



WE ARE OUR MOUNTAINS

Development
Agency

REPORT

On the Activities of the
Development Agency
"We are Our Mountains"

2025



ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The “We Are Our Mountains” Development Agency NGO

was founded at the end of 2022 by Ruben Vardanyan and his partners to implement development projects and programs in Artsakh and Armenia.

In 2022–2023, due to the challenges caused by the blockade imposed by Azerbaijan, the organization was compelled to focus its efforts on preventing a humanitarian disaster in Artsakh and addressing the population’s urgent needs.

On September 27, 2023, during the mass displacement of Artsakh’s population, **Ruben Vardanyan was arrested by the Azerbaijani government and remains illegally detained in Baku.** From prison, he urged the continuation of the organization’s charitable work and called for providing all possible support to forcibly displaced Artsakh Armenians. Following the appeal of the organization’s founder of the “We Are Our Mountains” continued to support Artsakh Armenians who found refuge in the Republic of Armenia after the forced displacement.

Since October 2023, the “We Are Our Mountains” Development Agency has been supporting forcibly displaced families in overcoming psychological trauma, adapting to new conditions, and stabilizing their socio-economic situation. The organization also contributes to unlocking and developing the potential of displaced people in Armenia.

While continuing its humanitarian response, the organization is currently placing greater emphasis on long-term initiatives, including the development of human capital and regional potential, particularly in Syunik.

Overall, between **2022 and 2025**, the organization implemented around **50 projects and programs** with a total value of approximately **USD 3 million**, impacting the lives of more than **100,000 people**. Detailed reports are available on the organization’s website at the following [link](#).

In 2025, the organization implemented programs and projects worth more than USD 435,000, impacting the lives of around 10,000 people across different regions of Armenia.

Below is an overview of the implemented programs and initiatives, including key results, budget/expenditure, geographic coverage, and the number of beneficiaries.

IMPLEMENTED PROGRAMS

WINGS : REHABILITATION PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS DISPLACED FROM ARTSAKH

"The simplest way to grow wings is to give them to someone who needs them."

| Context

Immediately following the forcible displacement of Artsakh population in September 2023, the “We Are Our Mountains” Development Agency launched its first emergency psychosocial intervention—the “**Wings**” Rehabilitation Program. The program was designed to address the profound impacts of war, blockade, forcible displacement, and loss on thousands of children and their families. Initially conceived as a rapid response to an escalating humanitarian crisis, the program is now in its third consecutive year of implementation.



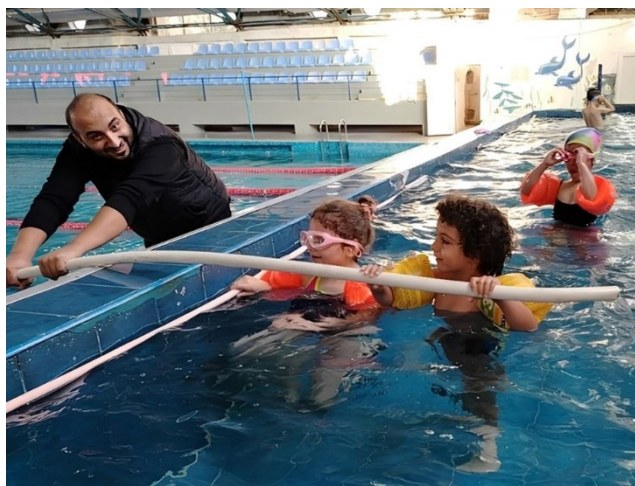
| Core Components

- **Psychological Rehabilitation (36 hours)**
Trauma-informed creative therapies, including storytelling, expressive arts, drama therapy, sand therapy, clay work, mask and mandala making, string art, collage, spontaneous drawing, hippotherapy, and trust-building exercises.
- **Physical Rehabilitation (24 hours)**
Sports and movement-based activities, including swimming, volleyball, football, dance, and fitness.
- **Cognitive Rehabilitation (16 hours)**
A two-day intensive module focused on strengthening emotional regulation, conflict management, adaptability, and communication and interpersonal skills.
- **Support for Parents**
Psychoeducation, as well as group and individual support.
- **Sociocultural Adaptation**
Community-building and integration activities.

Methodology and Approach

“Wings” is a three-month psychosocial support model designed for displaced children aged 4–18 and their parents, with the aim of restoring a sense of safety, trust, and belonging.

The program’s key strength lies in its comprehensive approach, integrating the psychological, physical, cognitive, and social dimensions of recovery. During the reporting period, we introduced an important additional component: participation of local children from the host communities where the program is delivered. This decision supported integration, helped reduce barriers, and strengthened community cohesion. Joint sessions created a space of mutual understanding, empathy, and trust between forcibly displaced children and their peers in host communities.

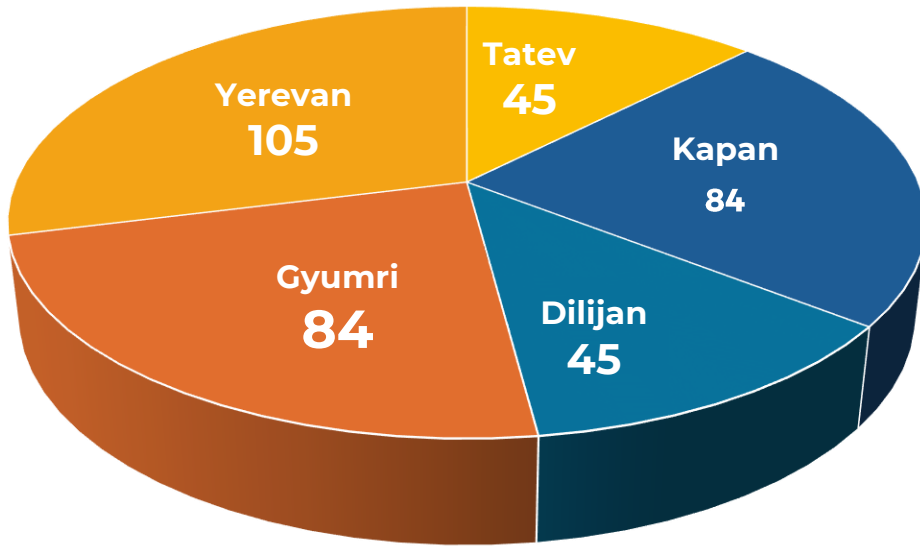


Program Reach in 2025

- **363 children** completed the three-month rehabilitation program
- **220 parents** participated in the family support component
- The program was implemented in **6 cycles** across **4 locations: Yerevan, Gyumri, Kapan, and Halidzor**
- **Local children** also participated in the program.



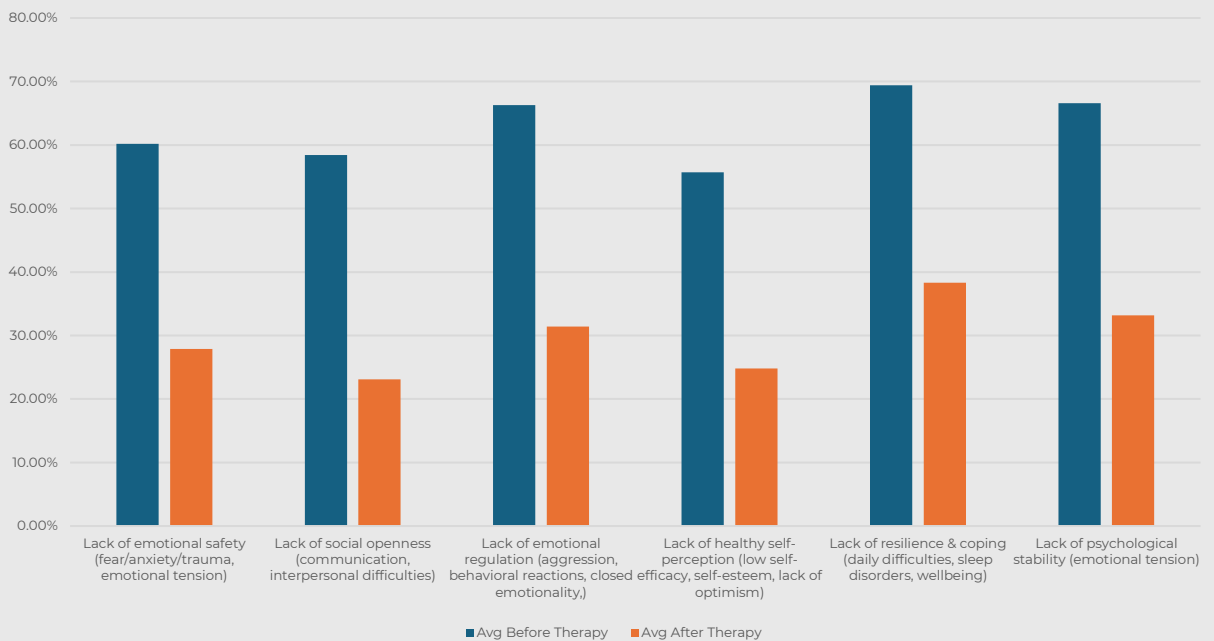
Program Distribution by Region



Results Assessment

Program outcomes include improved social integration; reduced aggressive behavior; better sleep and emotional self-regulation; and increased parental confidence in their children’s recovery.

Each participant is assessed at baseline and again upon completion of the program. A structured set of indicators is used, with key measures including reduced anxiety and improved adjustment to a new environment.



Reciprocal Hospitality and Inter-Community Connections

As part of the program, **reciprocal exchange visits** were organized for participants from Halidzor and Kapan. Notably, the children themselves hosted one another.

These visits fostered warm and meaningful connections between children from two communities in southern Armenia, created an opportunity to restore—or rediscover—relationships **disrupted by displacement**, and strengthened their sense of belonging.



The Return of Creativity

One participant in Kapan was so inspired by the program that they created the “Wings” program anthem using AI tools. The song quickly became part of the program culture and is now regularly played at events in Kapan, embraced by children and adults alike as a shared symbol of connection, hope, and belonging.

The desire to create is an important indicator of trauma recovery. Through creative expression, people reconnect with their inner world, regain a sense of agency, and give voice to emotions that are difficult to convey in words.

Working with Parents: Case Study from Kapan

Work with parents is a crucial component of supporting children who have experienced forcible displacement and psychological trauma. **One example** is an event held in Kapan that was organized specifically for mothers—**with no children present**—so the women could focus on their own well-being.

The gathering included creative workshops such as making decorative soap and creating the traditional “Tree of Life.” It was **more than a workshop**: it became a supportive space for connection and quiet joy. The women were so engaged that they did not want the session to end. One participant shared candidly:

“This was one of the happiest days of my life.”



This experience demonstrated that even the strongest and most resilient mothers carry an invisible emotional burden and have a profound need for moments when they can breathe, create, and restore their strength. Such support for parents directly strengthens their capacity to support their children.

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF THE PROGRAM

In 2025, the “Wings” program drew the attention of international partners. In March, the “We Are Our Mountains” Development Agency hosted a delegation from the Municipality of **Marseille**, led by the City’s First Deputy Mayor, a physician by profession, **Ms. Michèle Rubirola**, who arrived in Armenia on an official visit.

The French delegation visited the “Intra” Mental Health Center in Yerevan, where they learned about the ongoing “Wings” program implemented with the support of the “Support Artsakh” Union. The guests attended art therapy and drama therapy sessions, spoke with children participating in the program, and met with parents to hear their personal stories.

“

“I am deeply moved to see everything that is being done here to help children and their families overcome trauma,” noted Michèle Rubirola. “We share your pain and admire your strength in recovering after such losses.”

Parents involved in the program shared how important the “Wings” program has become for their families.

Susanna Baghdasaryan, mother of a participant: ***“Our children have lost their home, their friends, and the world they knew. The ‘Wings’ program helps them smile and dream again. We are grateful that we at least have the chance to reimagine life on Armenian soil. There is light in our children’s eyes again, and that is what matters most.”***



“

“Our goal is not only to mitigate the consequences of trauma, but also to help these families build the foundations of a new life. This visit is important not only as an expression of solidarity, but also as a confirmation of a reality: the challenges faced by the people of Artsakh are a challenge for all of humanity.”

Grigory Martirosyan

Executive Director

“We Are Our Mountains” Development Agency



DONOR VISIT AND MEETINGS WITH BENEFICIARIES

In spring 2025, representatives of «**Association de Soutien à l'Artsakh**» (France) visited Armenia to **review the delivery** of the “Wings” program. The delegation traveled to **Gyumri, Yerevan, and Tatev**, where they met with participating children and their parents, and held discussions with the program team on the program’s methodology.

The visit provided an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the needs of displaced families, strengthen the partnership, and agree on next steps.



| Key Challenges and Response Measures

- Despite the proven effectiveness of the “Wings” program, **demand for psychosocial support among forcibly displaced families remains high.**
- **With current funding levels,** the program can reach only **around 1 in 30 children in need** of this support.
- Each time registration opens for new groups, all available slots are filled within minutes, resulting in **long waiting lists.**

The “Wings” program is not merely a response to a crisis — it is an investment in the psychological future of an entire generation.



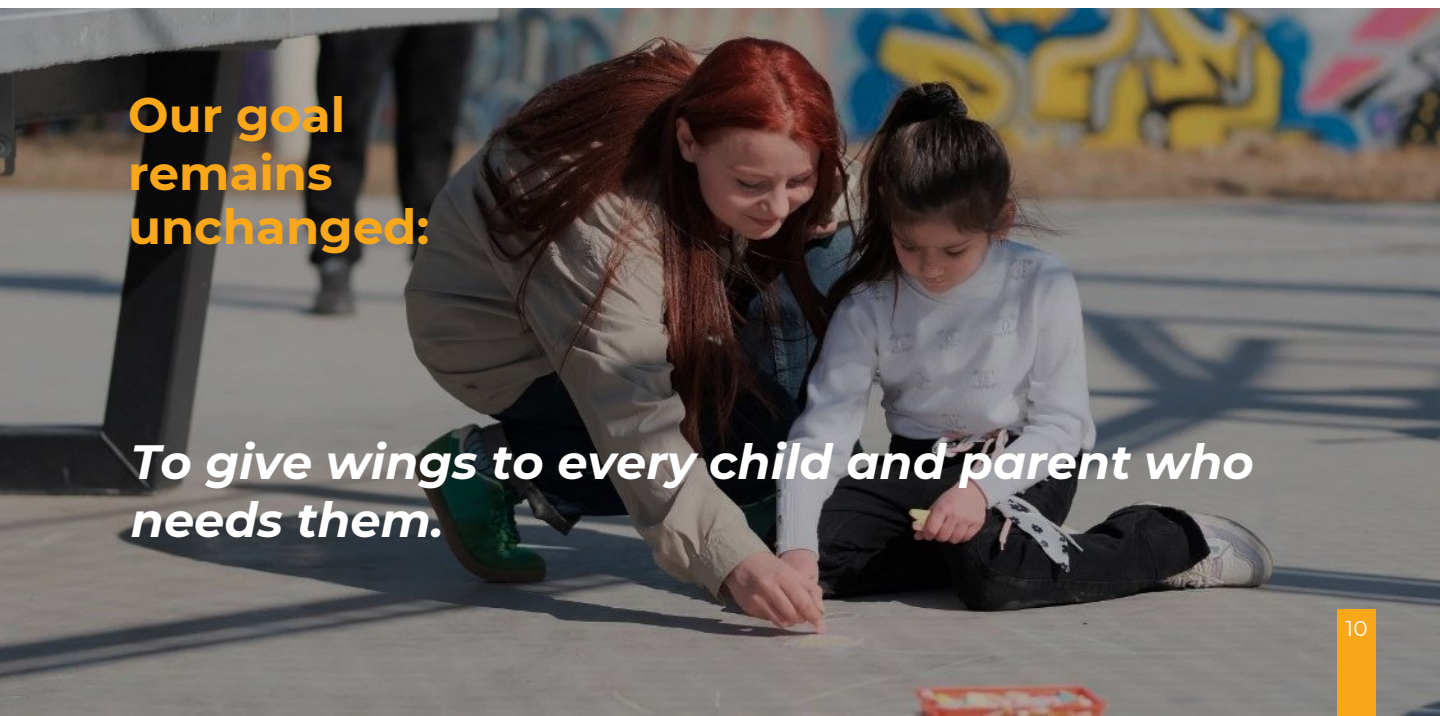
| Looking Ahead

The program’s next steps include:

- expanding into new regions;
- strengthening monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tools to better track impact;
- publishing key findings and the methodology in peer-reviewed professional journals to support specialists working in similar contexts.

Our goal remains unchanged:

To give wings to every child and parent who needs them.



KEY PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

The program was implemented thanks to the trust and financial contributions of the supporters of “We Are Our Mountains,” and achieved high effectiveness through partnership-based collaboration with mental health professionals and experienced local organizations.

In each region, we worked with dedicated specialists who applied a range of methods grounded in a trauma-informed approach.

OUR GRATITUDE

To our partners

- INTRA Mental Health Center, Yerevan
- “Arevamanuk” Foundation for Psychosocial Support, Gyumri
- Tatev Community Center
- IDEA Charitable Foundation, Gyumri
- Oogway School of Superheroes
- “Aquatec” Sports Complex, Yerevan
- Football Federation of Armenia
- InSport Syunik
- LIGA Insurance

To our supporters:

- Hedgehog garden
- Tashir Arena
- “Nashe Delo” Foundation (Russian Federation)
- “Kaza” Swiss Humanitarian Foundation

To all specialists

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to «Association de Soutien à l'Artsakh» (France), “Saint Sarkis Charity Trust” (United Kingdom), and to all our friends and partners who believe in the power of care and recovery.

With their support, children and families from Artsakh were able to receive the assistance they needed and regain hope for the future.

WINGS4ALL: BUILDING YOUTH-LED ENTREPRENEURIAL FUTURES IN TATEV

In **2025**, the “We Are Our Mountains” Development Agency **delivered** the **Wings for All** program in the Tatev community to strengthen the **economic resilience** of forcibly displaced families from Artsakh and residents of Tatev. The program was designed as the next phase after the “Wings” psychosocial program, supporting the shift **from recovery to sustainable development**.

Wings for All responded to two interconnected challenges:

- the need for Artsakh families to rebuild their lives after displacement;
- limited economic and employment opportunities in Syunik.

The program aimed not only to provide support, but also to create opportunities — focusing on **family entrepreneurship**, **youth engagement**, and **community cohesion**.

| Approach and Implementation

The program was implemented by the “We Are Our Mountains” Development Agency in close cooperation with **Inobiz NGO**, the **Tatev Community Center**, and the **Tatev Municipality**.



*The program was carried out with a grant from the **H. Hovnanian Family Foundation**, with financial support from the **ACBA Federation** and **AraratBank**.*

| A Program Designed for Families, Not Individuals

A defining feature of the **Wings for All** program was its family-centered approach: it engaged parents and adolescents simultaneously, enabling them to learn together, make decisions jointly, and develop entrepreneurial ideas as a team. This made it possible to combine adults' experience with young people's digital and creative skills.

Core Components

- Six-month entrepreneurship training and mentoring
- Idea generation, market research, digital marketing, and financial literacy
- Small educational grants to pilot and test ideas
- Pitching and seed/start-up funding
- Youth leadership development
- Community events and study visits
- Training of local coaches/trainers



Results and Reach

- **74 applications** were received.
- **59** - participated actively in the program.
- **43 participants** completed the full cycle.
- **58%** of participants were **women**, and **61%** were **young people under 30**.
- **12 participants** were from **forcibly displaced Artsakh families**.
- **37 business models** were developed in the fields of beekeeping, crafts, food production, agrotourism, agriculture, and services.
- **30 participants** received **USD 330 stipends** to pilot and test their ideas.
- **29 grant applications** were submitted; **12 selected proposals** received up to **AMD 1,000,000** in funding with the support of the **ACBA Federation** and **AraratBank**.
- More than **120 hours of mentoring** were delivered.
- **9 local trainers** were **trained** to support program continuity and sustainability.



WINGS4ALL



Is not only a program, but also a replicable model for community-driven development.

Study Visits

In addition to the core training and mentoring components, **Wings for All** included four community events and a series of study visits aimed at deepening practical knowledge and strengthening community engagement.



Visit to Margahovit

- **Two-day specialized training** at the “Beekeeping Forge” educational center
- **Tour of the ATP Environmental Center**
- **Experience exchange** at the “Simona” raspberry farm



Participant Survey Results

- **89% of respondents** rated the development of their entrepreneurship skills as **high**.
- **85%** reported increased confidence in their leadership skills.
- **89%** said they were ready to continue entrepreneurial activities.
- **89%** reported stronger community connections.

Our Beneficiaries



Meri Papyan

“Before the program, it seemed like we already knew everything... but during the course it became clear that we still have a lot to learn. Previously, I imagined running a greenhouse would be very simple—I thought you could just put seeds in the soil and get a harvest. During the program, I realized that everything must be carefully calculated and managed properly. Now my motivation is very high. With the grant I received, I will solve the issues of the greenhouse covering and heating. In the near future, I also plan to equip the greenhouse with innovative solutions and introduce new crops as well.”



Norayr Abgaryan

“In Artsakh, I worked in beekeeping for 15 years, growing the number of my hives from 3 to 85. As a result of the 2020 war and the mass displacement from Artsakh, I lost everything. After the displacement, once I settled in Tatev, I started from scratch producing beehives. I applied to the ‘Wings for All’ program with a project to expand this new production. The grant we received is a great support for our workshop. We have decided to purchase new equipment, which will help us organize the work more efficiently.”



Martik Gasparyan

“First and foremost, the ‘Wings for All’ program gave us the skills to develop a proper business plan and access to professional consulting. We learned about innovations and new technologies. I especially value the opportunity to engage with the experts from the Beekeeping Forge. Personally, this program has been helpful to me in many areas. My main questions were about honey sales, working with large and small markets, and—most importantly—packaging, producing eco-honey, and artificial queen breeding.”

“TREE OF LIFE” INITIATIVE: PILGRIMAGE TO TATEV MONASTERY

With the aim of uniting the public around spiritual values and reviving the historic tradition of pilgrimage to Tatev Monastery, the “We Are Our Mountains” Development Agency—with the blessing of the Armenian Apostolic Church and in cooperation with several Armenian charitable organizations—organized the **second annual pilgrimage to Tatev Monastery** on **May 31, 2025**, as a continuation of the **“Tree of Life”** initiative launched in May 2024.

More than **2,000 people** joined the pilgrimage.



The second pilgrimage to Tatev monastery focused on:

- Reaffirming spiritual and national renewal, and valuing our connection to roots and traditions;
- Preserving Tatev’s historical and cultural heritage;
- Uniting the public around the call for the release of armenian captives;
- Continuing the initiatives aimed at tatev’s development.

Co-organizers of the pilgrimage included:

- Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU)
- Aznavour Foundation
- «Association de Soutien à l'Artsakh» (France)
- DAR Regional Development and Competitiveness Foundation
- IDeA Foundation
- Armenian Relief Society
- H. Hovnanian Family Foundation
- Near East Foundation – Armenia Office
- Orran Charitable NGO
- Teach For Armenia Educational Foundation
- Tufenkian Foundation
- Tatev Community

| BAPTISM

As part of the pilgrimage, beneath the thousand-year-old arches of Tatev Monastery, a baptism ceremony was held for **seven children from Artsakh**—as a symbol of hope and a new beginning.

Three of these children were born in Artsakh during the blockade; the others were forcibly displaced from Artsakh while still unborn, carried under their mothers' hearts.

The baptismal crosses were gifted to the children by the Emil Grigoryan Jewelry Factory in Yerevan.



“I was six months pregnant when we left Artsakh. On September 23, when we were displaced from Stepanakert, we still didn’t know that I was carrying a little heart inside me—God’s blessing... Eva was born in Syunik, in the city of Goris. We are immensely grateful to our dear Ruben Vardanyan. We have a vow to fulfill. Yes, we have a very difficult path ahead of us. Perhaps we will not live to see it, but God willing, we will—and our children will—see that bright day when they return to our Artsakh, which lives in our hearts.”

Lusine Tovmasyan



Joint Prayer

At the Holy Paul and Peter Church of Tatev Monastery, pilgrimage participants joined in a joint prayer led by **Bishop Makar Hakobyan**, Primate of the Diocese of Syunik. The prayer was dedicated to the release of Armenian captives held in prisons in Baku.



“We are witnessing a distinct expression of public support today, which is inspiring. Raising awareness about these processes—or even simple heartfelt concern and sharing in the public sphere—matters greatly, and it can have a multiplying effect on key international actors and decision-makers in politics.”

Siranush Sahakyan
Co-founder, “Legal Path” NGO



“Our pilgrimage today is a journey during which we remember and pray for all our compatriots who remain in captivity, in prisons in Baku.

First and foremost, I want to mention Ruben Vardanyan, because his name is inseparable from the history of Tatev. Years ago, Ruben initiated a major project that redefined not only Tatev’s architectural revival, but also its spiritual and public renewal. In essence, it is a continuation of the tradition of philanthropy—one with centuries of history.”

Grigory Martirosyan
Executive Director, “We Are Our Mountains” Development Agency



Uniting Around National Values

Within the framework of the **“Tree of Life”** initiative, the architectural composition **“Circle of the Guardians of the Roots”** was created. It consists of twelve monumental benches made of architectural concrete, arranged around the **plane tree (chnar)** planted during the first pilgrimage in 2024 as the **“Tree of Life.”**

Each bench is dedicated to one of the leading Armenian charitable organizations whose work nourishes and strengthens the spirit of the nation.

Attached to the benches are copper plaques bearing the names of the organizations that joined the initiative: the **Aznavour Foundation**, the **Armenian Relief Society**, the **Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU)**, the **Initiatives for Development of Armenia (IDeA) Foundation**, the **H. Hovnanian Family Foundation**, the **Teach For Armenia Educational Foundation**, the **DAR Regional Development and Competitiveness Foundation**, the **“We Are Our Mountains” Development Agency**, and the **Orran Charitable NGO**.



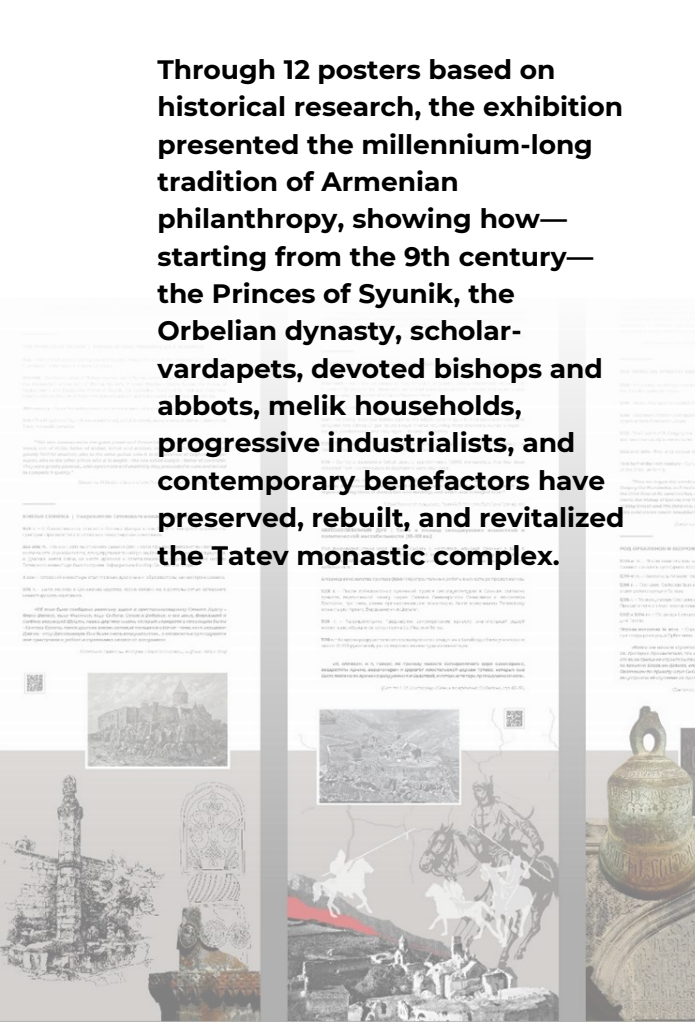
*The **“Circle of the Guardians of the Roots”** symbolizes the contribution of Armenian charitable organizations to preserving the traditions and spiritual values of the Armenian people—passed down from generation to generation.*

Exhibition at Dzit Han

As part of the pilgrimage, the exhibition **“The Golden Chain of Patrons: Guardians of Tatev Through the Centuries”** was presented. It recounts the complex and trial-filled path of Tatev Monastery, highlighting the contributions of its guardians—from the Princes of Syunik to modern-day benefactors.



Through 12 posters based on historical research, the exhibition presented the millennium-long tradition of Armenian philanthropy, showing how—starting from the 9th century—the Princes of Syunik, the Orbelian dynasty, scholar-vardapets, devoted bishops and abbots, melik households, progressive industrialists, and contemporary benefactors have preserved, rebuilt, and revitalized the Tatev monastic complex.



CULTURAL HIGHLIGHTS



“MENK” National Dance Group



Artsakh Dance Ensemble



“Tree of Life” Trio



“Voices of Yerevan” Choir

The event, centered on the idea of returning to one’s roots, was accompanied by presentations of national culture and a traditional Armenian harissa offering.



Gratitude

The pilgrimage is not merely a journey, but a meaningful spiritual act. It symbolizes our aspiration for inner purification, a deeper awareness of our history, and the strengthening of faith. It is a unifying act that connects us with our ancestors, our culture, and our traditions, and expresses our determination to build the future on a strong spiritual and historical foundation.



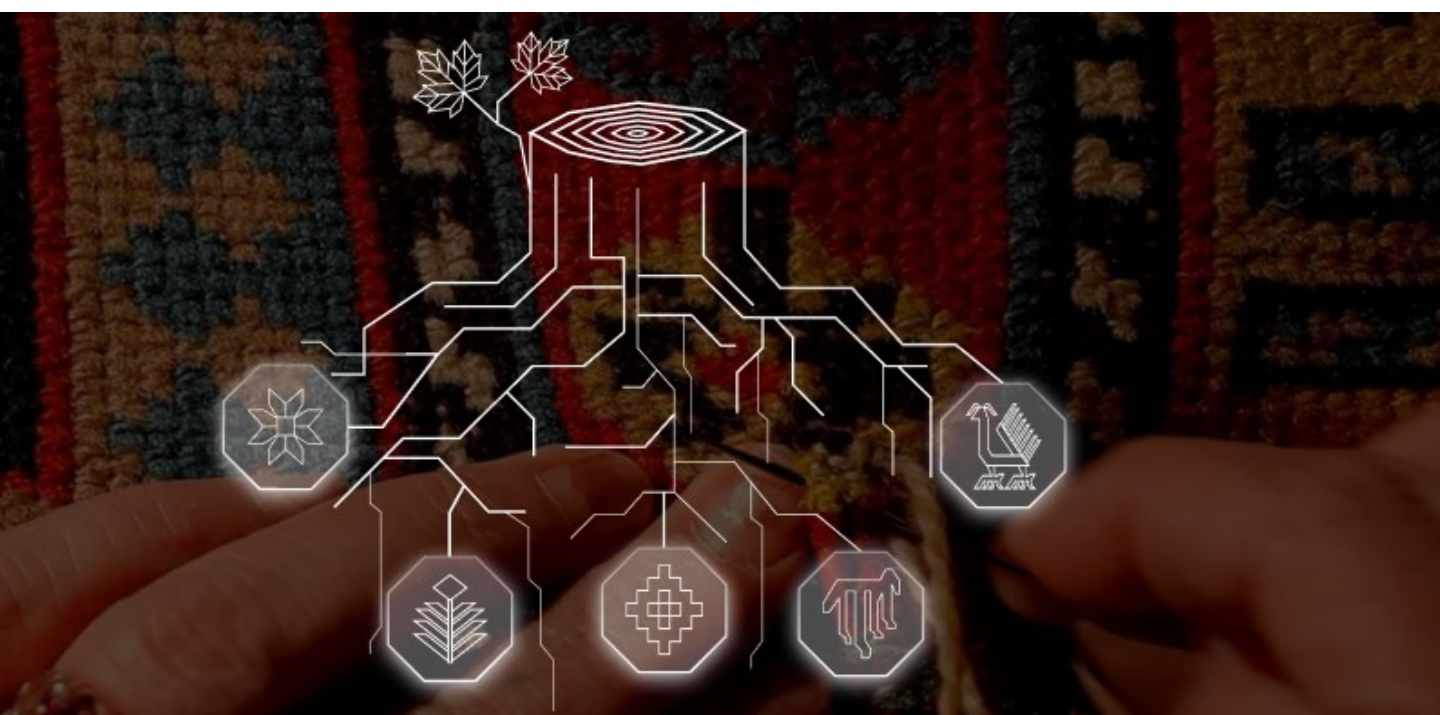
We extend our heartfelt gratitude to:

- all pilgrims who **joined** us and shared this path of faith, remembrance, and unity;
- all organizations and individuals who **supported** the organization of the pilgrimage.

“PRESERVING ARTSAKH”: AN ELECTRONIC PLATFORM FOR INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Following the mass displacement of Artsakh’s population, not only people but also their intangible cultural heritage—language, oral traditions, crafts, and rituals—has been placed at risk of being forgotten and disappearing.

To address this challenge of cultural loss, the **artsakhian.org** digital platform was created with a grant provided by the **Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation**.



ARTSAKHIAN DIGITAL HOUSE OF CULTURE

Within the framework of the project, research was conducted and archival materials were collected and documented; the platform’s content sections were developed; and the digital platform itself was technically built.

In total, more than 10,000 pages of material on Artsakh’s intangible cultural heritage were collected and prepared for digital publication. On the platform, the materials are presented according to UNESCO’s five main domains of intangible cultural heritage classification:

- **Oral traditions and expressions**
- **Performing arts**
- **Social practices, rituals, and festive events**
- **Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe**
- **Traditional craftsmanship**

Next Steps and Challenges

Within the framework of the project, a substantial body of materials related to Artsakh's intangible cultural heritage has been collected (including fieldwork records, archival sources, photographs, and audio-visual materials), and the **artsakhian.org** website has been created with the most essential core functionality.

Next steps include:

1. Field Research and Community Engagement

- Continue ethnographic field studies with the aim of carrying out the scientific collection, recording, and documentation of oral cultural heritage within displaced Artsakh communities.
- Collect and document endangered layers of Artsakh's intangible cultural heritage.

2. Full-Scale Platform Deployment

- Process the collected materials for publication.
- Complete the coding of the artsakhian.org website and integrate the content.
- Develop an interactive, multilingual interface (Armenian, English, and Russian).

3. Public Engagement and Outreach

- Organize cultural discussions, presentations, and community events.
- Promote the platform through media outlets, social networks, and engagement with relevant stakeholders.

Challenge

The full launch and further development of the website require new professional and financial investments.



SUPPORT THE PLATFORM'S DEVELOPMENT

FRENCH LANGUAGE

PROGRAM FOR ARTSAKH STUDENTS

From **March to June 2025**, additional French-language lessons continued for **24 children from Artsakh** studying at **Yerevan Basic School No. 48 named after Missak Manouchian**. The program aimed to support students who, after being forcibly displaced and enrolling in this school in Yerevan with an advanced French curriculum, faced difficulties in learning a foreign language.

The 2020 war, repeated displacement, the prolonged blockade of Artsakh, and the mass forced displacement from Artsakh in 2023 had negatively affected not only the children's physical and psychological well-being, but also their academic performance.

This program was an effort to help Artsakh schoolchildren bridge learning gaps and ease their adaptation to a new educational environment.

The lessons were held at the school for two age groups: students in **Grades 3–5** and **Grades 6–9**.

The program was implemented with the support of **«Association de Soutien à l'Artsakh» (France)**.



“When I came to Yerevan from Artsakh, I didn’t know French at all, so I started from zero here. These lessons helped me a lot to catch up and not fall behind. We learned the names of months and days, pronouns, verb conjugations, tenses... I really like French. I dream of going to France and seeing the Eiffel Tower.”

Maria Minasyan

5th-grade student, School No. 48 named after Missak Manouchian



“Last year, when the additional French lessons for the children from Artsakh started, we began almost from the alphabet—most of the children did not know French at all. Fortunately, within the first year they overcame those difficulties. And this year, by continuing the lessons, the children were able to deepen their knowledge further, which is clearly reflected in their progress.”

Sona Kalenjyan
French teacher



“FUN FRENCH”

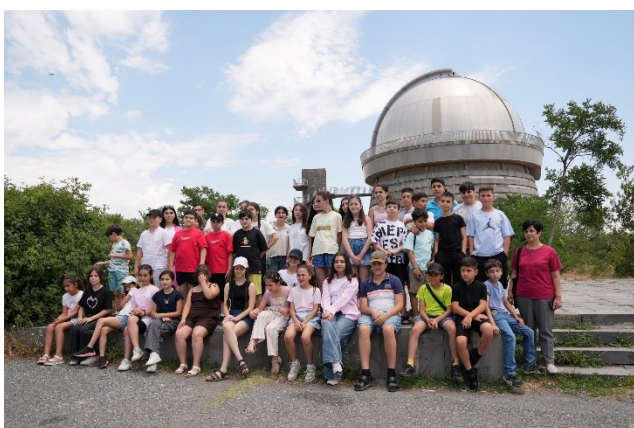
SUMMER PRACTICAL COURSE FOR ARTSAKH STUDENTS

The “Fun French” program was launched in 2024 for children forcibly displaced from Artsakh. It was developed as a follow-up to the “French for Children from Artsakh” project, with the aim of reinforcing the knowledge children acquired during the school year during the summer holidays through engaging games and camp-style activities. By combining interactive lessons with a dynamic camp program, the initiative delivered both educational outcomes and emotional/psychosocial benefits.

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAM



➤ games, songs, and role-play-based learning methods



➤ an educational excursion to the Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory and Saghmsovank Monastery.

Program Reach

- The program engaged **45 children from Artsakh**, aged **10–15**, studying in different schools across Yerevan.
- The children were divided into groups based on age and level of French proficiency.
- The program also involved **two French teachers displaced from Artsakh**.



➤ Implemented from July 7 to 25 at the “Yeraz” Summer Park in Yerevan, the program included:



➤ art therapy and drama therapy



➤ interactive French lessons

| Program Outcomes

During the program, the children **expanded their vocabulary, strengthened their conversational skills, made new friends, and regained their self-confidence.**



| Our Gratitude

We thank «**Association de Soutien à l'Artsakh**» for its continued support in implementing the “**Fun French**” program.

We are also grateful to all our supporters—including **volunteers, teachers, and specialists**—for their contribution and dedicated work, and to the “Yeraz” Summer Park for providing the venue free of charge and for its warm hospitality.

| Next Plans

Considering the positive feedback received from beneficiaries, we plan to continue the “**Fun French**” program in **2026**.

Your support will enable us to include more children in the program.



SUPPORTING YOUNG MUSICIANS **FROM ARTSAKH**

Identifying and supporting talented children continues to be one of our key priorities.

“We Are Our Mountains” enthusiastically joined the **“Born in Artsakh” educational initiative**, created and primarily implemented by the Art 23 NGO under the leadership of Sergey Smbatyan—Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Armenian State Symphony Orchestra and UNICEF National Ambassador.



“Born in Artsakh” is a comprehensive five-year educational program aimed at the professional development of talented young musicians forcibly displaced from Artsakh.

By joining the initiative, the Agency focused its efforts on providing participants with the musical instruments they need—**violin, cello, double bass, clarinet, trumpet, and piano**—as well as essential computer equipment.

With the support of the **Howard Karagyozyan Foundation**, 23 tablets were purchased and provided to young musicians from Artsakh.

Within the program, it is planned to purchase musical instruments for young performers who received their foundational music education in Artsakh; some of them already perform in orchestras.

High-quality instruments are not only essential for their professional growth, but also a vital source of stability on their path forward.

Program Outcomes

Of the 23 young musicians from Artsakh selected as beneficiaries of the “Born in Artsakh” program, **15 needed a musical instrument**. In 2025, thanks to donations from supporters of “We Are Our Mountains,” **we were able to purchase the required instruments for 7** of them.

Our Beneficiaries



**Nver
Tsatryan**

**16 years old,
Cello**

Tchaikovsky
Music School,
Yerevan

“When I held the new cello in my hands, I felt that someone believed in me. It gave me the strength to look ahead.”



**Anush
Aghajanyan**

**11 years old,
Violin**

Alexander
Ajemian Music
School

“Now I believe again that I can achieve my dream. Thank you to everyone who is helping me do that.”



**Iren
Abrahamyan**

**11 years old,
Piano**

Lazaros Saryan
Art School,
Yerevan

“I dream of becoming someone worthy of Artsakh—a good musician—sharing my homeland’s story wherever I go and being able to say out loud: ‘I was born in Artsakh.’”



**Levon
Hakobyan**

**13 years old,
Cello**

Ghazaros Saryan
Art School,
Yerevan

“My dream is to one day perform with my father on a stage in Artsakh.”

Our Beneficiaries



**LIA
BALASANYAN**
9 years old | Piano

**KAREN
BALASANYAN**
15 years old | Piano

**VADIM
BALASANYAN**
17 years old | Piano

“

“It is a great source of pride for me that, among the 23 children in the ‘Born in Artsakh’ program, three are mine. This is a double responsibility—so that they can prove they were worthy of this support and hold on firmly to the hand that helped them in this difficult moment.”

Meri Balasanyan — mother of Lia, Karen, and Vadim Balasanyan

“For our children, music is not only a way to express emotions, but also a bridge between the past and the future. Thanks to this program, they once again can believe in their strength and their calling.”

“

Narine Aghabalyan — Program Coordinator

Our Gratitude

We extend our deep gratitude to all supporters thanks to whom music, hope, and inspiration continue to live in the hearts of young musicians from Artsakh.

Challenge

Eight talented girls and boys from Artsakh still need musical instruments. They need your support.



“CAREER NAVIGATOR”: EDUCATIONAL ORIENTATION PROGRAM

From June to August 2025, the “We Are Our Mountains” Development Agency—supported by the DAR Educational Support **Charitable Foundation** and in partnership with the **School of Superheroes** educational platform—delivered the “Career Navigator” career guidance program.

The program targeted **63 forcibly displaced Artsakh students** in Grades 9–11, who found themselves in new and challenging circumstances and were facing the need to make informed choices about their future educational and career paths.



- ✓ **Discover Yourself.**
- ✓ **Set the Course.**

- ✓ **Define the Coordinates of Your Future.**
- ✓ **Take the Wheel.**



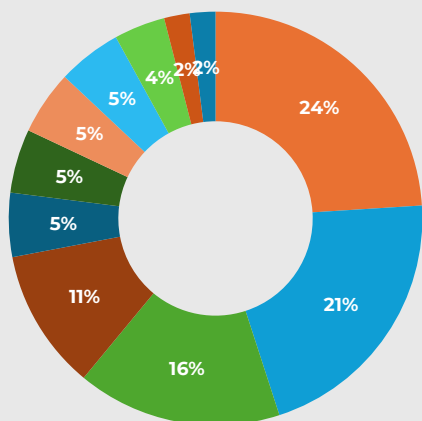
It combined multiple learning formats, including in-person trainings, online financial literacy sessions, site visits to organizations across different sectors, a business simulation, and a **capstone masterclass on the future of work and the role of artificial intelligence.**

Program Outcomes

Participants gained a clearer understanding of labor market needs, in-demand and emerging professions, and the fundamentals of financial management. They also strengthened key competencies in self-reflection, teamwork, and informed decision-making.



- The program contributed to **increased self-confidence among adolescents, deeper awareness of their strengths and interests, and a clearer sense of direction for the future**—an important step toward their educational and professional development.
- As a result, **100% of participants identified their preferred career pathway**, most frequently choosing entrepreneurship, creative industries, finance, and IT.



- Management and Entrepreneurship
- Creativity and Design
- Finance and Management
- IT and Technology
- Medicine and Health
- Engineering and Construction
- Marketing and Communications
- Law and Jurisprudence
- Science and Education
- Aviation and Transport
- Tourism and Service

A New Year Surprise FOR CHILDREN FROM ARTSAKH

Tashir Arena supported our initiative, enabling **over 20 children from Artsakh**, together with their parents, to spend an unforgettable day attending the **“Eterna”** circus performance.



With the support of the **“Nashe Delo” Foundation**, we distributed New Year gifts to 120 children in Kapan and Halidzor.

Each child received:

- a theater or cinema ticket;
- wireless headphones;
- creative educational kits;
- age-appropriate games.



INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

In the first half of 2025, alongside program delivery, the “We Are Our Mountains” Development Agency prioritized **institutional strengthening, international presence, and participation in initiatives of broad public significance.**

| Strengthening Institutional Capacity

Thanks to a grant from the **Near East Foundation’s STRIVE** program, the Agency significantly expanded its communications and outreach capacity. The project supported the production of multimedia materials presenting the Agency’s work and the upgrade of the official website, which is now available in four languages: Armenian, English, Russian, and French.



We also prioritized digital outreach by developing a one-year social media (SMM) strategy, covering structured social media operations, content planning, a stronger visual identity, and engagement of new audiences.

To present the breadth of our work, we produced a short documentary about the Agency, highlighting our key focus areas, values, and founding story. In addition, five program-specific videos were created, featuring beneficiaries’ real stories, achievements, and impact on local communities. These materials are already being used for public communications and for introducing the Agency to potential partners and donors.

Communications Impact (2025)

Key results (organic growth only)



Facebook:

- 20 435 followers;
- 1 179 375 content views;
- 25 000 interactions (+77% к 2024);
- 32 200 page visits (+44,6%);
- +1 500 new followers (+82%)



Instagram:

- 67 669 views;
- reach 22 100 (+490% к 2024);
- 1 200 interactions (+100%);
- 1 700 profile visits (+445%)



LinkedIn (с февраля 2025):

- 57 088 views;
- 2 241 reactions;
- 407 total followers (320 new in 323 days);
- strongest geographies: **Yerevan (AM), Montreal (CA)**



Telegram:

- 16 025 views;
- 180 followers

What this indicates

- Strong, scalable top-of-funnel **visibility** (Facebook remains the primary reach driver).
- Clear signs of **community engagement and trust** without paid promotion (engagement is sustained across platforms).
- LinkedIn is rapidly becoming a channel for **international/diaspora** reach and **partner-facing credibility**.

2026 priorities (next steps)

- Standardize reporting metrics across platforms (**views vs reach vs page visits**) and track **3 KPIs**: Reach/Views, Engagement rate, and **Conversions** (website clicks, inquiries, donations/applications).
- Build a consistent content cadence: **Facebook = impact stories + calls to action; Instagram = Reels/Stories rhythm; LinkedIn = partnerships + thought leadership**.
- Improve conversion tracking with **UTM links** and clear CTAs (“Support / Apply / Learn more”) to connect visibility with program funding and participation.

PROGRAMS DELIVERED:

KEY FIGURES AND IMPACT

In 2025, the “**We Are Our Mountains**” Development Agency, in partnership with its collaborators, delivered programs and initiatives with a total value of over **USD 435,000** (see table), benefiting approximately **10,000** people across different regions of Armenia.

PROGRAM*	USD (Amount)	LOCATION	TIMEFRAME	NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES	DIRECT BENEFICIARIES (Number)
WINGS: REHABILITATION PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS DISPLACED FROM ARTSAKH	173 652	Dilijan Gyumri Yerevan Tatev Kapan	Dec–Mar Jan–Apr Feb–May Apr–Jul May–Aug Sep–Dec Sep–Dec Sep–Dec	1 500	363 children 220 parents
WINGS4ALL: BUILDING YOUTH-LED ENTREPRENEURIAL FUTURES IN TATEV	91 014	Tatev	April– December	224	56
«TATEV CAVE GARDEN». NEW MARKET IN TATEV	18 065	Tatev	2025-2026	5 000	200
«TREE OF LIFE» INITIATIVE: PILGRIMAGE TO TATEV MONASTERY	75 013	Tatev	May	2 000	2 000
PRESERVING ARTSAKH: AN ELECTRONIC PLATFORM FOR INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE	30 209	Web	January– December		
FRENCH LANGUAGE PROGRAM FOR ARTSAKH STUDENTS	2 951	Yerevan	March-June	90	25
SUMMER PRACTICAL COURSE “FUN FRENCH” FOR ARTSAKH STUDENTS	10 050	Yerevan	July 1-19	180	50
SUPPORTING YOUNG MUSICIANS FROM ARTSAKH	9 893	Yerevan	March– December	108	23
EDUCATIONAL ORIENTATION PROGRAM “CAREER NAVIGATOR”	14 033	Yerevan	June–August	220	63
OTHER INITIATIVES	6 765	Yerevan Tatev Kapan	September– December	168	168
INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING	3 710		Throughout the year		WAOM DA
TOTAL	435 355	RA	January– December	9 490	3 168

* For detailed information about the programs, please refer to the respective links.

The “We Are Our Mountains” Development Agency extends its sincere gratitude to Ruben Vardanyan’s family for their invaluable support to the organization during this challenging period.

All activities were made possible thanks to the invaluable support of a wide network of the Agency’s partners and donors.

We sincerely thank all donors:

Avet Mirakyan, Edel Hovnanian, Garnik Meliksetyan, Gevik Baghdasaryan, Hayk Safaryan, Shant Mardirosyan, as well as everyone whose individual and collective contributions have made our achievements possible.

DONORS OF 2025 PROGRAMS

Association de Soutien à l'Artsakh	Vasilij Bardadymov	Mikhail Ayanyan
L'Œuvre d'Orient	Voznineri Aygi Restaurant	Mikhail Khadjabekyan
Near East Foundation (Armenia)	Garik Saroyan	Youth center of Kapan NGO
SAINT SARKIS CHARITY TRUST	Garnik Meliksetyan	Narek Stepanyan
Avet Mirakyan	Gayane Kirnosova	Narine Aghabalyan
Ayk Petrosyan	Gayane Tevosyan	Narine Okonyan
Hayk Safaryan	Gevik Baghdassarian	Innobiz Business Support NGO
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Amarayin Aygi LLC	Georgek Anjargolian	The Hovnaian Family Foundation
Ameriabank	Dilijan National Park SNCO	Sergey Filimonov
Ara Tanak	Deena Dulgerian	Suren Tonoyan
Araks Arakelyan	no last name Dmitry	Susanna Aghajanyan
AraratBank	House-museum of Avetik Isahakyan	Tatevik Babayan
Areg Miqayelyan	Eva Kirchmayer Bilic	Tatyana Lopareva
Armen Vachenants	Yevgenya Paturyan	Technical Centre Academy CJSC of FFA
Armen Mkhoyan	Elena Makarova	"Tigran Luttitz"
Armine Grigoryan	Emil Grigoryan Yerevan Jewelry Plant OJSC	Trio Tree Of Life
Armenian-Croatian Community	no last name Zhasmen	ACBA Federation CJSC
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Arsen Shamilyan	Laura Shahnazaryan	The DAR Foundation of Regional Development and Competitiveness
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Arthur Kalpakchian	Lusine Margaryan	Shant Mardirosian
Arthur Khachents	Marina Libik	KASA Swiss Humanitarian Foundation
Association of Medical Graduates of the ARS	Marina Hovhannisyanyan	Edel Hovnaian
Orran Benevolent NGO	Maria Zhog	Eduard Gevorkyan
The Charitable Foundation for the Promotion of Education Dar	Masis Arakelyan	Yuriy Baluyan
Valensia JV LLC	"Matilde Dias"	
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