducive environment for psychological and emotional well being
Socio Berd Day Care Center in Berd (Mardigian Child Protection Center)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 170 children from 128 vulnerable families (including 16 displaced kids) from five rural communities in Berd 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional resilience • Child/parent healthy relations • Life skills
“Home Again” family environment for Gyumri Children Support Center Beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 children reunited with families • 70 local workforce in Gyumri, Kapan and Yerevan trained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% in deinstitutionalizing children • Modeled pilot for best practices in child/family reunification

Integration of Displaced Families in Sisian

- 270 families with 128 children assessed
- 118 families selected for assistance 44 received essentials
- 130 parents trained on parental skills, family budget management, etc.
- 56 kids had a trip to historical sites
- Immediate needs met
- Resilience issues addressed through ED initiatives
- Legal aid, psychological assistance, familiarization with cultural heritage made many settle in Sisian

Family Stabilization in Ijevan, Noyemberyan (BCPP)

- 270 families (140 in Ijevan and 136 in Noyemberyan assessed
- Support packages designed and delivered (humanitarian aid, psychosocial rehabilitation)
- Living conditions improved
- Mental health challenges, family violence issues, single parenthood, disability issues addressed

Strengthening Armenia's Social and Child Protection Systems

- 70 specialists from crisis intervention centers in Gyumri, Kapan and Yerevan trained
- 40 policy and decision makers from child, woman and family issues trained on foster care
- 21 displaced from Artsakh social workers benefited from supervision service
- 14 displaced social workers received psychosocial assistance
- 14 Children's Center staff received training on child protection issues
- Capacity of government owned institutions improved to promote family unification and stabilization
- Methodologically empowered human resource to further promote foster care model
- 20+ SWs from Artsakh employed with local social services and NGOs
- Displaced SW overcame displacement stress and trauma
- Continuous opportunities result in more targeted and effective service provision
- The government refers the most complex cases to the Center

Their Stories



A Birthday to Remember

On October 22, 2021, Osanna Astoyan, a 32-year-old mother of three daughters—Knarik, 14, Ani, 10, and Marine, 6—received a life-changing call from FAR informing her that her application for the FAR’s Children of Armenia Sponsorship Program (CASP) had been approved. This meant her daughters would each receive a stipends annually until they turned 18, providing crucial support to their family.

“It was just a week before Ani’s sixth birthday,” Osanna recalls. “Thanks to this support, I managed to organize a small celebration. The cake was adorable, decorated with a Barbie doll, butterflies, marshmallows, and lollipops. The joy in Ani’s eyes as she blew out the candles is something I’ll never forget.”

Osanna has been the backbone of her family since her husband’s tragic passing in a car crash in 2018. Living in Gyumri, where harsh winters demand extra heating, she’s had to stretch every penny to keep her daughters safe and warm in their humid home.

“The support from CASP has been a lifeline for us,” Osanna shares candidly. “Every autumn, I use the stipend to buy firewood. Keeping my children warm is essential, especially in such a damp house. This year, I even replaced the windows through the support to help keep the heat in during winter.”

But the financial aid has done more than just keep the family warm. It's also opened up new opportunities for the girls. Osanna proudly mentions a new tradition linked to the CASP support: a pilgrimage to St. Hovhannes Church in Shirak Province to thank God for the kindness of those who have helped them through difficult times.

In addition, the stipend has allowed the sisters to attend dance classes and participate in international festivals. Knarik recently took first place at a festival in Tbilisi, Georgia. "Without this financial help, I would have had to take out a loan to afford the trip," admits the mother.

Through the CASP program, generously supported by the dedicated volunteers of the Women's Guild of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (WGCC), children like Knarik, Ani, and Marine are given the chance to pursue their dreams and build meaningful lives.

By [donating to FAR today](#), you can be a part of their journey, empowering them to reach for their dreams and create brighter futures.



www.farusa.org/post/a-birthday-to-remember



Economic Development

Provided a path to self-reliance for war veterans, vulnerable families, women, and Artsakh refugees through economic initiatives and training.

Economic & Community Development Programs

Activity	Numbers	Impact
Small Business Assistance Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90 applications solicited from displaced entrepreneurs • 19 received grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The path to self reliance started. All 19 have either started new or make attempts to expand existing enterprises
Business Support and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 displaced women trained by GITC (tech for no tech) and got subsequent business support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprises are in progres
Women's Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 displaced women trained in confectionery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 are successful with their individual enterprises
War Veterans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 veterans of Artsakh war trained, small businesses supported (rabbit breeding, honey production) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small businesses up and running
Agricultural Training for Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 42 up to 29 yo youth from Armavir and Syunik trained in high value crop cultivation, dried fruit and honey production. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The participants received the required toolkits to start entrepreneurial activities. In progress.

<p>Smart Agriculture Center</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A joint venture with Agrarian University. • 16 beneficiaries underwent vocational training in cheese making, computer skills and crop cultivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved income level and self sufficiency
<p>Shaghat Cooperative</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coop member farmers in Syunik supported with packaging machinery to pack sewing and ag production goods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added value to sell the products for higher price
<p>Training and Support for Rural Entrepreneurs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 53 residents from 3 rural communities of ljevan trained and supported to start their small business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodworking, poultry breeding, baking and guest house are types of business in the development phase
<p>Business Accelerator Partnership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with EU supported Innoljevan project, 5 agrotourism companies with apitherapy and permaculture components supported. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants stimulated authentic tourism development in Tavush. Knowledge and tools provided to move forward in accord with market trends.
<p>Cooperative Establishment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile slaughtering service introduced in Tavush in partnership with FAO and Shen NGO. FAR cofounded a track for the mobile unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe to buy meat. For FAR, it is instrumental as the kindergartens were not getting meat due to the lack of slaughterhouses. Now, it is possible.

Youth Workforce Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armenia Workforce Development Activity (AWDA/USAID) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Started enterprises, more to come when the agricultural season starts.
Armenia Workforce Development Activity (AWDA/USAID)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to 29 yo youth across the country trained in HighTech, Agriculture and Hospitality 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 young people trained including PWDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50%+ reported securing new or improved employment, this is an indicator of economic resilience and acer growth
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach foster longer term community development, responds to labor market needs and provides equal opportunities to all the participants
Family Stabilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 170 children received psychological assistance, help in life skills, art therapy, human capacity development, etc. • 150 parents improved parental skills • 91 families referred to other social services • 73 displaced families assessed for the needs (290 persons) • 135 persons received humanitarian assistance (79 displaced and 56 local) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of displaced families • Empowered families • Dignified life

<p>Community & Economic Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 123 farmers participated in training on ag related topics 85 farmers consulted on ag related issues • 74 beneficiaries continue “start your own business” projects, monitoring in progress • Vocational training for 45 beneficiaries (11 displaced and 34 local) • 8 displaced families underwent training on diary production • Chocolate bank distributed 450 kg chocolate to 150 most vulnerable seniors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to business, self-employment is to increase chances towards self-reliance • Dialogue of generations strengthens links between the youth and seniors thus contributing to the integrity
<p>Healthcare</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200 community members trained on the importance of vaccination • 93 trained on Self Care • 53 young women and girls participated in • 9 sessions on hygiene, reproductive health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness on public health issues
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on Kindergarten Meal Plans • Staff of 18 kindergarten participated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of local workforce to serve the community in a more effective way
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ToT on Vaccination • 6 local GPs and family doctors participated 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ToT for psychologists • 14 psychologists and social workers participated in training on “Psychological Work with Post Trauma Cases” 	
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 120 students from 21 schools participated in Sports events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased civic engagement • Increased youth participation in civic processes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 students from 18 schools participated in History and Culture of Berd Region events 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 students from 21 schools participated in Science Olympiad 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 children attended the summer camp in Hankavan 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 children attended the Science Camp 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 community members (27 youth) participated in non formal education events 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 youth (5 displaced and 7 local) participated in Training on SMM Skills Development 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 youth participated in a course on Medical Literacy, Leadership and Advocacy 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 youth participated in sessions on professional orientation 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applied to 11 grants (7 funded, 3 rejected, one pending approval) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fee for Service to 110 farmers (consultation, animal feed milling, orchard, plot sprinkling with the agro drone) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About 5 K USD raised
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation's network expanded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represented on the boards of local guardianship committee, Berd medical center board, member of Integrated social service, Local NGO network member, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visibility on social platforms 	<p>Average post reach 4900 on FB and 590 on IG</p>

Their Stories



Closing in on a One-Ton Fruit Harvest Dream

Vardan Tsaturyan starts his day with purpose in his beloved, peaceful border village of Paravakar, in the Berd region. His passion over the past few years has been cultivating peaches and persimmons in his garden, nurturing a bountiful future for his family.

He began with just 50 trees, and now his orchard has grown to nearly 500 peach and persimmon trees. *"FAR helped me expand my orchard. When I applied for the Start your Business initiative, I was skeptical," he shares. "It was my first time applying for such a program, and I didn't think anyone would help me realize my dream."*

Through the program, Vardan also set up a sustainable irrigation system, allowing him to water his trees 24/7. Before, he had to do it manually from the nearest village—a task that was both physically exhausting and inefficient. *"If I had done it on my own, buying just 100 meters of pipe each year, it would have taken forever. Thanks to FAR, it's now a reality,"* says the father of three.

This autumn, Vardan harvested his first fruits, which he proudly gave to his children. *"The fruits are delicious, and I didn't use any extra fertilizers—I want everything to be natural."*

In a few years, he expects the orchard to produce even more—around 20 to 30 kilograms of fruit per tree, or about 1 ton in total.

Many people, like Vardan, in remote communities of Armenia want to become thriving entrepreneurs with our support. Your contributions to FAR today will empower them on their journey towards economic prosperity and self-reliance.

Start your Business initiative is a part of the FAR's multi-faceted Breaking the Cycle of Poverty in Tavush Region Program. Since 2013, BCPP has been promoting activities that generate positive and sustainable impact for families in the Berd, Ijevan, and Noyemberyan regions of Tavush Province. BCPP is generously funded by the Mardigian Family Foundation.



<https://www.farusa.org/post/closing-in-on-a-one-ton-fruit-harvest-dream-1>



Healthcare

Career expansion for professionals and a path forward for Artsakh refugees in the medical field to rebuild their lives.

Healthcare Programs

Activity	Numbers	Impact
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 500 doctors and 200 nurses participated in Continuous Professional Development opportunities offered by/through FAR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Credits to practice
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 118 medical doctors including 58 displaced went through the 4-week long CME 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 120 professional development credits earned
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 77, including 7 displaced, hospital head nurses underwent 2-week long CME 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60 credits earned
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 112 nurses from Vayots Dzor, Aragatsotn, Tavush and Gegharkunik marzes participated in a 3-day Elderly Care, Geriatrics course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved skills to service seniors 18 credits earned
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 145 General Practitioners from Yerevan and marzes participated in a two day course on Fundamentals of Geriatrics 	

<p>BCPP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 GPs and pediatricians from Tavush participated in an online course on pediatric disease management for 5 days. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 credits earned
<p>BCPP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 community nurses in Tavush participated in a 12-day long in person CME course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 credits earned
<p>Sisian Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 community nurses underwent five-day first aid training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 credits earned
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 doctors and 15 nurses displaced from Artsakh got tuitions for residency program at YSMU or NIH. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All are employed in Armenia
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1572 (876 in Berd, 696 in Aragatsont and ljevan) kindergarten age children benefited from kindergarten meal program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physically and cognitively healthy generation
<p>Choolfaian Scholarship Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 nurses graduated • 2 new enrollments • 6 currently in program 	

<p>Community Training on Public Health Issues in Sisian, Ijevan and Noyemberyan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3000 young mothers and youth (including 500 displaced from Artsakh) participated in training on healthy lifestyle, NCD prevention • 500 displaced underwent psychological therapy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention vs Treatment • 40-50% awareness increased on the mentioned topics • Psychological stress released among the displaced women and children
<p>Infrastructure Rehabilitation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 healthcare establishments partially renovated in Sisian, Noyemberyan, Ijevan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved healthcare service in remote regions, especially rural communities • Accessibility of healthcare services increased for the population in the regions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 establishments supplied with essential medical supplies and equipment 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 kindergarten in Tavush completely renovated and furnished • 30 kindergartens in Aragatsotn and Tavush received new furniture, kitchen appliances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducive pre-school education/development: ensures normal physical growth of 3-6 yo children

Hypertonia Measurement Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1200 adults in Syunik and Aragatsotn underwent screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Results due in February 2025
Nutrition Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In partnership with AUA and WFP, Columbia University Institute of Nutrition brought together 150 stakeholders to discuss child nutrition issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FAR's primary role in advocating for proper child nutrition on pre school and elementary school level as a beacon for healthy generation upbringing

Their Stories



A Dispatch from Anna Karapetyan: Tracing COVID-19's Cardiovascular Impact

After years of unwavering dedication, Anna Karapetyan has seen her vision come to fruition - a triumph of perseverance and passion. She leads a dynamic team of three brilliant female scholars, united in their pursuit of understanding the enduring impact of COVID-19 on the cardiovascular health of Armenia's populace. Their groundbreaking study, *"The Long-term Effects of COVID-19 on the Cardiovascular System within the Armenian Population,"* has recently received the prestigious Dr. Aram Chobanian Award from FAR's Yervant Terzian Armenian National Science and Education Fund (ANSEF).

"We aim to explore the lingering effects of COVID-19 on the bloodstream and devise appropriate interventions for healing," explains Anna, 49, who also serves as the Head of the Department of Human and Animal Physiology at the Faculty of Biology, Yerevan State University.

Having applied for ANSEF grants over ten years, this year, Anna has finally secured her inaugural grant as team lead and her second overall as an ANSEF recipient.

“For scholars like us, ANSEF provides a trusted platform to not only delve into research intricacies but also to disseminate our findings globally,” Anna emphasizes. *“Our current focus on the cardiovascular aftermath of the pandemic builds upon our prior research, which aimed to understand the prevalence of mycoses in the Armenian population during the pandemic through blood tests and nasal mucosa samples.”*

As the specter of Long-COVID looms large, their scientific inquiry has shifted to investigate the enduring cardiovascular repercussions of the virus. Tamara, 39, the junior researcher, gathers samples for analysis, while Ruzanna, 26, the youngest member of the team delves into scientific literature. Meanwhile, the other Anna, 45, synthesizes data and compiles statistical results, orchestrating their collective effort.

“We’ve expanded our scope to include heart indicators alongside blood analysis,” Tamara explains. *“By categorizing COVID-19 patients based on severity and vaccination status, we aim to comprehensively understand the spectrum of cardiovascular implications.”*

“ANSEF grant is a lifeline for our research. It equips us with the necessary resources to conduct our research rigorously and serves as a powerful motivator for our team,” notes Anna proudly acknowledging ANSEF’s pivotal role.

Your support to brilliant scholars like Anna and her team can make all the difference. By donating to FAR today, you’ll not just fund a study, but will also be investing in the future of health, knowledge, and progress.

<https://www.farusa.org/post/a-dispatch-from-anna-karapetyan-tracing-covid-19-s-cardiovascular-impact>



Education

Provided opportunities to socially insecure youth to spark their interests, level the playing field in education, and support academic excellence.

Education Programs

Activity	Numbers	Impact
Scholarships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 450 youth received scholarships (32 from displaced families) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal opportunities for socially insecure youth with excellent academic progress Thus far 80% of graduates are employed
Sisian Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80 displaced elementary school children received backpacks and schooling supplies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No education dropouts among the displaced population in Sisian
Supporting Yerevan State Conservatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 student groups participated in the chamber music group contest New supplies provided to the Conservatory symphony orchestra 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance capacity improved Prizes and monthly stipends as stimulus for better studies and performance Conservatory's improved capacity to ensure better education
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 best students receive Arsen Sayan monthly stipend 	
Yerevan Botanical Gardens Eco Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3000 high school students attended issue specific lectures, workshops, discussion sessions held at the Center Plant management practicums at the Gardens for school children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased interest in ScienceTEM

<p>Agriculture Interest Group in Sisian</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 school children attended the classes on agriculture basics, crop management, greenhouse management, winemaking, etc. • Visited wineries, learn grafting and pruning techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group is the major student supplier to the Agrarian University's Vocational college in Sisian • Almost all the students are graduates of the ag interest group
<p>Sahan's Master Classes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits, concerts and master classes in 6 locations, including Javakhk of Georgia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A huge opportunity for teachers to upgrade teaching skills • A huge opportunity for children to learn from and perform with a renowned piano player • A beautiful opportunity for the communities to enjoy beautiful music performed by the musician during his charity concerts
<p>STEM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1156 7-9 grader students in Tavush and Syunik participated in victorines, quizzes, competitions in science, chemistry, physics, biology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The anticipated impact is to promote interests in STEM and encourage younger generation to pursue STEM specializations

- 137 senior high school students participated in World of Science Chemistry and Physics Olympiad in Tavush.
- Top 35 participants were in a science camp.
- 8 best participants became FAR scholars to pursue STEM specializations at universities

- 20 teachers of physics in Noyemberyan re-trained in new teaching methods, project management, etc.

- Improved teacher capacity, upgraded educational process on the high school level

- 24 chemistry teachers trained in Ijevan

- 2000 students from 30 schools in 8 marzes participated in a series of lectures “From School to Space” and meetings with scientists

10th Science Camp for Yerevan, Lori, Tavush, Kotayk, Syunik, Aragatsotn and Vayots Dzor marzes

- In partnership with Observatory and Astronomical Society, 40 senior high schoolers attended the science camp in Byurakan

- Obvious interest among the participants to choose science as their future specialization

<p>Practical sessions in Physics in Sisian</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sessions held for 90 high school students in Sisian by AUA professors: practical experiments using the school lab and AUA equipment
<p>Music and Arts Support (extracurricular education)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oktet school orchestra and folk ensemble had a concert at Vanadzor Music School • 12 students of Dilijan Art College participated in national contests and festivals • Completed overhaul renovation of Vanadzor Art School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance skills improved thanks to traveling concerts and competitions • Gyumri, Dilijan schools are musical hubs in Shirak and Tavush • Vanadzor Art school tripled the student body 70 to 200+ • Vanadzor Art school became a center to host diverse community events
<p>Summer Camp in Hankavan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 317 9-14 yo kids spent two weeks at the camp (orphans, displaced, children of war heroes and veterans, from socially insecure families) • 18 FAR scholars volunteers as assistance teachers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An opportunity to experience happy childhood, to become physically healthy and develop as a citizen

<p>Infrastructure Rehabilitation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 chemistry labs rehabilitated in Sisian • 2 school canteens renovated in Tavush (BCPP) • 2 technology classrooms renovated and supplied with equipment in Noyemberyan villages (BCPP) • Heating system installed in one school (BCPP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 800 children benefited
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued on going maintenances of Gyumri and Dilijan music schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About 500 students continue studies in up to date clean and cozy conditions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renovated and furnished the Graduate Research Center at the NA Institute of Botany 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved conditions for the graduates students
<p>ANSEF</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All 22 projects funded in 2023 fully implemented, reports submitted and accepted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 articles published in local and international reviews 14 PIs received larger grants from other international sources

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17 grants awarded in 2024 in biology, physics, chemistry, biotechnology, material science, history and philology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation started. 13 PIs are women, • 7 PIs are below the age of 35
<p>Math Honor Program in partnership with ASOP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stipends awarded to 18 winners • 2 of the winners held practical sessions for the summer camp participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEP promotion
<p>Greentech Lab in Marmashen Village</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embassy of Japan Grant • The construction is in progress • Shirak marz 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative training facility to train youth, children, women, displaced and war veteran in renewable energy and technological solutions. • With opening planned for mid-2025, the hub aims at empowering local communities and driving sustainable regional growth
<p>Training and Internship for Artsakh War Veterans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-6 month long courses in #D Modeling, Java Script, Python, Engineering . • 270 applied • 60 enrolled • 23 graduated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 new businesses established • 40% of graduates employed

<p>SheCan Women Economic Empowerment Accelerator for displaced and vulnerable women from Gyumri, Vanadzor, Echnmiadzin and Yerevan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 320 applicants • 110 enrolled • 65 graduated • 72 enrolled in the second phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 businesses established • 5% of graduates employed thus far • In progress
<p>GTech ACT College Construction in Parakar</p> <p>Arts, Craft and Technologies (ACT)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction in progress • Curricula endorsed by the Ministry of Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT, a licensed vocational school with diploma recognized by the RA government to open the doors once construction is over in 2025
<p>Deep Engineering Program in Vanadzor and Gyumri</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 280 participants from both locations • 132 enrolled participants • 75 graduates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classes over in mechanical and electrical engineering, Python and incubation basics • New engineering products under development: vending machine, motorboat, innovative greenhouse
<p>ALMA Project in Gyumri and Vanadzor (UNDP funding)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 220 applicants • 82 participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In progress
<p>Women in Coding (GIZ, Gyumri)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85 applicants • 50 trainees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In progress

Their Stories



The First September in Vanadzor’s Rejuvenated Art School

This September, around 180 students will step into the rejuvenated Vanadzor Community Art School for the first time in many years.

Originally built in 1957, the school had suffered years of neglect, leading to a dilapidated state that severely limited educational opportunities for local children. But in just one year, FAR has transformed this once-decaying building into a modern, two-story school.

Fully furnished and equipped, the school is ready to welcome its new cohort of students, including over 60 newly accepted ones, eager to discover and nurture their talents in fine arts.

School principal Arsen Raphayelyan candidly shared, “We’ve never received so many admission letters before—more than 200! Even after the exams held in July and August, applications continue to pour in.”

Among the newcomers is 11-year-old Areg, who had previously refused to attend the “old school” due to its poor condition. “When we came to apply last year, the building was in such bad shape. I was upset and disappointed; I just couldn’t bring myself to attend. But when I heard about the renovation, I was beyond amazed. I did well on the exams, and now I’m here, ready and excited to learn. The school has completely changed—from one floor to two!” Areg exclaimed, his big, beaming eyes reflecting his enthusiasm.

Principal Raphayelyan also noted that many students had considered withdrawing their applications to seek education elsewhere due to the long pause in renovations. However, they have since returned, impressed by the school's transformation.

"Now, there's a scent of 'modern art' in the air. Before, it smelled like an artist's cluttered studio," remarked 14-year-old Albert Margaryan, who has been attending the school for six years. "The first time I set foot in the renovated school, I felt a complete 'wow.' Everything has changed, but the old aura remains," he added, mentioning that while the building's condition was never his main concern, learning in this new, cozy environment feels special.

The Vanadzor Community Art School was officially reopened in May of 2024. This transformation was made possible by the generous donation of Kourken Yegarian of NY State, USA, in loving memory of Armenik Yegarian. Thanks to extensive renovations, the school boasts spacious, bright classrooms for drawing, painting, sculpture, decorative arts, and graphics. The newly added second floor houses a well-lit exhibition hall. Alongside construction and renovation, the school was equipped with new furniture and essential learning accessories.



<https://www.farusa.org/post/the-first-september-in-vanadzor-s-rejuvenated-art-school>



Social Services

Provided physical and psychological support to the most vulnerable Armenians and Artsakh refugees.

Social Services Programs

Activity	Numbers	Impact
CASP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 659 one sided orphans from Syunik, Tavush, Shirak and Javakh/Georgia and children of 4 and 44 day war heroes received financial support • 80 children attended the summer camp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small token of appreciation to their hero fathers • An opportunity to feel equal, respected
BCPP in Ijevan and Noyemberyan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 276 families assessed in Ijevan and Noyemberyan • 178 families underwent in depth assessment • Individual work plans are under development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipated impact is stable, resilient families
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 houses winterized in Berd (1 of a displaced family, 1 – local) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved housing
Sign of Hope Program/Support to the Displaced in Tavush	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 400 displaced families assessed • 2800 cubic meters of firewood distributed • WASH and basic household supplies distributed to 1500 displaced people • Psychological counselling offered to 550 adults and children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project in progress until August 2025

<p>Soup Kitchens in Berd, Yerevan, Byureghavan, Nor Hajn and Gyumri (Senior Center)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 SKs serve seniors, unemployed families, PWDs, displaced • 735 guests benefit from the meal program 5 days a week • Special menus offered on Easter and New Year/Christmas • Gyumri seniors benefit from 3 time a month public bath coupon program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a service to ensure dignified life to the most vulnerable strata of Armenia's population
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New kitchen equipment provided to Gyumri SK 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipated impact is stable, resilient families
<p>VOAH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65 seniors stayed in 2024, 11 displaced • Currently 55 live full board • Weekly bible readings with the local priest • 45 in house and outdoors cultural and entertainment events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The only elderly care institution in Armenia with the most interesting social, cultural life offered to its patrons/ • Once a week fun, enjoyment is tracked in 2024
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cardiologist's consultation and prescriptions to follow but VOAH doctor and nurses • 25 consulted by the visiting gerantologist • 6 patrons underwent eye surgery at Spicak Eye Clinic • Regular blood tests at the local Disease Control and Prevention Center 	

Their Stories



I love the Meat Soup and Kompot at the Soup Kitchen

When Sveta first walked into FAR's Gyumri Atinizian Senior Center, she didn't know what to expect. Her friend Ruzanna had encouraged her to come, and after some hesitation, she decided to give it a try. The first meal she had there was meat soup with salad and kompot, and she immediately fell in love with it. "I love it now. They really make the meat soup very delicious," says 84-year-old Sveta Asatryan, her eyes sparkling as she recalls that first visit.

That was six years ago, and since then, coming to the soup kitchen has become a regular part of Sveta's life. Though she's a bit shy and doesn't often chat with the other seniors, the daily routine of getting up and going to the soup kitchen is important to her. It's where she gets the most nutritious meal of the day, something that's not always possible at home.

Often, Sveta takes home a second serving to share with her son, Hovsep, for dinner. *"The first few days were a bit strange for me; I felt shy eating there. But slowly, it became a normal part of my life. I usually sit at the first table with Ruzanna. If it weren't for the soup kitchen, things would be much harder for my son and me,"* she says, highlighting the tough realities many face in Gyumri.

With prices rising, it's challenging for many families to afford two hot meals a day, making the support from FAR's Gyumri Atinizian Senior Center all the more vital.

Winter brings its own set of challenges. With her modest pension of 40,000 AMD (\$102) and her son's irregular work, it's hard to make ends meet, especially when they have to save for heating. But even in the coldest months, Sveta remains resilient and optimistic. "I love Gyumri and the people here. I can't imagine living anywhere else," she says with a smile.

FAR's Gyumri Atinizian Senior Center is more than just a place for a meal. It's a lifeline for 120 elderly people in Gyumri, providing nutritious meals five days a week. More importantly, it offers a sense of community and belonging, reducing the feelings of isolation that can often come with old age.

If you're moved by Sveta's story and want to help support elderly people who rely on FAR Soup Kitchens all across Armenia, please consider making a donation today.

<https://www.farusa.org/post/i-love-the-meat-soup-and-kompot-at-the-soup-kitchen>

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