

The Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation-Armenia has been re-named the Open Society Foundation-Armenia (OSF-Armenia).

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.

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It is with great sadness that we mark the passing of Amalia Kostanyan, Board Chair of the Open Society Foundation-Armenia and founder and Chair of the NGO “Transparency International Anti-corruption Center.” Amalia passed away on September 30, 2010 in a hospital in Yerevan. She was the Board Chair of the Open Society Foundation-Armenia since 2008, having already served

two years as a member of the Board. The Open Society Foundations lost more than a remarkable leader and supporter, a brave and outspoken human rights activist, we lost a true friend who we all loved. We all lost one of our best compatriots. We deeply grieve Amalia’s untimely death and wish to convey our condolences to Amalia’s relatives, friends and colleagues. Amalia’s high spirit, intelligence, humor and energy long inspired and guided us during most difficult times. She will be greatly missed.

Open Society Foundation-Armenia staff

HUMAN RIGHTS AND CIVIL SOCIETY

People with Disabilities Representing Different NGOs Take Part in a Workshop in Poland

On September 17-21, a group of 10 people representing Armenian NGOs working with people with disabilities took part in a workshop in Poland. The project was supported in the framework of the East-East Partnership Beyond Borders Program. The project consists of three phases. The first phase, the workshop in Poland, aimed to promote home aid for people with disabilities in Armenia and Georgia. The second phase, which will take place in Yerevan in November, will be designed to promote a rehabilitation and therapy center for people with disabilities in Yerevan, while the third part, to be carried out in Georgia, will focus on promoting voluntary work for people with disabilities.



Visiting rehabilitation and education centers in Poland to get acquainted with their teaching methods, September 17-21, 2010, Poland

The main aim of the project is to share experience in the field of creating rehabilitation and aid-support systems for blind and partially blind people. As a result of the project, Armenian participants hope to gain enough knowledge and skills to establish

a professional centre for rehabilitation and support for the blind and partially blind. ■

Open Society Foundation-Armenia Gives Grass-roots Funding to New Human Rights Organizations

In September 2010, nine grassroots human rights organizations, four of them from the regions, were selected in a competitive process to receive grants for their work. In June 2010, the Open Society Foundation-Armenia (OSF-Armenia) announced a competition for grassroots human rights organizations to identify new players in the field and contribute to their professional growth.

The selected NGOs, each with a small budget of up to \$10,000, will implement projects in different spheres, ranging from ecology to juvenile justice. ■

Open Society Foundation-Armenia Launches Policy Fellowship Initiative

In September 2010, the Open Society Foundation-Armenia launched a Policy Fellowship Initiative to enable members of the public policy community to pursue research projects that will stimulate and deepen debate about the most critical problems facing the country.

The Fellowship Initiative is intended to attract civil society representatives, university faculty, policy analysts and advisers eager to carry out rigorous and innovative studies within the following research areas: rule of law and justice, the global economic crisis and its effects on Armenia, European integration processes in the Armenian context, free media, development trends in the public/social sphere, and educational reform. Projects may produce policy papers with concrete recommendations, research reports, books, and innovative public-education materials. The Open Society Foundation-Armenia plans to award up to \$4,000 for each project. In addition, OSF-Armenia aims to enhance the research capacity and policy formulation skills of the selected fellows by organizing policy writing and methodology workshops.

Prior to designing the Policy Fellowship Initiative, in May 2010, OSF-Armenia Policy and Civil Society Coordinators participated in a Policy Research Methodology training in Ulanbataar, Mongolia, organized by the Open Society Forum. The training was also an opportunity for the foundation's staff to learn about designing and running a Policy Fellowship Program. ■

Foundation Supports Summer Camp to Promote Ethnic Tolerance and Dialogue

In August 2010, OSF-Armenia contributed \$1,500 (total budget \$3,451) to the project "Engineering Tolerance," a 5-day multi-ethnic youth summer camp that took place from August 19-24, 2010 in Lusakert for 31 junior representatives of ethnic minorities and ethnic Armenians. The camp was dedicated to the International

Year of Youth, celebrated on August 12, with the goal of strengthening tolerance, promoting dialogue, and increasing civic activism among young people in Armenia. Children, aged 15-21, learnt more about the minorities living in Armenia and were acquainted with UN values, discussed human rights, gender, and environmental issues with international and local experts while celebrating together the International Day of Youth.



Group work in the Youth Minorities Camp, August 10, 2010

The event was organized jointly by the UN Department of Public Information (UNDPI), Yerevan Office, the Armenian UN Association (AUNA), with assistance of the OSCE Office in Yerevan. The "Engineering Tolerance" summer camp was a follow-up of the two-month project organized by UNDPPI and AUNA in the spring of 2010, which was devoted to capacity building and youth empowerment, with a focus on ethnic minorities in Armenia. This earlier program was supported by the Government Staff Department of Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs. ■



▲ Discussing ethnic tolerance, human rights issues, August, 2010

Open Society Foundation-Romania Seeks Closer Ties between Armenian and Romanian Civil Societies

In promoting European integration and honoring relevant standards and norms of human rights, fundamental freedoms, and participatory democracy, the Open Society Foundations value the experience of other countries

that have advanced to EU member status. In this context, the Open Society Foundation – Romania initiated a trip of its Board Chair Dr. Ilona Mihaies, Board Member and Program Coordinator Sergiu Panainte to Armenia to meet with Armenian civil society representatives and OSF-Armenia colleagues to design joint initiatives between the civil societies of both countries. ■

PARTNERSHIP FOR OPEN SOCIETY INITIATIVE

“Shirak Center” NGO Presents “Monitoring Report on Social Housing Allocations in Gyumri in 2009-2010”

On September 28, 2010, the NGO “Shirak Center” presented the results of its monitoring of the process of social housing allocations in the disaster zone. The monitoring work was funded by OSF-Armenia. The aim of the project was to make processes more transparent and to enhance public awareness and oversight of these processes.

The monitoring report encompasses consolidated data on the type of apartments distributed to beneficiaries, information on beneficiary eligibility and status, and other important factors in the process. The information was gathered through monitoring of all apartment allocations.

At the round table, issues such as the absence of a docu-

mented accurate number of homeless in Gyumri were raised – discrepancies between circulated figures sometimes amount to more than a thousand people. Not only does this hamper transparency and accountability, it also makes a large number of eligible people’s prospects of getting decent housing problematic. Along with these findings, the report developed recommendations on approaches to housing distribution that can improve the efficiency of the process and increase public trust in it.

The discussion was attended by national and international organizations, media and government representatives. Among the attendees was the Minister of Urban Development, Vardan Vardanyan, who pointed out that Commission was created to closely follow the housing distribution process and that complaints received from citizens were not many. The full text of the monitoring report can be found at www.partnership.am. ■

MEDIA

A1+ Starts Broadcasting Online



In September 2010, OSF-Armenia supported A1+ to start internet broadcasting. Ayb-Fe news can now be watched online every hour from 13:45 to 21:00. “Post-Scriptum,” a daily program, featuring public, political and cultural figures and hosted by Aram Abrahamyan, is broadcast at 7:10p.m.

Monday through Friday. This support was extended to A1+ in order to offer the diversity of opinion and impartiality that Armenia has not had since the only oppositional channel was taken off the air. ■

Foundation Supports Five Online Media Organizations

In September 2010 OSF-Armenia extended support to five online media organizations, selected in a highly competitive process. The five organizations--Meltex OJSC (www.a1plus.am), AHTK Hamakarg (www.lragir.am), Ecolur NGO (www.ecolur.org) and Umbrella NGO (www.medialab.am)--will use the funds to generate more impartial content on the Internet, which until now has been sadly lacking. ■

STRATEGIC LITIGATION

Strategic Litigation Program Supports Nine Cases

The Strategic Litigation Program supported nine cases in June - September 2010. The cases involved property rights, transparency and accountability of government, freedom of

information, fair trial rights, moral compensation and environmental issues. Three of the cases dealing with the constitutionality of legislation, are at the Constitutional Court, one case has reached the ECHR and the others are being tried in courts of various levels in Armenia. ■

Human Rights in Patient Care Practitioner Guide-Armenia is Launched

The *Human Rights in Patient Care Practitioner Guide-Armenia* was launched at the 18th World Congress on Medical Law (WCML), held in Zagreb, Croatia, August 8-12, 2010. The Congress gathered experts in the field from all over the world and provided an excellent opportunity to present the Guide and exchange views on important topics such as human



Armenian delegation at the 18th WCML in Zagreb, Croatia, August, 2010

rights-based approaches to regulating patients' rights, health laws & medical institutions, issues in medical malpractice, physicians' and institutions' liabilities, end of life decisions, bioethics, and informed consent. The Armenian delegation included OSF-Armenia's Law and Public Health Program Coordinators and representatives from the NGO "Anti-Drug Civil Union." "The event was an exceptional opportunity to build alliances across borders and continents and present Armenian resources developed for physicians and lawyers to remedy abuses in patient care," said Human Rights in Patient Care Project Legal Fellow Violeta Zopunyan.

The *Human Rights in Patient Care Practitioner Guide-Armenia*, supported by the Open Society Law and Health Initiative, is the first resource in Armenia in the field of law and health that covers the overall patients' rights situation in Armenia and serves as a teaching manual for legal and health professionals. ■

Training on Protecting Patients' Rights for Human Rights Lawyers

On July 8-10, 2010, OSF-Armenia organized a three-day training program for human rights lawyers on protecting patients' rights. The training specifically focused on the application of the ECHR and UN treaties both in domestic proceedings and in cases before the European Court of Human Rights and UN treaty bodies. The training was supported by OSF-Armenia, the Human Rights and Governance Grants Program, OSI-Budapest, the Law and Health Initiative, the Public Health Program of OSI-New York, and the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The main emphasis of the training session was on the application of the substantive case-law of the European Court and the UN treaty bodies in everyday legal practice. The training referred to the *Human Rights in Patient Care Practitioner Guide-Armenia*, which elaborates relevant domestic, regional and international standards and how they are applied to protect patients' rights. In doing so, the training's aim was to present a comprehensive picture of the range of human rights in patient care that can be addressed through civil and political, economic and social rights. ■

EDUCATION

Situational Analysis on Child Protection in Three Regions is Presented

Save the Children Armenia presented the results of their situational analysis of child protection in Gegharkunik, Lori and Tavush regions to interested parties on Friday, September 10. The analysis was carried out as part of a three-year project, co-funded by the Open Society Foundation-Armenia and the European Union.

The purpose of the project, which is entitled "Let's Unite for Children and Save the Future," was to study the level and scope of violence committed against children in various institutions and to find out what potential there was to address the issue.

The project team interviewed 59 children's rights protection specialists from a variety of institutions and conducted meetings with 21 focus groups to collect data. They came to the

conclusion that the most widespread violations were physical and psychological abuse and negligence, largely due to poverty, unhappy families, and lack of parenting skills, as well as alcohol and drug abuse in families.

The project is expected to establish child protection referral systems, which will help detect and address cases of violation of children's rights. ■

Armenian Scholars Conduct Research in Cambridge

Two Armenian scholars, Hovhannes Hovhannisyan and Anna Asatryan, were selected to participate in a one-month research program at Cambridge University in July, 2010. Hovhannisyan (Yerevan State University, Religious Studies) and Asatryan (Yerevan State University, Solid State Physics) spent a month in the UK within the framework of the Cambridge

Colleges Hospitality Scheme. Hovhannes was placed at Jesus College and his area of research was the phenomenology of religion. Anna did her research on solid state physics at Clare College.

“Participation in the program allowed me to revise the course I teach at the Yerevan State University according to international education principles, which I find especially useful,” Anna told us, while Hovhannes remarked that: “The program was a chance to meet counterparts from Cambridge, share experience and develop new ties with the educational community in Cambridge.”

The Cambridge Colleges Hospitality Program, run in conjunction with the Open Society Foundations, provides opportunities for post-doctoral scholars from countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union who wish to work in the University’s libraries or to contact academic specialists in their fields. So far, 12 scholars have had a chance to participate since the program was inaugurated in Armenia in 2001. ■



▲ Anna Asatryan and Hovhannes Hovhannisyan (to the right) in Cambridge, July, 2010

“National Center for Strategic Research in Higher Education” NGO Presents a Guidebook on “Design and Implementation of Competency-based Study Programs”

On September 17, 2010, the NGO “National Center for Strategic Research in Higher Education” presented its guidebook on “Design and Implementation of Competency-based Study Programs.” The presentation was attended by representatives of all Armenian universities, international organizations and donor organizations active in the field of education.

Approved by the Ministry of Education and Science as a reference tool for Armenian higher education institutions in April 2010, the guidebook was developed within the framework of the program “Developing Methodology for Designing Multi-cycle Competency-based Study Programs in Higher Education.” The project was implemented in 2009 by the NGO “National Center for Strategic Research in Higher Education” (NCSRHE) and was funded by Open Society Foundation-Armenia. The publication of the guidebook was supported by the National Tempus office in Armenia.

The guidebook describes methodology for and approaches to designing competency-based study programs and provides examples for designing, revising and approving a program on Theoretical Physics.

The guidebook is available at www.osi.am/links.asp ■

ARTS AND CULTURE

Tumanyan Fairy Tale Day Gathers 200 Children in Dsegh

The 5th “International Festival of Puppet Theatres,” called “Tumanyan Fairy Tale Day,” opened in Dsegh village of Lori marz on September 5, 2010. Puppet theaters from 10 countries: Denmark, Belgium, Belarus, Czech Republic, Georgia, Slovenia, Switzerland, France, Bulgaria and Hungary, and theatres from all over Armenia took part in the festival.

More than 200 children from nearby villages, Vanadzor, Yerevan and other cities of Armenia, including about 50 children from the “Orran” day care center, came to Dsegh for the festival. Children of different ages and their parents were overwhelmed by the event and the abundance of surprises, including the Big Balloon brought from Switzerland by the Swiss Puppet Theatre. ■



◀ Fairy tale characters at the festival, September 5, 2010

“Black Life” Photo Exhibition Opened in Yerevan

The “Black Life” photo exhibition opened on September 16, 2010 at the Art Gallery in Yerevan. The “Black Life Project” was one of the biggest and most impressive photo-projects by award-winning Armenian photojournalist and documentary photographer Ruben Mangasaryan (1963-2009).

Mangasaryan was the founder of the Patker Photo Agency and the editor of *National Geographic Traveler in Armenia*. The exhibition was supported by the Open Society Arts and Culture Program and was the first exhibition Ruben Mangasaryan’s work in Yerevan since his death. The Exhibition

was attended by hundreds of artists, media, politicians, representatives of civil society, international organizations, and foreign missions in Armenia.

The project documents the “black life” of an Armenian family that fled the war over Nagorno Karabakh to settle in the village of Bagratashen.

Between 2003 and 2009, the “Black Life Project” won several awards and was published in Days of Japan magazine and BCC Online. Some art galleries in France and Switzerland expressed a willingness to host the exhibition in their countries. ■

EMERGENCY FUND

Four Summer Camps to Provide a Caring Environment for Disadvantaged Children

The Yerevan Educational Complex for Children with Hearing Impairments (YECC) and the Medical Psychological Pedagogical Assessment Center (MPPAC) organized two to three week summer holidays for 120 special education needs



Children of Armavir Diocese summer camp, July 14, 2010

children aged 6-13 in Hankavan and Stepanavan. OSF-Armenia made a \$25,000 contribution to YECC (YECC’s in-kind contribution was \$10,716) and provided \$21,472 to MPPAC (MPPAC’s in-kind contribution was \$11,299).

The Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Holy Church’s Diocese of Armavir arranged summer rest for 130 orphans from needy families from Armavir marz in Hankavan. The grant amount of this project was \$25,000, with a \$8,550 in-kind contribution.

OSF-Armenia supported the Armenian Sisters of Immaculate Conception by contributing \$66,824 to have a heating system in place in Diramayr Hayastani Jambar. Co-funding in the amount of \$66,824 was provided by USAID. Diramayr Hayastani Jambar 2010 targeted 850 disadvantaged boys and girls, aged 8-14 from different parts of Armenia and Southern Georgia.

The summer camp activities provided a warm and caring environment for children, strengthening their spiritual, physical and emotional well-being, lessen the immediate and long-term impact of poverty and abandonment in their lives, and, in the case of special schools, they also provided professional support to promote social integration of children with special educational needs with their peers from regular schools. ■



▲ Children of Diramayr Armenia camp, July 12, 2010



▲ Sports activities at Lusabats camp, August, 2010

Support to “Ashtarak” Farmers' Group - Saving Innovative Agriculture

Farmers from different regions of Armenia who cooperate on creating an alternative and innovative scheme for growing some rare vegetables (artichoke, kohlrabi, physalis, broccoli, etc.) faced a serious financial need due to the economic crisis and were on the verge of losing both the crop and all their investments during recent years. In order to save their unique agricultural production, which has developed and involved more regions of the country during recent years, OSF-Armenia made



Artichoke field, August, 2010

a \$5,000 contribution towards a \$7,100 project (\$2,100 was the Farmers' Group's in-kind contribution), aimed to help the farmers save their crop of valuable vegetables and get a chance for further development. The project is implemented in Ashtarak and nearby villages. ■

Emergency Fund Makes It Possible for “Khnamk” NGO to Provide Supported Accommodation for People with Mental Disability

The Open Society Foundation-Armenia provided support for the NGO “Khnamk,” which works to promote the reintegration into society of people with mental health problems, so that it would not have to stop its activities. “Khnamk” provides accommodation for people with long-term mental disability supported by professional and experienced staff in a Support Day-Center in Yerevan and in a house purchased in Ashtarak community.



Day-Center in Yerevan for people with mental health problems

Both the Day Center and the house have all necessary conditions and equipment to serve people with mental disabilities and promote their social rehabilitation and reintegration into society. Each beneficiary has an individual rehabilitation plan.

The project will allow more than 60 people with mental disabilities to receive services from the Support Center and have a chance to integrate into the society as well as have supported accommodation in a community. Due to \$25,000 from the Emergency Fund, with \$6,000 in-kind contribution, “Khnamk” will not interrupt its project and will have an opportunity to get state assistance for further work, increasing the number of beneficiaries. ■

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CAMBRIDGE COLLEGES HOSPITALITY SCHEME 2011

Cambridge University, in conjunction with the Open Society Foundations, invites applications from scholars from selected countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, including Armenia, who wish to work in the University's libraries or to contact academic specialists in their subjects.

At Cambridge the programme offers a one-month visit in one of the Cambridge colleges during the summer months (July-September). Scholars must be of post-doctoral or equivalent status and will be university teachers or members of research institutes.

Applicants must have a good knowledge of spoken and written English. Those who will have spent two months or more of academically-related time in the West within the period 1 April 2010 and the start of their visit will not be eligible. Applicants who have already benefited from this scheme in the past will also not be eligible. Priority will be given in Cambridge to those working on a specific project such as a book or a new course or series of lectures, and to those who have not previously had a chance to study outside of Central and Eastern Europe or countries of the former Soviet Union.

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

Contact person: Anna Gevorgyan; email: anna@osi.am; tel: +37410 533862; 536758. Address: 7/1 Tumanyan St, 2nd cul-de-sac, Yerevan 0002.

Completed application forms with a recent photograph must be returned to OSF-Armenia by November 1, 2010.

OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS/UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX SCHOLARSHIPS FOR MASTERS DEGREES IN HUMAN RIGHTS 2011-12

The Open Society Foundations and the University of Essex invite applications for the above scholarships at the Centre for Human Rights.

Applicants will be expected to be both nationals of and resident in Armenia. Applicants should have outstanding relevant academic qualifications and good English. Each scholarship provides one year's tuition fees at the University of Essex, a stipend to cover living costs (for one person only), and return air travel from the scholar's home country. On completion of the scholarship, scholars are expected to return to their home country to resume their studies or work there.

Application package and notes of guidance can be downloaded from OSF-Armenia website www.osi.am.

Further information can be obtained from the Open Society Foundation-Armenia office.

Contact person: Anna Gevorgyan; email: anna@osi.am; tel: +37410 533862; 536758. Address: 2nd cul-de-sac of Tumanyan St, house 7/1, Yerevan 0002.

Completed applications should be returned to OSF-Armenia by 17 January 2011, 5.00 pm.

Address:
2nd cul-de-sac of Tumanyan Street, house 7/1
Yerevan 0002, Armenia
Tel./Fax: +37410 533862; 536758
E-mail: info@osi.am
Website: www.osi.am
www.partnership.am