



ARMENIAN FUND
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

**ARMENIAN FUND FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**

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OUR ACTION

Empowering vulnerable women in Armenia



+120

Income-generating activities created since 2022

Education



+10000

Beneficiaries of educational projects

Migration - Voluntary Return



+420

Microenterprises created since 2005

Vulnerable people



+1500

Refugees supported

OUR PROJECTS

The year 2025 marked an important milestone in our mission to develop and support the most vulnerable populations. Through our actions, we strengthened our presence in key sectors, including migration, education, assistance to people in precarious situations, and the promotion of the Francophonie.

Among our priorities, support for the empowerment of vulnerable women has taken a central place, particularly for refugee women, the wives of military personnel affected by the consequences of the 2020 war, and successive crises. Through the implementation of tailored and concrete programs, we have helped strengthen their resilience and foster new opportunities for the future.

This 2025 annual report illustrates the progress made, the obstacles overcome, and the results achieved. It reflects our ongoing commitment to supporting women and displaced people from Artsakh toward sustainable autonomy. Through this document, we invite you to discover the impact of our initiatives and the encouraging prospects for the years to come.

EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN ARMENIA

Following the selection process conducted in December 2024, the project to support vulnerable refugee and war-affected women, jointly implemented by the Saint Sarkis Charity Trust Fund, the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD), and coordinated in the field by the AAAS, entered its operational phase in January 2025.

This program, deployed nationwide in Armenia, generated strong interest with 175 applications received. Among them, 95 participants completed an intensive training program, resulting in the selection of 46 projects, including 25 business start-ups and 21 vocational training pathways. From the first half of the year, these initiatives were launched and supported through individualized follow-up, allowing the support to be tailored to each beneficiary's specific needs.

In the second half of the year, the project reached a decisive milestone by consolidating income-generating activities, with particular attention paid to the agriculture and production sectors. These areas were prioritized for their sustainability potential and their ability to offer stable long-term economic prospects. At the same time, beneficiaries strengthened their skills through training in entrepreneurship, accounting, and management, which are essential to structuring and sustaining their activities.

Some participants engaged in vocational training were thus able to complete their pathway and begin integrating into the labor market or developing their own business.



The acquisition of practical skills enabled them to envision a gradual evolution of their projects, moving from a subsistence logic to a true entrepreneurial dynamic. The regular monitoring by the AAAS and the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development teams was a key success factor. Monthly field visits enabled quick identification of difficulties, targeted adjustments, and proper implementation of activities. Thanks to this rigorous and continuous support, all supported projects were successfully completed.

Beyond the economic results, the project's impact is also measured through the social transformations observed. Several beneficiaries are now able to meet their family's needs, strengthen their autonomy, and reduce their dependence on public aid. This lasting change helps break the cycle of precariousness and restore confidence in the future.

However, despite these encouraging results, the needs remain considerable. Due to insufficient resources, many women could not be supported under this program. This reality underscores the importance of support from partners and donors to continue and expand this action.



In 2025, this project fully met its goal: to enable vulnerable women to become actors in their own future by laying the foundation for sustainable economic and social autonomy.

OUR BENEFICIARIES



« I was lucky to have the love and strength to keep going. »



Anahit, war widow

In Vanadzor, Anahit transformed a former family garage into a professional kitchen to launch "Irma," her small business specializing in homemade frozen meals, including stuffed dumplings (ravioli).

After months of uncertainty and several exploratory training courses, she chose to devote herself to food production. With the support of the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD), she equipped her workshop and structured her business.

Today, her business provides a stable income and supplies local families with quality artisanal products. For Anahit, "Irma" represents much more than a job: it is a way to honor her husband's memory, offer her children a dignified childhood, and, step by step, build a more secure future.

“

« Every piece of clothing I make carries something of my own story. Helping other women get back on their feet has become my purpose. »



Mariam, widow, 1 child

Some stories embody resilience with particular strength. Originally from Martakert, in Artsakh, Mariam had always dreamed of becoming a seamstress. She had opened her workshop before being brutally displaced in 2020, while pregnant. Despite a perilous exile, she was able to draw on her resources to start everything over.

Now in Sevan, she's restarted her work with the equipment she received through our project. Her workshop has become more than a place to sew; it's a place where things get passed on, where women support each other. Two women from Artsakh have trained with her and joined the team. Mariam holds tight to her roots: she weaves cultural motifs from Artsakh and the colors of the Armenian flag into her work.

Her project goes beyond sewing: it becomes a life mission, a space for collective reconstruction, and a tool for transmission. Together, these women are building a future made of autonomy, pride, and memory.



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP: AREV SOCIETY

In a context marked by the lasting consequences of recent conflicts and the challenges faced by displaced populations, the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD) strengthened its cooperation with its partner, Arev Society, in 2025, in close collaboration with the Armenian Association of Social Assistance (AAAS).

This alliance is part of a long-term commitment to support the most vulnerable women toward sustainable economic and social autonomy.

After a first phase focused on humanitarian aid, this cooperation has gradually evolved toward the implementation of structured programs, focused on skills strengthening, access to employment, and the development of income-generating activities. The objective is clear: to enable displaced women from Artsakh and those affected by the consequences of war to rebuild their lives, regain their dignity, and become full actors in their future.



Practical Seminar on Armenian Taxation for Refugee Women from Artsakh

In February 2025, 25 women displaced from Artsakh participated in a hands-on workshop on Armenian taxation, organized as part of a cooperation between the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD), AAAS, and Arev Society

This seminar aimed to help participants better understand the tax rules governing small business activity in Armenia, in the context of significant changes to the tax system.

Participants were informed of recent tax reforms that directly affect micro-entrepreneurs. Starting January 2025, the turnover tax rate will double, rising from 5% to 10%. This increase marks the first phase of a gradual transition away from the turnover tax system, with a second phase of more radical changes planned for July 2025.

Participants also learned that the Armenian government aims to narrow the gap between the tax burdens of the turnover tax system and the general tax system, while increasing incentives for commercial entities by reducing document expenses.

The trainer, who is herself a former FADD beneficiary, highlighted the support opportunities available for women entrepreneurs, particularly in the high-tech sector, where the government plans to introduce a reduced turnover tax rate of 2% (instead of 5%) and to cover part of the training costs of companies that invest in the professional development of their employees.

Through this initiative, AF4SD and its partners hope to provide displaced women from Artsakh with the tools and knowledge they need to rebuild their economic lives despite the considerable challenges they face in their host country.



Digital Literacy for Displaced Women

The first stage of the program aimed to strengthen basic digital skills, essential for professional autonomy and integration into the labor market. This free training, entirely online, was aimed at women displaced from Artsakh as well as those whose husbands were killed or seriously wounded during the war.

For four weeks, 100 participants received structured support. They learned to effectively use office tools such as Word and Excel, to work with Google applications (Docs, Sheets, Slides, Gmail), and to adopt safe practices on the Internet.

Beyond acquiring technical know-how, this training enabled participants to gain confidence and better organize their professional projects. For many, it was a first concrete step toward exploring new opportunities and developing skills transferable to different sectors of activity.

Exchanges among participants also enriched the program. The online sessions encouraged the sharing of experiences, collaborative learning, and the creation of professional support networks, allowing each to draw inspiration from the others' journeys and strengthen her own skills.

Finally, this training laid a solid foundation for all those wishing to continue developing their digital skills. It provided the basics necessary to build more advanced technical skills and remain competitive in a constantly evolving professional environment.

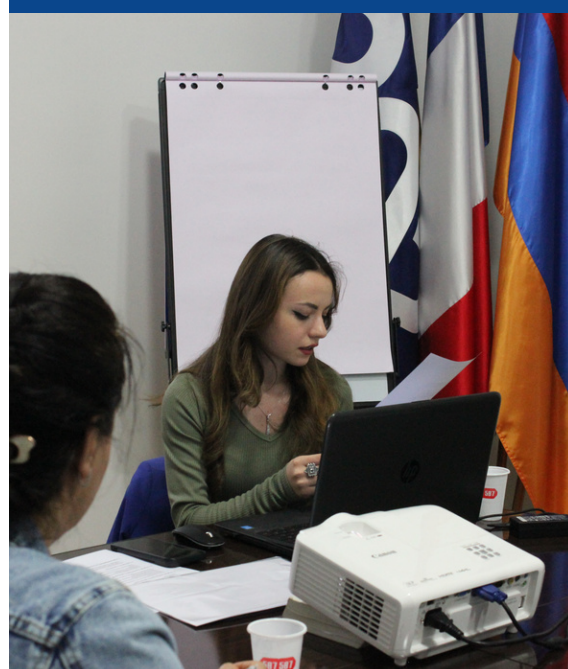


Social Media and HR Training for Displaced Women

In April 2025, a targeted training program for women displaced from Artsakh was organized to strengthen their capacity for professional integration in Armenia.

Participants discovered the recruitment methods preferred by Armenian companies: local job platforms, selection processes, and decisive interview criteria. HR professionals presented current trends such as video recruitment and situational assessments.

The training also covered essential digital strategies for an effective job search or for launching a business. Beneficiaries learned to optimize their presence on LinkedIn, a platform that is becoming crucial in the Armenian market.





Introduction to Artificial Intelligence: Preparing the Skills of Tomorrow

In continuity with the digital training program, an introduction to artificial intelligence was offered, allowing participants to deepen their professional skills.

Delivered online and supervised in a structured manner, this training brought together 100 participants. It enabled them to discover the concrete uses of AI to improve their professional efficiency and stimulate their creativity. Participants were trained in writing effective prompts, creating professional content, analyzing and quickly summarizing large documents, and automating certain repetitive tasks. Each module included practical exercises promoting direct experimentation with the tools and their adaptation to each participant's specific needs.

Beyond technical skills, the program also encouraged reflection on innovation and applied creativity. Participants explored different ways to integrate artificial intelligence into their professional activities, whether in document management, communication, or task organization. This approach helped strengthen their autonomy, problem-solving capacity, and openness to new professional opportunities.

By combining practical learning with exploration of emerging technologies, this program illustrates the ongoing commitment of the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development and Arev Society to the professional development of women and to expanding their prospects in a constantly evolving economic environment.

VOLUNTARY RETURN

For more than twenty years, the Association Arménienne d'Aide Sociale and the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development have worked hand in hand to support Armenian migrants in irregular situations in France who wish to return to their country of origin.

Thanks to the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII) program, these voluntary returns are accompanied by concrete, personalized support. Each beneficiary receives tailor-made support, including advice on settling in, training, and social and economic reintegration programs adapted to their situation.

Funding committees, organized regularly at the French Embassy in Armenia, select projects to support, including small agricultural initiatives, craft workshops, and local businesses. The objective is clear: to enable each person to start over on solid ground and transform their return into a sustainable opportunity.

In 2025, this cooperation continues with the same rigor and the same commitment. Beyond a simple return, it is about restoring hope and autonomy for beneficiaries while contributing to the economic and social dynamism of local communities in Armenia.



RETOURS VOLONTAIRES

2005 à ce jour

2287

Nouvelles activités génératrices
de revenus en 2025

16

CRÉATION D'ENTREPRISE

416

Depuis le démarrage du projet

LE COQ FRANÇAIS



Every year, in March, the national "Le Coq Français" competition is a highlight for Armenian students learning French. This event, which has become a key date, brings together thousands of students from across the country to assess their language skills and celebrate their connection with Francophone culture.



The 2025 edition confirmed this enthusiasm, with more than 2,500 students from all regions of Armenia participating. Their commitment, seriousness, and proficiency in French reflect the growing role of French in the country's education system.

Over the years, the competition has developed and grown, offering participants much more than a simple competition: a rewarding experience that fosters cultural openness, self-confidence, and sharing.

This dynamic actively contributes to promoting the French language and strengthening educational and cultural ties between Armenia and the Francophone world.

FRENCH CLASSROOMS



Since 2018, the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development, in partnership with the "Stepan Gishyan" Charitable Fund, has been working to facilitate access to the French language and culture for students in remote regions of Armenia.

The main project focuses on creating modern, fully equipped French classrooms to transform learning conditions in schools that often lack resources.



These rooms are more than just classrooms. They're built to spark curiosity, to pull students into the French-speaking world, and to invite them to explore other cultures. In 2025, two more were inaugurated in the Tavush and Aragatsotn regions, bringing the total to eleven. For teachers, they make the work easier and the teaching better.



For the students, they're places that open a window onto the wider world.

We genuinely believe that the environment where you learn matters. It shapes how well you do and how much you grow. That's why we plan to keep building more of these spaces in the years ahead.



VOICES THAT INSPIRE AND TRANSFORM

Behind every program we run are women whose lives speak louder than any statistic. They've kept going through circumstances that would have stopped most of us. Their stories are where you really see what these initiatives do.

The women we work with in Armenia come from very different backgrounds. Many have been through serious hardship, personal, social, and economic. But they share one thing: the determination to learn, to find their feet, and to build something steady and meaningful for themselves and their families.

The stories in this section come straight from our teams on the ground. We talk with these women regularly. That's how we understand what they actually need, see what's working, and notice the changes, sometimes quiet ones, sometimes profound. A new sense of confidence. Someone is taking initiative for the first time. The ability to imagine a different kind of future.

By sharing these voices, we want to put real faces and real journeys at the center of the conversation. These are stories of individual courage, but they're also part of something bigger: a movement toward greater equality, greater independence, and more possibilities for women in Armenia.

**Empowerment of
Women in Armenia**

A BIOLOGIST WHO CHOSE TO CULTIVATE HOPE

Margarita got married in 2019 and moved to Hadrut, in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh). She'd trained as a biologist, but teaching had always pulled at her.

That year, she joined Teach For Armenia and settled in one of the most remote parts of the region. She didn't go in with grand plans, just a quiet determination to live with purpose. She wanted to teach, to learn, to make herself useful in her new community.



While teaching there, she kept running into a small, stubborn problem: fresh mushrooms were almost impossible to come by. The few that made it from Armenia were usually spoiled before they reached the stores. A minor thing, on the face of it. But Margarita saw an opportunity. With a background in biology and a growing interest in things that could last, she started to wonder — what if she grew mushrooms herself, right there?

She knew nothing about farming. But she had instincts, and she had grit. She read, experimented, tinkered. Bit by bit, she set up a small mushroom-growing operation. She figured out how to keep the temperature and humidity just right, how to manage the mushrooms' life cycle, how to store and pack them so they'd stay fresh longer.

It didn't start as a business idea. It started as an answer to something missing. Something simple. Something useful.

Then came 2020, and the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War. Margarita, her husband, and their young son had to leave Hadrut along with thousands of others. They left their home, the school where she taught, the little mushroom project she'd patiently put together. Like so many families from Artsakh, they were torn from everything that anchored their lives.

They resettled in Stepanakert. Starting over was hard, but Margarita held on. In 2022, when the blockade cut off gas, electricity, food, and medicine, she somehow got the operation going again, this time in a small space on the edge of town. Without transport, she walked several kilometers a day to tend to the mushrooms, often carrying them back herself. Even in the middle of shortages, she kept giving some away to families who needed them, adapting however she could to the conditions.

Then, in September 2023, she had to leave again. This time to Armenia, near Yerevan. With support from the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development, she started over once more, with a modest setup and the same determination. Her son is at the center of everything she does, and her commitment hasn't budged.

Margarita's story is one of constant reinvention. Every time something is taken from her, she rebuilds not by trying to recreate what was lost, but by working with what she has. The drive to be useful. To create. To hold on. It's a quiet kind of resilience, but it runs deep, and it's the thread that ties her whole story together.



Margarita, 29 ans, 1 enfant
réfugiée d'Artsakh

**Empowerment of
Women in Armenia**

MARIANNA'S JOURNEY OF STRENGTH

In the rolling hills around Martakert, in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh), Marianna once had a quiet, meaningful life. She'd trained as a nurse and was a devoted mother to two children. She and her husband had built something modest but real, rooted in the land, growing vegetables, raising poultry, doing the work together.

It wasn't a life of luxury. It was a life of rhythm, of purpose, of being home.



Then 2020 came and changed everything. The first wave of war forced them to leave for a while. Eventually, they came back, picked up where they'd left off, and slowly built something that looked again like ordinary life. But the peace they'd patched together wouldn't last.

On September 19, 2023, war came back to Artsakh, and this time the consequences were devastating. In the chaos of the attacks and the displacement that followed, Marianna lost her husband. Suddenly, she was alone, responsible for her children and the rest of her large family, and once again forced to leave everything behind.

She left carrying grief and fear, escaping ethnic cleansing.

Their journey ended in Vanadzor, in Armenia, where they found temporary shelter.

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Adjusting to a new place with nine people under one roof was overwhelming. Grief made every day heavier, and it was especially hard on the children. Their new home didn't offer much comfort, and there was no work to be found. But Marianna didn't fold.

With a quiet, steady kind of resolve, she set about rebuilding the kind of life she'd known. She took a part-time job in the local school administration. She bought a few hens.

Mornings started with feeding the hens, gathering eggs, and handling the small sales that followed. Whether she was supplying local shops or selling to neighbors, she slowly found a rhythm. It wasn't easy; resources were tight, and the emotional weight didn't lift, but it was a start.

Marianna calls her family "hardworking people," and you can see it in everything she's done since the displacement. From day one, she refused to just sit still. For her, keeping going was a way to honor her past and protect her children's future.

While searching for programs that helped refugees, she came across the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD). She applied without much hope. The AF4SD team came out to see whether a chicken-raising business could actually work in her circumstances. At first, she thought she could set it up in her neighbor's yard next to their pigs, but AF4SD asked her to dedicate a proper section of her garage to the chickens. Once she'd prepared the space and passed the final inspection, the funding came through. The grant let her buy more hens, which meant more eggs.

"I went door to door, shop after shop," she says. "Eventually, one of them said yes. Fresh eggs, twice a week." She pauses, and a small but real smile crosses her face. "I know it's not much. But it's the start of something."

She talks about the housing vouchers refugees are entitled to, her voice picking up as she lays out their plan.

"We want to buy a house in Vanadzor," she explains, her eyes lighting up. "With the vouchers, we won't have to worry about rent anymore. Every egg and every chick I sell will go straight into building our life, not just surviving it."

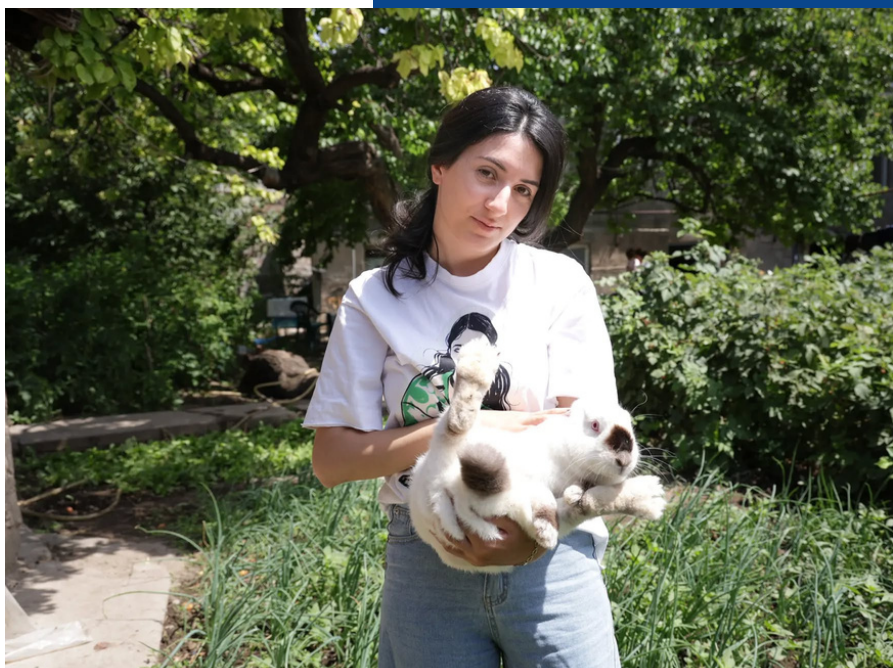


Marianna, 36 years old, 2 children
Artsakh refugee

ZOYA'S NEW BEGINNING

When war broke out in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) in 2023, Zoya and her family had to flee hastily. They left everything behind: their home, their land, their livelihoods, but also their dreams, which remained buried in their homeland. The shock of exile was immense, but fortunately, they were not alone.

Upon arriving in Armenia, Zoya found an unexpected human warmth around her: friends, humanitarian organizations, people who believed in the power of a fresh start.



It was this solidarity that gave Zoya and her husband the strength to get back up and start again. They rented a small house in the Kotayk region, not far from Yerevan. After the birth of their daughter, they decided to embark on an activity that could provide them with a modest but regular income. Their choice fell on rabbit farming.

It wasn't a random choice. Raising rabbits takes far fewer resources than raising cattle or pigs, and the meat is lean and high in protein, exactly what health-conscious families look for.

The project quickly became something more than a livelihood for Zoya.

With support from the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD), she turned the idea into reality. The AF4SD team visited her, reviewed the business plan, and the committee approved it. With that, she bought her first rabbits and got the farm going. She's deeply invested; she watches over the rabbits' health and growth with real care. Her neighbors and community welcomed the project warmly.

But for Zoya, this isn't just business:

"I'm glad I can help parents like me who are looking for healthy food," she says. "Especially the ones who want the best for their kids."

She's already dreaming bigger: expanding the farm, working with local shops, raising more rabbits, and feeding more families in the area.

Her drive has rippled through her family. Her mother started baking traditional bread. Her father took up chicken-raising. Her husband found work in security, always there in the background, the quiet kind of presence that holds everything together.

This is a family that refused to be defeated by what happened to them. Instead, they got moving. They took on the challenges in front of them. They started building new paths forward.



Zoya, 27 years old, 1 child
Artsakh refugee



Find more testimonials by scanning the QR code.

INNA'S JOURNEY

Inna still remembers the forests of Chartar. Green, endless, with air so pure that it felt like breathing peace itself. Her house was located at the very top of the village, surrounded only by trees and silence.

In Artsakh, Inna worked as an entomologist.

Every spring, she advised farmers on how to protect their crops from insects. Her husband worked the land. Together, they lived according to a simple philosophy that became their motto :

"We love nature and animals, because plants do not betray and animals do not deceive. They are honest, and there is so much to learn from them."

This world disappeared in September 2023. After months of blockade and famine, they had to flee Artsakh hastily to escape the looming ethnic cleansing.

"The journey was incredibly difficult, especially with my small child," Inna recalls.

She doesn't really like to talk about those hellish moments: the war, the blockade, the evacuation. Who would?

They arrived in Armenia almost empty-handed. They had lost everything, except their lives. But what makes Inna's story different is that she didn't just survive. She is rebuilding.



After a stay in the city, which they quickly disliked because of the noise and the lack of nature, they settled in Parakar, a small town near Yerevan. With support from the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD), they launched a pig farm. Inna smiles as she says that now, her husband "works for her," but that's how a family business works.

"We love this work," she says simply.

Their dedication is visible. They use natural feed, and their customers love their products. Living on the outskirts of the village is ideal: it avoids inconvenience to neighbors and gives them space to dream big.

In addition to pigs, they raise rabbits in a multi-story house built by her husband. Their idea? To use rabbit manure to produce biohumus for their vegetable garden, and then sell it to other farmers. Their next big goal: beekeeping.

"In Artsakh, we had more than ninety hives," Inna recalls. "We produced pure honey. Today, we only have memories left... But we have kept all our know-how and the will to start over." It may seem like a dream, she acknowledges. But when you've already lost everything once and find the strength to start from scratch, dreams no longer seem so impossible.

"The most important thing for my family and me is to live in peace and to create," she affirms. "It is difficult to build when you are constantly attacked and everything you build is destroyed. But we are hardworking, persevering, and above all... this is what we love to do."

Deep down, Inna knows they have lost a lot, but she also knows they had the courage to find their way back. She and her husband have discovered work they love and do together with passion. It is harmony everywhere: in their marriage, in their work, in their life.

From the forests of Chartar to the farms of Parakar, Inna's story is not just about displacement. It speaks of an unbreakable human spirit, of the love of land, family, and honest work.

"We don't want to live in the past," Inna concludes. "We want to find a little more joy and build a more stable and predictable future for ourselves and our children."

And step by step, one pig, one rabbit, one future hive at a time, Inna and her family are rediscovering their home.



Inna, 30 years old, 1 child
Artsakh refugee

**Empowerment of
Women in Armenia**

MERI'S STORY

Meri was the director of a beauty products company in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh). She had built her business with her own hands and led a beautiful team of women whom she inspired and helped achieve financial independence.

It wasn't just a career, but a true vocation.

Then war broke out, followed by the total blockade. In a few months, the vivid colors of life disappeared.



Her team scattered to the four corners of cities and villages, each carrying her wounds, her losses, sometimes even the loss of hope. The bond that united them was broken, and Meri, who had supported so many others, in turn found herself needing to be carried.

She struggled to survive, not only financially but also psychologically. Her daughter Adrianna had been deeply marked by what she had lived through during the war.

The nights were the hardest: the silence was no longer a comfort, but a constant fear. For a mother, seeing her child suffer is heartbreaking. And yet, Meri continued to stand tall, without a plan, but with a certainty: pain cannot be allowed to win.

After their forced displacement, fleeing ethnic cleansing, the family found refuge in the village of Mrgavet, in the Ararat region of Armenia, thanks to the humanitarian organization Gain. When her husband's birthday came, Meri wanted to thank the local team by preparing something special: baklava.

This simple gesture changed her life. A German volunteer tasted her cake and told her: "This baklava should be on the market." Meri had never thought about it. But his words resonated within her. The next day, she went to Yerevan with a tray of baklava. Without a label, without a plan, just with confidence. She knocked on the doors of restaurants and shops. One of them placed her first order. Thus began a new adventure.

At first, she only had an oven, no professional equipment. But she moved forward, step by step. Then she discovered the economic support program for refugee women of the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD). She grabbed the chance, applied, wrote her first business plan, and got support. That gave her the push she needed: she bought proper equipment, improved her products, learned how to present them, and even entered an international dessert competition in Dilijan... which she won.

Today, Meri is no longer limited to baklava. She also bakes cakes and cookies and dreams of opening her own pastry shop. Even pregnant with her second child, she has never stopped: she learns, she works, she builds. And at every stage, she remembers why she started: Adrianna, her daughter.

It is for her that her business bears this name, as a promise and a tribute.

Meri is not just a pastry chef. She is a survivor. A mother. A builder. Her story is not a story of desserts, but a story of courage, of grief transformed into creation, of a future reinvented by the strength of the heart.



Meri, 27 years old, 2 children
Artsakh refugee



Economic Aspects of Income Generation by Refugee Women in Armenia

In the aftermath of the 2020 war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, thousands of families found themselves plunged into a crisis they had not asked for. Despite financial compensation, they suffered economic instability and deep trauma.

Many women became widows. Others had to take care of seriously injured husbands, moving from the role of stay-at-home mother to that of full-time caregiver, with the heavy responsibility of their children's well-being.

Added to these women are the refugees, deprived of stable resources, living in temporary housing and depending on meager state allowances. With an unemployment rate reaching 15.5% in 2024 and strong competition in the labor market, finding a job is a challenge.

In the face of this situation, the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD) and its partners launched an economic empowerment program through the creation of small businesses.

Why Create a Small Business ?

Economic Arguments

Micro-enterprises are particularly well suited to refugees: few administrative formalities, reduced taxation, and tax exemption for unprocessed agricultural production. The initial investment is reduced, which is essential for families without capital.

Access to traditional credit is often blocked by the lack of guarantees and high interest rates.

 "We tried to obtain credit, but the rate was unaffordable. We are tenants, and the land is not ours, which was unacceptable to the bank."

– Réfugee, 27 years old, project beneficiary

Flexibility and Accessibility

Small businesses, especially home-based ones, offer flexible hours, essential for women who need to balance work and family responsibilities. They also make it possible to leverage existing skills (crafts, cooking, services).

Community Integration and Support

Warmly welcomed by the local population, refugees see entrepreneurship as a lever for economic and social integration. Some benefit from the support of their neighbors and shopkeepers. In rural areas, the creation of an activity also allows women to gain autonomy in the face of social norms that often entrust the management of property to male in-laws.

 "When the owner of the market learned that I had lost my husband, he offered to sell all my dried fruit production without me having to pay rent."

– War widow, 42 years old, project beneficiary

Skills Development and Economic Impact

Running a business enables women to acquire skills in entrepreneurship, management, and marketing. They also develop interpersonal skills and greater self-confidence.

The objective is to generate additional income to avoid falling into poverty.

Transforming Communities

When a refugee woman creates a business, her entire family becomes autonomous. She ceases to be dependent on aid and becomes a full-fledged economic actor: she creates jobs, generates income, and contributes to the local economy.

The project, reserved for women, encourages them to take on leadership roles. After having been excluded from decision-making during the war, they are now taking control of their economic future.

You can read the article in its entirety by visiting our partner "Arev Society" website by scanning the following QR code.



Poverty rate in Armenia, in
2023

23,7 %

Poverty rate among women
in Armenia for the
same period

56 %

SUPPORT OUR PROJECTS

**We
need you!**

Make your donations through the
following link or by scanning the QR code..

www.af4sd.org



Our partners



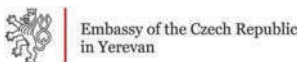
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ՀՀ կրթության և
գիտության նախարարություն



Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development

10/7, avenue Azatutyun
0037 Yerevan, Armenia

Tel.: +374 10 20 18 40

www.af4sd.org
info@af4sd.org
facebook.com/AF4SD

