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EVALUATION REPORT

of

The NGO Training and Resource Center (NGOC)

Yerevan, Armenia

A Project of the Armenian Assembly of America

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I EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An independent evaluation of the NGO Training and Resource Center (NGOC), a project of the Armenian Assembly of America (AAA), was carried out from December 1 through December 22, 1997. The work of the NGOC has been made possible through a subgrant from Save the Children Federation (SCF) as umbrella grant manager of Cooperative Agreement # CCN-0001-A-00-3132-00, financed by USAID. The evaluation team was contracted directly by USAID.

The purpose of the evaluation was to gauge the progress of NGOC in meeting the objectives set forth in the project proposal and the targets established in the approved Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IME). USAID provided a Scope of Work (SOW) to the evaluation team. The SOW included specific questions related to program impact, monitoring and evaluation, training, outreach, grants, management, sustainability and lessons learned.

The evaluation team recognizes the many positive achievements of the NGOC to date. Many Armenian NGOs are extremely grateful for the services NGOC has provided, including assistance in official registration, use of the Resource Center (RC) facilities, training, grants and facilitation of linkages with other NGOs as well as PVOs and international organizations. The NGOC is seen as a place where an NGO can go with a problem and receive sympathetic advice or tangible assistance. In addition to maintaining an active office in Yerevan, NGOC has also opened a branch office in the northern city of Gyumri. The Gyumri office has proved to be a success both because of the dedication of its staff and the strong support for it in the Gyumri NGO community.

However, the overall conclusion of the evaluation team is that the NGOC has not fully realized its objectives or met its targets under the IME. This is due to a number of factors, including

lack of a clear vision and strategy The NGOC is still attempting to do too many things at once without clearly defining priorities or establishing realistic targets.

management weaknesses The project has been hindered by a top-down management structure. This has prevented the emergence of a strong local leadership, a key to the eventual indigenization of the NGOC. Also, many key NGOC staff do not clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.

uncertain impact The impact of the project is difficult to ascertain, in part because the established objectives are probably not realistic and because the follow-up monitoring of completed trainings and other activities is inadequate to measure their true impact.

Unfortunately, many of the negative findings of the present evaluation were already mentioned in an interim evaluation report commissioned by Save the Children in 1995. That report noted insufficient tracking and reporting systems to measure the impact of training and warned that NGOC was trying to do too many things without effective prioritization or management.

It is encouraging to see so much growth and energy in the NGO sector in Armenia, especially considering that ten years ago the sector barely existed. Undoubtedly, some of the credit for this growth belongs to the NGOC. The evaluation team believes that NGOC has the potential to play a continuing, important role in the NGO sector, especially as it moves toward

indigenization. Therefore, any criticisms offered in this report are intended to be constructive and hopefully will lead to improvements in the overall program of NGOC.

II INTRODUCTION

As the end of the decade approaches, a cautious sense of optimism can be felt among the people of Armenia. The economy has expanded over the past few years and the process of political consolidation appears to be well on its way. However, many problems remain. The country is still grappling with the legacy of three events which have rocked the country, both literally and figuratively, over the past decade.

The first of these was the earthquake of 1988 centered in the north of the country. Tens of thousands of people were killed and hundreds of thousands were made homeless. Gyumri, the second largest city in the country, was almost totally wrecked, and even today tens of thousands of its citizens are living in metal shipping containers, suffering from the frigid temperatures of that region. Government funding for reconstruction has not been enough to meet the need, and the people have had to rely largely on their own efforts to cope with the hardships.

The second major event and probably the one with the greatest long-term impact was the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. While welcomed by the great majority of the population, this event precipitated a huge social and economic crisis for which few were prepared. Almost overnight, many state-owned industries failed, leaving vast stretches of empty industrial wasteland around the cities of Yerevan and Vanadzor and resulting in the unemployment of hundreds of thousands of workers. The sudden shift to a market economy after decades of socialism provoked a surge of inflation which left many pensioners and other vulnerable groups almost totally destitute. As the economy slowly rebounds, the effects of the change may be mitigated, but a great percentage of the population is still living in very precarious conditions.

The third major event was the war with Azerbaijan over the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh. Though the enclave has been effectively separated from Azerbaijan and a cease fire has held since 1994, the long-term status of the territory is far from clear. Mediation efforts, led mainly by Russia, are underway, but a political solution still seems far away. At the same time, there is growing international pressure on Armenia to reach a political solution. There is a fear among some here that if this is not done soon, Armenia will miss out on the economic boom already beginning to result from the exploitation of oil and natural gas resources in the Caspian Sea region.

It is in this context that major international donors, including USAID, have operated for the past five years. In order to provide quick and appropriate humanitarian aid to the Armenian people, USAID decided to work through the mechanism of an umbrella grant to an American PVO. Through a competitive process, Save the Children Federation was selected to manage the Cooperative Agreement which would facilitate the delivery of resources to the people of Armenia, beginning in 1993.

While many of Save the Children's subgrantees chose to address the immediate relief needs of the people, the Armenian Assembly of America elected a somewhat different approach. Realizing that the long-term social, economic and political health of the country depended on the emergence of a strong sector of independent, non-governmental organizations, AAA directed its efforts to the stimulation and growth of this sector. For many in Armenia the

concept of an NGO was and remains a new one. During the Soviet period there were virtually no organizations outside the control of the state or the Communist Party. Gradually, however, many local organizations, often with support and encouragement from the Armenian Diaspora, were formed to address the needs of the population.

The Armenian Assembly of America decided to create the NGO Training and Resource Center to support the development of the NGO sector in Armenia. The ultimate goal of this project was and remains to strengthen and sustain the democratization process in Armenia. The objectives of the program have since the beginning focused on encouraging sustainable NGO activities, mobilizing of resources for the NGO sector, replication of NGO programs and encouraging cooperation among NGOs in Armenia and beyond its borders.

Based on the results of the initial subgrant, USAID and Save the Children decided to extend the subgrant to AAA for the period November 1, 1995 to August 31, 1997, in the amount of USD 2.5 million. The total amount allocated to the project since 1993 has been USD 3,278,948. The closing date for the subgrant was eventually extended to October 31, 1997.

According to the Project Identification Information (request for project extension) dated October 25, 1995, the Goal, Objectives and Impact Indicators of the program are as follows:

Goal

Support the growth and development of the NGO sector which will contribute to the continuing development of Armenia as a democratic society.

Objectives

Increase NGOs' competencies to (a) assess the needs of their members, constituencies, local populations or vulnerable groups, (b) develop solutions to local problems and needs, and (c) mobilize a range of resources (governmental, non-governmental, private donors, and voluntary donations of time, money and materials) in order to effect measurable changes.

Facilitate and promote multilateral partnerships and collaboration among NGOs, PVOs, IOGs and governmental institutions through joint programs, information sharing and resource pooling.

Develop a core group of NGOs to guide the future growth and development of the NGO sector.

Impact Indicators

An effectively functioning and more developed core group of NGOs partnering with various levels of Armenian society and government (as evidenced by an assessment of a core group of 20-30 NGOs using the Stages of Development tool).

Positive international awareness of and cooperation with the NGO sector in Armenia (as evidenced by increased programmatic and consultative partnerships among NGOs, PVOs and IOGs and increased international financial support of NGO programs).

Development of an NGO voice for a transparent civil law environment to enable open and effective NGO activity (as evidenced by the creation of NGO coalition groups cooperating on legislative and administrative law issues).

Positive public awareness of NGO activities and their contribution to social welfare and democratic process (as evidenced by increased media attention and coverage of NGO activities)

The main vehicle for reaching the above impact and objectives has been the NGO Training and Resource Center (NGOC). During the life of the subgrant, the role of the NGOC has been to help local NGOs establish themselves. This has included advice on registration with the Ministry of Justice as prescribed under Armenian law, as well as registration with the NGOC itself. Once fully registered, an NGO becomes eligible to use the facilities of the NGOC Resource Center, as well as to apply for core training courses (CTC), advanced training courses (ATC), customized training and small grants. It is part of the long-term strategy of AAA to foster a fully sustainable and indigenous NGOC, which will continue to play a key role in the development, training and advocacy on behalf of the NGO sector in Armenia.

The NGOC Resource Center provides NGOs with access to computers, telephones, photocopy and fax machines, as well as advice on their use and linkages with other NGOs who use these services. Other activities undertaken by the NGOC include a workshop series, designed to improve specific skills, training of trainers, dialogue programs, consisting of forums, roundtables and conferences for NGOs and the larger public, a public awareness campaign regarding NGOs and their activities, an NGO newsletter, support for NGO coalitions which are interested in cooperation and joint planning, activities supporting legal and procedural reform, such as a national needs assessment and production of an NGO legal handbook.

III EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The Project Identification Information (project extension proposal) dated October 25, 1995 states that "An outside evaluation is currently scheduled during the second year of the proposal period in June 1997." The evaluation was postponed due to a time extension granted through October 31, 1997. This Evaluation Report is the product of the outside evaluation.

The Scope of Work for the evaluation is included as Appendix A. The time frame of the evaluation was from December 1, 1997 through December 22, 1997. During this time the team made contact with a variety of parties interested in the project, including Armenian NGO representatives, USAID officials, staff of AAA, NGOC, Save the Children and other PVOs and UN agencies, Armenian governmental authorities and representatives of Peace Corps and the United States Information Service. The main methods of gathering information were through direct meetings with the interested parties (Appendix B) and a review of documents relevant to the project (Appendix C). The team developed a questionnaire as a guide for interviewing staff of Armenian NGOs, both those directly related and unrelated to the work of NGOC (Appendix D). A separate questionnaire was developed for interviews with the staff of NGOC (Appendix E). It should be mentioned that the interviews were informal and open-ended in nature, permitting deviation from the questionnaire where this was helpful. Though it is obvious that many more opinions and views could have been solicited, the team had to establish priorities for its work. Inevitably, some voices were not heard. Nevertheless, the team feels that it was exposed to a broad and deep enough range of opinions to enable it to draw reasonable conclusions.

As is clear from the Scope of Work the report contains sections on impact, monitoring and evaluation, training, etc. Because these topics are so interrelated, the findings and recommendations on one topic may appear to be those of another. For this reason, a summary of all the recommendations is presented at the end of the report.

The members of the evaluation team were

Ms Narine H Badasyan Ms Badasyan holds an MBA from the American University of Armenia and has worked for an Armenian NGO, AsEx, as a business consultant in strategic business planning and financial management and planning. She has also worked for Eurasia Foundation in Armenia. She has recently completed a database analysis of Illinois NGOs as a Visiting Scholar at Southern Illinois University.

Ms Cecilia Damonte-Thorup Ms Damonte recently served as Team Leader for the Columbia Country Program Evaluation for Catholic Relief Services, focusing on institutional development, human rights, conflict transformation and civil society interventions. She is an active member of CRS' Civil Society and Human Rights Technical Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Mr D Randall Harshbarger (Team Leader) Mr Harshbarger has worked for over twelve years in international development, focusing mainly on program management, grant compliance and community and institutional development in areas of conflict. He holds a JD degree from Columbia University.

Mr Tigran Petrossian Mr Petrossian holds a degree from Continent Nord School of Interpreters in Moscow. He has worked as translator and interpreter for a number of international organizations working in Armenia, including TACIS, Volunteer Technical Assistance for Cooperatives and Agriculture (VOCA) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. He also served as Field Office Manager for CARE International at its office in Vanadzor, Armenia.

In addition, the USAID/Caucasus Mission designated **Ms Maya Barkhoudarian** as an observer-member of the team. Ms Barkhoudarian has served as Project Assistant for Civic Society Programs since June 1997. She holds an MA in political science from the American University of Armenia.

The evaluation team benefited from the cooperation of all those with whom it came in contact. The team would like to offer its special thanks to the staffs of Save the Children Federation and the NGOC who willingly gave of their time and energy to facilitate this evaluation.

IV FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS

A IMPACT

In carrying out the NGOC project, AAA linked its goals, objectives and activities to the USAID Strategic Objectives for the Caucasus, particularly SO 2.1 "Increased, better-informed citizens' participation in political and economic decision-making." The Intermediate Results which flow toward this SO are "increased public confidence in citizens' ability to affect change" (IR 2.1.3) and "increased effectiveness of NGOs involved in the public policy process" (IR 2.1.3.2). These Intermediate Results are in turn based on IR

2 1 3 2 1 “ a legal and regulatory environment that is conducive to NGO activity is established and enhanced” and IR 2 1 3 2 2 “increased national and international NGO coordination ”

Findings

It is difficult if not impossible to measure the impact of a particular program on a general policy environment. It is even difficult to prove in this case that increased NGO coordination is the product, at least in part, of the efforts of the NGOC. However, the vast majority of local NGOs with which the team met feel that the NGOC has played a crucial role in the process of bringing local NGOs together and of facilitating their contacts with both international NGOs and in some cases with NGOs in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The impact of the efforts of the NGOC in the formulation of an Armenian NGO law is harder to gauge. Indeed, it is unclear how much influence any party had on the promulgation of the Law on Public Organizations which governs NGOs in Armenia. Certainly most organizations and individuals which the team met with expressed less than complete satisfaction with the law and its application, especially in the area of taxation.

While it is perhaps unrealistic to expect that the NGOC could have a measurable impact on progress toward realization of the Strategic Objectives, the team did compare the goals and objectives of the original NGOC proposal and the approved Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IME) for years two and three of the activity (November 1, 1995-August 31, 1997) with the achievements to date. The results are shown in the table below. While in some areas, such as numbers of core trainings conducted, the NGOC met its targets, in others, such as timely production of informational videos and organization of a regional conference, it did not.

In terms of its impact on the NGO sector in general, the overwhelming majority of Armenian NGOs felt the NGOC had served a very useful purpose in this regard. This was especially so in the city of Gyumri where the NGOC established a branch office in 1995. Many Gyumri-based NGOs expressed the view that NGOC had played a key role in bringing them together and in enhancing the role of the NGO sector in that area of Armenia. They also cited the NGOC Resource Center as a key factor in their ability to contact foreign donor organizations and to form links with Armenian NGOs. Many NGOs who did not participate in any of the trainings sponsored by NGOC nevertheless used the computers, telephones, fax machines and photocopiers of the Resource Center in both Yerevan and Gyumri.

NGOs who participated in core or advanced training were generally positive in their assessment of its usefulness. Many organizations cited in particular the proposal writing training as the key to their ability to successfully seek funding from donors other than NGOC. The team compared lists of local NGOs funded by donor agencies and in fact found a high correlation between those receiving core training from NGOC and those receiving grants from other donors. This could either be because the same dynamism which led some NGOs to apply to NGOC for training also impressed funders or because the training received from NGOC actually resulted in improved proposals for submission to donors. If the latter is the case, this is potentially a major and positive impact of the NGOC training program. Unfortunately, the NGOC has apparently not devoted any attention to following up on its trainings to see if they do in fact lead to outside donor funding.

It is much more difficult to speculate on larger issues such as overall impact of the program on local NGOs. For one thing, it is unrealistic to expect Armenian NGOs to become sustainable within what is after all the relatively short time frame covered by the project. For

another, it is impossible to prove that a particular training or grant of NGOC led to this result. In general, there was little attempt to follow up with the recipient organizations following the training or period of grant (project) activity to ascertain if in fact positive and permanent changes had been made in the way the NGO operated. (This point is discussed more fully in Section B, Monitoring and Evaluation, below.)

Following is an analysis of the approved IME carried out by the evaluation team. Most of the information on the status of activities came from NGOC, which has primary responsibility for project monitoring, in its quarterly reports to SCF. SCF carried out periodic monitoring, as it did for all of its subgrantees. The evaluation team made its own assessment of impact achieved, based on its analysis of the data.

Analysis of approved IME

Objective	Strategies	Status	Impact
<p>Develop the institutional capacities of NGOs to effectively manage their own programs and projects in achieving stated goals and objectives</p> <p>Develop a core group of NGOs to guide the future growth of the NGO sector</p> <p><i>Indicators</i></p> <p><i>An increase in the institutional capacity of NGOs who have used NGOC services – NGOC Capacity Assessment Survey (CAS)</i></p> <p><i>An increase in the number of NGOs who have reached the sustainability stage of development (CAS)</i></p>	<p>1 7 Core Training Classes (CTC) for 60-65 diverse NGOs</p> <p>2 4 Advanced Training Classes (ATC) for 20-30 CTC graduates - 2nd/ 3rd stages of development (1 Sep 96)</p> <p>3 Customized Training to 10-15 NGOs /criteria determined by the NGOC + PVO recommendations (Oct 96-Aug 97)</p> <p>4 Outright Grants to 20-25 (USD 2,000 each) CTC graduates and 8 to ATC (USD 3,000 each)</p>	<p>1 8 CTC for 64 NGOs (46 in Yerevan (Y) and 18 in Gyumri (G))</p> <p>2 3 ATC for 17 NGOs (Y=12 and G=5) /10 graduates from CTC</p> <p>3 Customized Training has been given to NGOs according to demand However, the records do not distinguish between customized training and TA, in the NGOC service logs they are all lumped together Even such things as use of the fax machine at the Resource Center are counted as TA, which inflates the number of hours dedicated to this activity</p> <p>4 CTC 31 Grants (Y=18/equiv 39%participants G=13/equiv 72%) (USAID=USD 51,573 UNDP=USD 8,000) Average USD 1,922 each ATC 12 grants for 12 NGOs (Y) USD 12,000 Grants pending in Gyumri for 5</p>	<p>The institutional capacity of NGOs participants has increased to a certain degree, particularly after ATC, although it is difficult to measure the level of strengthening of the NGO as a result of the services provided</p> <p>The capacity assessment survey (CAS) has not been applied after the services and there is no effective follow-up after the completion of the services (CTC, ATC, Customized T , etc)</p> <p>NGOC has played a key role in promoting the creation of new NGOs, and satisfied and responded to an existing demand for services for an important sector Training is still one of the main needs in this development sector However, it is too ambitious to think that the services and grants given by NGOC have promoted NGOs to reach the “sustainability stage of development”</p> <p>The NGO sector in Armenia is in the early stages of development and it is necessary for NGOC to improve its</p>

	<p>5 Outreach to outlying regions, 10-15 participants per workshop (no specific # of workshops) (Jun 96-Aug 97)</p> <p>6 6-8 hrs per month of workshops to 5-7 NGOs in early stages</p> <p>7 130-150 hrs per month of individual TA to various NGOs</p> <p>8 Resource Center/Business Center to diverse group of NGOs Paid services introduced May 96 and free access eliminated by June 96</p> <p>9 Legal Handbook (Sep 96-Aug 97)</p>	<p>NGOs</p> <p>5 NGOC service logs and quarterly reports mention no workshops in Goris and one in Vanadzor NGOC staff reports that 1 two-day workshop involving 15 NGOs was held in Goris and 4 workshops involving 10-12 NGOs each were held in Vanadzor</p> <p>6 On average, NGOC conducted 6-7 training workshops per month Jan -Sept 1997 (Yerevan and Gyumri combined)</p> <p>7 See point 3 above The number of hours of TA offered is impossible to verify from the documentation reviewed</p> <p>8 RC totally implemented Limits for free and paid use were implemented only in Yerevan Free access has not been eliminated in either Yerevan or Gyumri</p> <p>9 Law compilation in Armenian subcontracted to local NGO, on hold</p>	<p>focus, strategic planning, coverage and monitoring & evaluation system in order to be more realistic and effective</p>
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Objective	Strategies	Status	Impact
<p>Promote multilateral partnership and collaboration among NGOs, PVOs, IOGs and governmental institutions through joint programs, information sharing and resource pooling</p> <p><i>Indicators</i> <i>An increase in cooperation within the NGO sector in Armenia - increased partnership among NGOs PVOs, IOGs and financial support of NGOs</i> <i>An increase of NGO coalition groups</i></p>	<p>1 Organize two roundtables per month for 22 months involving NGOs, PVOs and GOA representatives</p> <p>2 Organize monthly sector seminars</p> <p>3 Outreach to PVOs, private sector and GOA</p> <p>4 Provide information about donors, NGOs in CIS countries and Armenia</p> <p>5 Organize a Regional Conference in March 1997</p>	<p>1 Jan -Sept 1997 NGOC conducted 20 roundtables, 15 in Gyumri, 5 in Yerevan (2-3 per month)</p> <p>2 It is not clear how many seminars were organized, sectors and periodicity</p> <p>3 Constant activity</p> <p>4 Information available but not up-dated and comprehensive</p> <p>5 Activity eliminated</p>	<p>It is clear that NGOC has served as a link between GOA and NGO sector Also has promoted cooperation between PVOs/IOGs and NGOs in Armenia Example of this is their involvement with Peace Corps, Eurasia F and UN At this time it is not possible to ascertain the overall level of cooperation between GOA and NGOs Such relationships appear to be established on an ad hoc basis The one consistent link to the GOA is the registration process at the Ministry of Justice, but this is more legal than programmatic</p> <p>NGOC role in the formation of coalitions or civic active groups is not clear It seems they have their own dynamic which is not affected by NGOC activities There is no discernible impact on a regional level</p> <p>There is a need for NGOC to review and have a clear strategy in this matter Mechanisms to have up-dated and useful information related to potential donors and to identified key sectors at national level are necessary</p>

Objective	Strategies	Status	Impact
<p>Increase public awareness of the NGO sector, and of their activities and contribution to a just inclusive and sustainable democratic society</p> <p><i>An increase of public awareness of NGO activities (Increased media attention and coverage of NGO activities)</i></p> <p><i>An increase of public understanding on how activities and the NGO sector contribute to a just, inclusive and sustainable democratic society (Public Opinion Survey)</i></p>	<p>1 Publish quarterly newsletter</p> <p>2 Prepare weekly broadcast PSA on radio</p> <p>3 Prepare monthly profiles of NGOs to be published in Armenian-American press (Jan 96-Aug 97)</p> <p>4 Prepare monthly summaries of NGOs for local newspapers (Jan 96-Aug 97)</p> <p>5 Produce a series of videos to be aired in 6-8 segments on TV (Sep 96-May 97)</p> <p>6 Distribute on a quarterly basis the Legal Handbook (Sep 96-Aug 97)</p>	<p>1 Done 1000 newsletters (500 Armenian, 300 English, 200 Russian)</p> <p>2 Weekly PSA was suspended in Jan 97</p> <p>3 By-monthly profiles were prepared, although we could not find evidence of their publication in USA</p> <p>4 There is no mention of this since 3rd quarter of '96</p> <p>5 Eight videos were finished in December 97 There is no budget for airing them</p> <p>6 Not accomplished, on hold</p>	<p>There is no clear impact in this matter, although there are examples of media coverage Two main factors have affected this objective</p> <p>Internal reorganization in NGOC, staff overloaded and changes in priorities without an effective strategy have been evidenced in non-fulfillment of approved activities</p> <p>This was an unrealistic output It is difficult to measure the level of contribution of NGOC activities to this objective</p>

Recommendations

NGOC should identify more specific program objectives and adopt a relevant implementation, monitoring and evaluation plan to achieve them

NGOC should continue to provide core training for selected NGOs, including those recently formed, and should consider exploring some of the training topics in greater depth. These would include building relations with the NGO's constituency, financial and project management and proposal writing.

In order to avoid spreading itself too thin, NGOC should consider limiting the NGO sectors in which it operates. High priority should be given to development and humanitarian organizations, including those dealing with issues of women, youth and the environment. Lower priority should be given to professional associations, such as those for writers and businesses.

NGOC should follow up on its trainings to determine what impact, if any, it has on NGOs' organizational behavior, building relationships with their constituents and beneficiaries and ability to attract donor funding.

B MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The evaluation team undertook to assess the NGOC's capacity to effectively monitor and evaluate the development and achievement of NGOC-supported indigenous NGOs. The team's major finding is that the NGOC has historically had a passive approach to monitoring and evaluating the NGOs' development.

Findings

The monitoring and evaluation of NGOs' capacity and development is mainly done by a Capacity Assessment Survey (CAS) which is based on the form which the NGO first used to register with NGOC. NGOC also develops its database on NGOs by taking information from the registration form. This form includes questions on activities, completed projects, physical resources, funding sources and relations with other NGOs and organizations. Most of the data is quantitative.

The information database on NGOs is not systematically updated. The team tried to contact some NGOs using the contact list given by NGOC, but was not always successful. Some NGOs changed their directors or contact addresses, but the old information is still on NGOC list. NGOC has conducted re-registration only once since its establishment.

The team feels that the "NGO Who's Who" is potentially a very important source of information for NGOs, PVOs and IOGs. If properly kept it would permit improved coordination among NGOs with similar agendas, as well as better contact between NGOs and donor organizations.

Except for NGOs applying to UNHCR for grants, NGOC usually conducts capacity assessment surveys without site visits and the survey is based mainly on information given in the registration form. That is why many indicators of capacity analysis in the survey are difficult to verify and keep current. Assessments could be inaccurate and too subjective.

because most of the information is provided by the NGOs themselves during registration NGOC does not verify the information provided

During advanced training courses NGOC does make some site visits and conducts a capacity assessment survey of trainees. However, after the graduation NGOC has no systematic follow up to keep track of NGOs activities

The monitoring and evaluation system should be able to address goals, objectives, activities and resources. In this way, it can be used to identify problems, key changes or adjustments, human and material resources available, etc. The current NGOC monitoring and evaluation system only reaches the 'activities' component

Recommendations

The NGO Capacity Assessment Survey should be completed not only by the NGO itself but should include an NGOC site visit that will consider qualitative as well as quantitative factors

NGOC should update information on NGOs regularly to have a more accurate database on the NGO sector. PVOs and other donor agencies should be included in this database

NGOC should develop and implement an effective monitoring and evaluation system to address program goals, objectives, activities and resources and to obtain feedback from project stakeholders

C TRAINING

Training comprises an essential part of the NGOC's efforts to enhance the institutional capacity of Armenian NGOs. As such, the evaluation team paid special attention to this aspect of the program

It is important to be aware that building the NGO sector is a long-term process. There is a need to generate new attitudes and a change of mentality in a country transitioning from a socialist system, where a training component is crucial

It is key in this transition period to give adequate tools and skills to NGO leaders to work in an active and inclusive way with the community in order to be truly representative and to promote in a realistic and viable way a 'vibrant civil society'. If they are not genuinely representative of their communities, NGOs' advocacy and lobbying activities or strategies will not have the needed force to influence policy making

Findings

NGOC offers four types of activities that can be grouped under the general heading of training: core training courses (CTC), advanced training courses (ATC), customized training and technical assistance (TA)

A wide range of people interviewed insisted on the need to continue with CTC and ATC for a wide variety of sectors and regions. Most of those who spoke with the team believe that training should be available for a broad range of NGOs, not just for a small group of them. Representatives of PVOs and IOGs also spoke of the need to continue training for local

NGOs, as they are looking for partners who have the capability to carry out projects. In this regard, Peace Corps had indicated that it may be willing to share office space and expertise with NGOC-type activities in the regions. Likewise, The Eurasia Foundation is interested in such cooperation, especially in Vanadzor.

According to most of those interviewed, the most valuable topics covered in CTC were proposal writing and financial resource management, although in the latter case the general opinion was that the training was too short and superficial given the magnitude of the topic. Many NGOs believe there is a need for a more specialized and in-depth course on this topic.

Many ATC participants affirmed that as a result of the course they had developed the confidence to approach or otherwise carry out advocacy activities. During a roundtable discussion with five NGOs who were graduating from the first Gyumri ATC, three of the groups asserted that "as a result of the training they will completely change their strategies, objectives and strategic plan." A change of such magnitude, even if it constitutes a tribute to the skills of the trainer, should be viewed with some concern. Will each subsequent training also result in such radical changes and result in loss of organizational integrity?

A clear difference was found between participants in ATC and others in the vocabulary that they are using. Words and phrases such as "the need to develop the third sector", "advocacy vs propaganda", "sustainability" and "strategic planning" are commonly used by the former group. However, these may be only "buzz words" intended to convince the trainer that the lesson has been learned.

It was difficult for the evaluation team to measure from objective data if there has been a sustainable impact of the training component. The capacity assessment has not been followed up, and monitoring of grantees is focused only on financial data without including programmatic impact issues. Available information at NGOC is more focused on quantitative than qualitative measures. For example, there is no systematized data about how many times a trained NGO has asked for customized training or technical assistance in the same topics after the completion of the course, or if a project proposal has been approved after the training. The same is true of other common requests that NGOs have, such as help in drafting cover letters, project profiles, factsheets. Such training could be done for a group of people instead of on an individual basis to avoid a waste of valuable staff time.

Although many people showed great enthusiasm and new ideas after receiving training, nevertheless the objectives of the follow-up grants were not too realistic. It is also necessary to mention that training activities are dealing with a change of mentality in other contexts where centralized decision making is still common. It is not clear that participants in the various trainings are effectively sharing the new information with their staffs.

There is not a specific course or curriculum to train local trainers, nor an actual exchange program to expose local trainers to other contexts where the NGO sector is more developed than in Armenia. Some of the training personnel have learned during the sessions serving as interpreters, helping in the logistics and facilitation. Only recently have NGOC staff from Gyumri participated in the second ATC in Yerevan as trainees. The local trainers now feel capable of training local NGOs in CTC, but they do not believe they are capable of taking on the ATC. They agree that because of psychological factors local NGO participants pay more attention to expatriate trainers than to local ones.

Although the evaluation team did not meet with all CTC and ATC participants, those interviewed manifested their gratitude to NGOC and to its Director of Training.

Recommendations

CTC should include a component on how to build a grassroots organization, apply participatory planning and prioritize community needs

NGOC should focus on developing a partnership with The Eurasia Foundation and the Peace Corps (Business Centers) to implement CTC in other regions with a realistic timeframe to gradually transfer the responsibility to a regional or local organization. Goris and Vanadzor are two possible future sites. The details of such an arrangement need to be worked out, but as an example, Peace Corps could supply minimal office space in its regional Business Centers and The Eurasia Foundation could fund NGOC to do training of trainers. These local trainers could then be integrated into the Business Centers when they are indigenized. Thus, the training function of NGOC could be continued in the outlying regions without NGOC's direct involvement.

The seminar strategy should be analyzed in order to define the best method of training for NGOs. Special attention should be paid to specialized courses in finance and taxation for a qualified NGO employee, not only for the NGO's president or director.

ATC should be replicated to a broader number of NGOs. Selection criteria should take into account the participation of representatives from NGO coordination bodies and NGOs with democratic leadership and attitudes. It is important in ATC to continue to offer advocacy and leadership skills.

NGOC should develop and implement a specific curriculum to train trainers in order to contribute to the future process of indigenization of the NGOC. This training should include interchange outside Armenia in countries where the NGO sector is more developed.

D OUTREACH

The purpose of Outreach and Social Marketing is defined in the project proposal as promotion of "a better understanding of the NGO as a positive agent of change in Armenian society." The main components of this strategy are the Dialogue Program, Workshops, Public Awareness Campaign, NGO Newsletter and Support for NGO Coalitions.

Findings

One of the general problems facing NGOs in Armenia is lack of awareness of their activities on the part of government, the general public and PVOs. At the same time, NGOs lack appropriate information about the legal environment, especially taxes, and useful information about donors. Trainings/grants, seminars, roundtables, publications and technical assistance provided by NGOC to the NGO sector have aimed at meeting those needs, but NGOC has not yet reached its objectives in this regard.

NGOs from various sectors, especially environmental, women's and health organizations, gather monthly to share ideas, discuss problems in the field and find ways of cooperating with each other and with the government. Although initially the NGOC had an important role in organizing and facilitating these meetings, it does not appear that lately the NGOC has had an impact on their frequency, topics and outcomes. It may be that NGOC now feels that the coalitions are mature enough to set and carry out their own seminar agendas without

NGOC's assistance In any case, NGOC at present plays a rather passive role in the seminar program by providing mainly a space for NGOs to gather

This shortcoming is also related to problems in monitoring and evaluation cited earlier An adequate M&E system should permit NGOC to use information in a strategic way For example, NGOC could identify lead sectors, lead NGOs in those sectors, lessons learned, and PVOs and IOGs related to specific sectors NGOC could play an important role, not only in providing physical space, but in bringing all of these stakeholders together around common issues

The NGOC newsletter has been designed to provide information about NGOs, NGO related issues, PVOs, media, government officials, and other interested parties It is published monthly, with 500 copies in Armenian, 300 in Russian and 200 in English English copies are distributed to PVOs and some are sent to the AAA-Washington office The Armenian and Russian copies are distributed among media, government and NGOs locally The newsletter appears to be quite successful in providing information about the NGO sector to government, PVOs and the media

The NGOC prepares monthly profiles of the activities of local NGOs and sends them to the AAA-Washington office to be published in the American-Armenian press and elsewhere The NGOC and therefore its NGO partners are not aware of what coverage these profiles have received in the American media

Public service announcements have been broadcast on local radio since almost the beginning of the program, but were discontinued in early 1997 According to NGOC Director of Information and Social Marketing, the PSAs were suspended due to lack of time while the staff was trying to finish the video series According to the quarterly progress report, NGOC wanted to subcontract the PSAs to a local NGO, but this process was never finalized Whatever the reason, the suspension of the PSAs is regrettable, as it seems they were a promising way of increasing public awareness about the NGO sector

NGOC produced an eight-part video-series about the Armenian NGO sector to increase public awareness about NGOs, but it has not yet been aired Since the videos were an important component of the approved IME, it is unfortunate that they were completed so late in the project period that there was no money left for airing them

The team received the Armenian version of the legal handbook It contained a compilation of all laws concerning the NGO sector and nine pages of information in a question-and-answer format The NGOC has not published it yet, even though it was submitted to Save the Children on May 14, 1997 It was not clear to the team that Save the Children was required to approve the document, but in any case it is curious that NGOC apparently did not follow up with SCF on the handbook issue This is an important document, and it is unfortunate that its publication in final form has been delayed Many NGOs have expressed their interest in receiving legal advice from the NGOC

The database on NGOs could be very useful in helping NGOs increase their awareness of the NGO sector and of possible cooperation with the government and PVOs However, it has not been updated frequently and does not include current personnel and achievements of all NGOs The list of PVOs is also outdated and does not contain complete information on personnel, activities and target groups of PVOs

Technical Assistance is provided to NGOs in the areas of proposal writing, planning, implementing projects and restructuring of organizations. TA is done mainly without site visits and it is not documented to be assessed in terms of quantity and quality. There are also serious questions about NGOC's reporting on TA (See Section F, below). Nevertheless, many NGOs expressed their gratitude to NGOC for helping them write and present proposals to donors.

It is the overall impression of the team that the management of NGOC is not devoting enough time, energy or financial resources to outreach. Yet publicizing the work of NGOC and NGOs is one of the most important indicators of program impact. There seems to be a general lack of follow-through, many outreach activities are started, but few are completed. This may be due to problems in NGOC time and resource management. Whatever the justification for non-completion of outreach activities, sufficient funds were allocated to accomplish all of them.

Recommendations

NGOC should play a more active role in facilitating the creation of NGO coalitions by sector or around certain issues. Taxation is one issue which comes to mind.

NGOC should move as quickly as possible to implement outreach activities which were stipulated in the 1995-1997 approved IME. These include resuming PSAs, airing of the eight-video series and updating information on coverage of NGOC and Armenian NGOs in the Armenian-American media.

The legal handbook should be issued and updated on an annual basis to provide relevant legal advice to NGOs.

E GRANTS

The grants program was designed to supplement the Core Training Courses by offering funds for rehabilitation and development projects to selected NGOs through a competitive process. The process itself is seen as an important learning tool, as it gives NGOs the opportunity to write proposals and strengthen management and accountability skills learned in class. The grants are limited to a maximum of USD 2,000.

Findings

The grants program associated with both CTCs and ATCs is not one of the strongest points of the overall program, at least in terms of impact. It is somewhat understandable that an organization which has gone through training should be given the means to implement a project. At the same time, the amounts involved are so small as to barely justify the considerable amount of paperwork involved (an average of USD 1,922 for graduates of CTC and USD 1,000 for each participant of ATC). The subcontract alone for a grant not exceeding USD 2,000 is nine pages long, the RFP 16 pages and the project proposal itself another three. Even though the training grants are viewed by NGOC as a training tool for proposal writing and thus have value beyond their dollar amount, the process appears to be too cumbersome and the measurable impact meager.

Most of the time the projects done under the grants program were given ambitious titles, but an informal survey indicated that often the money was used simply to upgrade the office.

equipment of the NGO through the purchase of computers or other office supplies. This may indeed be an appropriate use of funds at this time, but it is unrealistic to assert that such small grants have transformed the organizations in question or put them on the path to sustainability. The grantees also receive programmatic and report writing training, but most of them do not complete their activities on time, and reports are often late and incomplete.

There are probably a number of Armenian NGOs which are capable of absorbing larger grants, even up to USD 25,000. Working with such NGOs would permit greater program focus and would streamline the heavy administrative burden which comes from trying to manage a myriad of tiny grants. At the same time, it would shift the focus to organizations that are stronger internally and hence better able to plan programs and account for the use of funds. Smaller grassroots organizations that are attuned to the basic needs of the people could still be helped by some kind of core training program, such as customized training. Increasing the size of the grants would also change them qualitatively. The purpose would no longer be to develop advocacy or coordination programs for NGOs but would be for actual project implementation depending on the sector the recipient NGO operated in.

Larger grants still require close monitoring, not only to ensure their quality but also their compliance with US Government regulations. Since the NGOC has never had to manage large grants, it would be advisable to devote significant resources to upgrading the Center's monitoring capacity should the decision be made to shift to larger and fewer grants. This is especially important in view of the fact that Save the Children will no longer serve as a management intermediary, and the human resources of USAID are already quite stretched.

The evaluation team was not able to get a good sense of whether or not the grants program has offered effective models, nor whether the selection process itself is timely and transparent. It does not appear that the grants program has had a significant impact, and there is no evidence that the grants have had a significant multiplier effect. In all fairness, though, the grants program is still relatively new, and it may take time before the true impact of the grants and any multiplier effect can be discerned.

To its credit, the NGOC has made a sustained and successful effort to include in its grants program organizations from outside of Yerevan and those which address the needs of women. This is true of grants following both core and advanced training. For example, of a total of 17 advanced training grants, five of these were from the Gyumri region and even included some rural-based organizations. Nine of these organizations were headed by women and/or are primarily oriented toward activities which benefit women. Likewise, out of 53 core training grants awarded up to now, 23 were for organizations based outside of Yerevan and at least 14 (and probably many more) were for women-focused or -headed organizations. (The team did not have time to verify the role of women in all of the organizations listed, but based on what we did know, women have a prominent role in many social service and charity organizations who benefited from the program.)

Criteria for grantees were developed and applied in a process through the 'Advisory Committee,' composed of representatives from diverse organizations including UNDP, Eurasia Foundation, SCF and also a local NGO representative. These criteria were applied only to CTC graduates who competed for the grants. Following two CTCs in Gyumri all graduates received grants, according to the information provided by NGOC. The main criterion for participation in the ATC grant program is the ability to work on a joint project with other organizations who have gone through the ATC.

The absorptive capacity of the NGO is not considered in the awarding of training grants. This is reasonable since the grants are so small anyway. Selection for ATC grants is made by NGOC alone, based upon an NGO's application form.

It is difficult to evaluate the training/TA/grant mix at this point. Many Armenian NGOs are still in great need of core training. TA can play an important role in an NGO's development, but from the documentation the team reviewed it is not clear what it consists of in programmatic terms. Most of the documentation focused on financial data only. The grants program could be revamped to provide for a smaller number of larger grants. However, this will necessitate in turn a re-training of NGOC staff to monitor larger grants.

Recommendations

The grants program should be separated from the training courses. This will demonstrate the appeal of the training courses themselves, as well as reduce the allure of the grant as a simple reward for having attended the training courses.

NGOC and USAID should consider awarding larger program grants (up to USD 25,000) to NGOs which have demonstrated the capacity to implement projects in an efficient and accountable manner. However, before this is done, USAID should certify that NGOC has addressed the weaknesses cited in this report and the earlier interim evaluation report. The larger grant program should be planned for 1999.

As part of this recommendation, NGOC should commit sufficient resources to upgrade the monitoring skills of its staff for larger projects.

F MANAGEMENT

Findings

The team was very interested in the management structure of AAA/NGOC and particularly the role of the AAA Washington office in the day-to-day management of the program in Armenia. Based on conversations with NGOC staff, AAA-Yerevan and AAA-Washington staff and review of relevant documents, the team notes that there is very frequent, usually daily telephone and/or e-mail contact between AAA-Washington and NGOC. In the project extension proposal dated October 25, 1997, this was stated explicitly and justified as follows: "Due to the unreliability of communications systems in Armenia, the Washington-based staff provides crucial contact with the outside world and ensure that fresh information is included in the Resource Center." During the present evaluation mission the daily contact was justified by the difficulties involved in trying to get funds transferred from Save the Children and issues involved in grant close-out. The sense of the team is that whatever prior justification there may have been for such frequent contact, it impairs the ability of the NGOC staff to act independently and presents a model of top-down management that is in conflict with the management models it seeks to promulgate among Armenian NGOs. It also requires a great expenditure of resources, both of time and money, that could be devoted to more useful purposes.

In a written response to the team's questions, AAA-Washington has indicated that "The management role of the AAA has already been greatly reduced for the future under the upcoming direct grant from USAID." Hopefully, this will indeed be the case, and an understanding can be reached between AAA and USAID that will result in less-frequent

involvement of AAA in the daily affairs of NGOC and greater freedom of decision for the NGOC. The sooner this can be done, the sooner the very laudable objective of transforming the NGOC into a fully indigenous Armenian foundation can be realized.

The team was very impressed by the energy and commitment of the NGOC-Gyumri staff. However, it appears that even such basic decisions as which Gyumri-based NGOs will receive core and advanced training are made in the Yerevan office. The team feels that not only is the Gyumri office better informed regarding such decisions, but would be empowered by a devolution of authority, which is consistent with the overall objectives of the program.

Many NGOC staff do not appear to have a clear vision of the NGOC's work. NGOC staff mentioned to the team that they are overloaded with work. In fact, tasks are not clearly distinguished and delegated among departments and employees. There is also a deficiency of information exchange among departments. Staff have little knowledge of what employees in other departments are doing. There are many interrelated duties, and some departments/employees are responsible for the same tasks. For example, workshops supposedly are under the Information & Social Marketing department but are actually conducted by the Training & Consultancy department.

NGOC tries to do many things but does not always consider its capacity and does not effectively prioritize tasks. For example, the NGOC produces a monthly media log which consists of short comments on all media coverage of the NGO sector, and it is translated into English. The compilation of this document consumes a great deal of staff time and energy, and it is not clear to what use, if any, this media log is put. On the other hand, more useful and urgent tasks, such as updating the NGO and PVO lists or following up on the Capacity Assessment Survey, are not done. The NGOC was not able to meet all of the targets set in the approved IME of December, and one therefore queries why so much time and energy was spent in trying to amend the IME by expanding the number of activities.

Another important management concern is that in some cases staff members have not received specialized training to do their job. Local trainers started out as interpreters for expatriate trainers, then assumed the role themselves, without any specialized training. These trainers, despite their best efforts, lack the self-confidence and expertise to conduct training programs. This may be one reason that expatriate trainers are preferred, especially in the ATC.

The team found a lack of clarity in overall project reporting, especially in the quarterly reports. They generally do not show linkage with the approved IME. Activities are mixed, and it is difficult to realize the level of accomplishment, problems encountered and adjustments needed. Sometimes from report to report activities appear or disappear without any explanation. In many cases, the same information is written in two or three reports without indicating the level of accomplishment. Progress reports tend to repeat the same information from period to period, such as the list of services provided by NGOC or the general activities of the various departments.

There is an emphasis on quantitative vs. qualitative data. For example, the first quarterly report of 1997 records that 2022 hours of TA were provided in Yerevan and Gyumri. This works out to the equivalent of 3.8 persons working on TA full time per month. However, there is no qualitative information about TA impact, problems encountered, ways to improve services, lessons learned or NGO institutional capacity after the TA was given.

Also, in some reports, time spent by NGOs in the Resource Center is counted in the total number of hours of TA. It is hard to understand how time spent by an NGO representative photocopying documents qualifies as Technical Assistance. In any case, the IME defines clearly states that TA and Resource Center are separate categories, so it is not appropriate to inflate the number of hours of TA by including hours of Resource Center time.

At times, documents provided by NGOC reflected the lack of a clear and realistic strategy. For example, the evaluation team reviewed both the approved and subsequent proposed IMEs. In any event, the proposed IME was never approved, but even so it recommended changes that were not focused or which would have added to objectives which were already too ambitious. An example is the idea of subcontracting some services to local NGOs while the general opinion of the NGOs interviewed is that they are not ready to assume such responsibilities. Another example is advocacy training. This is probably an excellent idea in the long run, but would add to an already overloaded plate of activities under the approved IME. In the team's opinion, Save the Children and USAID were correct in not approving NGOC's revisions of the IME.

NGOC has made progress in developing a database and data collection information. This tool should be useful after some adjustments to systematize the information, identify bottlenecks and try to find appropriate solutions. This could help the NGOC to have the desired program impact, but also to measure it more accurately.

Recommendations

USAID should ensure that it has sufficient managerial and monitoring resources in place to oversee this large and complex project. The elimination of the role of Save the Children and the reduction of that of AAA add urgency to this recommendation.

In consultation with USAID, NGOC should develop a plan for internal reorganization to include better definition of the strategic plan and staff responsibilities. The roles and responsibilities of one department or staff member should not be confused with those of another.

USAID and AAA/NGOC should cooperate on a plan to gradually and steadily reduce the role of AAA-Washington in the daily management of NGOC.

More decision-making authority should be devolved from the Yerevan office of NGOC to the Gyumri office.

Alternatively, the Gyumri director should be given clear managerial authority so that communications with the Yerevan office are first coordinated through her/him.

The 'NGOC Services Log' information should be better utilized in order to permit the NGOC to provide better service. Instead of providing individual service on demand to NGOs, the Center could organize group trainings on how to write cover letters, draft project profiles, etc. This would be more cost effective and would allow a higher quality training.

NGOC should ensure that progress reports are concise and geared to the approved IME.

G SUSTAINABILITY

Findings

It is generally agreed that sustainability is an important objective for most development projects. However, NGOC has yet to define sustainability for its context or to articulate a strategy for reaching sustainability. Does sustainability mean that NGOC will continue to exist as an Armenian NGO with a new funding base or that the emergence of a core group of Armenian NGOs will render the NGOC unnecessary?

There appears to have actually been a regression in some aspects of the project that appeared headed toward sustainability over two years ago. For example, the project extension proposal of October 25, 1997 cited the locally-organized NGO club as an example of an activity of the NGOC on its way to sustainability. The proposal further stated that "The NGO Club has also taken over much of the responsibility for the NGOC's NGO newsletter." However, as of this writing, the NGO Club is defunct and the NGOC continues to publish the newsletter on its own. There was an attempt in the past year to subcontract the publishing of the newsletter to a local NGO, but these efforts also appear not to have reached fruition.

There has been some coordination between NGOC and other USAID projects. The Eurasia Foundation is involved in implementing the Media Development Project and in doing so has had substantial contact and exchange with NGOC. Also, NGOC and the American Bar Association's Environmental Public Advocacy Center (EPAC) cooperated closely to make the first Earth Day in Armenia a reality. It is hoped that such cooperation will become even greater in the future in order to enhance the impact of all USAID-funded projects where cooperation with NGOC is possible. The team was not able to ascertain the degree of collaboration of NGOC with any other USAID projects at the present time.

Many Armenian NGOs are financed primarily by international organizations. There are five major international organizations in Armenia which provide grants to local NGOs. These are Catholic Relief Services (CRS), The Eurasia Foundation, Save the Children Federation, OXFAM and UNDP. Most of the funds given to NGOs are for technical assistance projects.

There is a strong trend of NGOs to submit proposals that conform to the mandates of donors, rather than addressing their own priorities. This may be leading to a top-down model of development. Creating an NGO may become at times a mere a tool for obtaining funding. PVOs often lack confidence in NGO capacity in Armenia. That is why they often implement projects by themselves or create ad hoc groups in communities to implement projects.

There is little possibility for NGO fundraising in Armenia at the present time. The customary sources of funds in many countries are private enterprises, government, and individuals. However, the Government of Armenia is not in a position to give significant financial support, and there are very few tax incentives for private businesses and individuals to support NGOs. Most members of NGOs pay no membership fees or only very symbolic ones. One of the main problems of the NGO sector's sustainability is that NGOs do not have regular funding, but work from project to project.

NGOC has not only coordinated activities with other organizations (UNDP, American University of Armenia, UNHCR) but also has started to develop strategic alliances with some of them, like Eurasia Foundation and Peace Corps. Examples of this are the level of involvement of Peace Corps' volunteers with NGOC-Gyumri and the capacity assessment

survey implemented in Vanadzor with Eurasia Foundation in view to creating a future joint business center

However, coordination has been limited to a small number of PVOs and IOGs inside the country. NGOC could play an important strategic role in facilitating contact between qualified Armenian NGOs and donor PVOs.

As yet, there is no clear strategy for fundraising for the NGOC, but this is expected to be a high priority for AAA in the coming project period.

One activity of the NGOC that holds significant possibilities for sustainability is the Resource Center. The facilities of the Resource Center are used (and praised) by most of the organizations the team met with. Some organizations voiced the hope that the Center could be expanded to meet the increasing demand which local organizations have for internet services, fax machines, telephones, etc.

The interim evaluation of July 1995 recommended that the Center move toward sustainability in a timely manner by requiring fees for services. It was understood that such fees would eventually cover or even exceed the cost to NGOC of providing these services, thus becoming a sort of income-generating activity for the NGOC. Unfortunately, two and a half years later it is clear that this recommendation was never effectively implemented. Services at the Yerevan Center are still charged well below their cost in the aggregate (which may explain their continued great popularity among NGOs). There is no charge for any of the services offered by the Resource Center at Gyumri NGOC, despite the fact that the Gyumri office was opened *after* the interim evaluation's recommendations were issued.

There is more involved here than lost revenues. Continued provision of subsidized services cultivates an entitlement mentality among their users. Armenian members of the evaluation team have commented that this constitutes a sort of throwback to the communist era when no one expected to pay the full value for services. Surely this is not the type of attitude that either USAID or AAA/NGOC is seeking to promote.

There is one further potential harm in offering such services below cost. In the struggling Armenian economy, there are many individuals who are trying to make a living by offering photocopying services, computer or English lessons or other services which face unfair competition from the subsidized services of NGOC. In a small way, NGOC may be inadvertently impeding the development of a sector of the Armenian economy.

The NGO network in Yerevan is not well organized. Some sector groups such as those dealing with women's and environmental issues are quite active, but their meetings are not regular. Other sectoral groups have not succeeded in holding coordination meetings.

On the other hand, NGOC/Gyumri plays an important role in facilitating the NGO sector in Shirak region by organizing regular roundtables with government officials, PVOs and IOGs. The NGOC also cooperates with the Union of NGOs for Shirak Region which has 36 member NGOs at the current time. The goal of the Union is to coordinate and promote collaboration between the NGO sector and government, PVOs, and IOGs and to publicize activities of NGOs in the region. In the future, it is hoped by its founders that the Union will have more influence at the regional and national levels. One of the results of the Union's cooperation with government is the organization of an arts festival for children from refugee families with the mayor and marzpet (district governor) of Gyumri.

As for regional networks, there have been some meetings with environmental NGOs of Georgia and Armenia though these do not take place on a regular basis

NGOC made one attempt to organize a Caucasus regional conference NGOC started to inform some organizations such as ISAR-Azerbaijan about an upcoming conference, but there was never any follow up It is not clear why NGOC did not organize the conference

Recommendations

NGOC should define precisely what it means by sustainability and develop a strategy for achieving it

NGOC should move quickly to design and implement a fee-for-service schedule for its Resource Centers in Yerevan and Gyumri All subsidies for services should be eliminated, and the Resource Centers should establish target dates for financial sustainability A qualified exception could be made for a few new organizations who have a strong justification for receiving subsidized services for a period not to exceed one year

NGOC should consult with the ISAR-managed programs in Georgia and Azerbaijan regarding a regional NGO conference Such a conference should preferably be sponsored by ISAR, as Azeri delegates would be unlikely to attend a conference sponsored by AAA

V LESSONS LEARNED AND SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The team feels that all interested parties should have paid more attention to the recommendations of the interim evaluation report, especially in terms of focusing the NGOC's program and in working toward sustainability of some of its aspects

In future projects of this type, special attention should be paid to the monitoring capability not only of the grantee but also of USAID itself It is not realistic to expect the already-overworked USAID staff to take on the heavy management and follow-up role formerly performed by Save the Children without the addition of extra human resources It is far better to implement a smaller program with clear vision, goals and objectives than one which, however praiseworthy its intent, is attempting to do too many things with no clear focus

All parties involved with the NGOC should consider setting more realistic objectives for the program Though the development of a strong NGO sector is important in the construction of a democratic society, the link is more implicit than explicit In other words, it is difficult if not impossible to measure the impact of training courses for Armenian NGOs on the democratic development of Armenian society

From the first day of the evaluation it was clear to the team that the working relationship between AAA/NGOC and Save the Children was problematical at best It is beyond the scope of this evaluation to determine the causes of the difficulties between the two organizations It was asserted by NGOC that certain program outputs were not met because Save the Children had not transferred funds in a timely manner or because the new budget had not been finalized (e.g. timely production of videos for airing on television, organization of a regional conference) However, since other NGOC expenditures such as salaries, funds for trainings and grants and the operation of the Resource Center were proceeding normally, the team is at a loss to explain why the above-mentioned activities were not implemented Hopefully, the new direct relationship between USAID and AAA will be a harmonious one,

but neither party should underestimate the substantial management role of Save the Children in what has obviously been a very complex project

Because of time and budgetary limitations, the team was unable to visit similar AID-funded NGO development programs in Georgia and Azerbaijan. Our exposure to them was limited to a review of some files in the AID Yerevan office and e-mail contact. Both programs are run by the Institute for Soviet-American Relations (ISAR). They are operating with much smaller budgets than the AAA/NGOC program and seem to be producing significant outputs. There may be factors specific to Armenia which have impeded the ability of NGOC to reach many of its objectives. Whatever the reason, the team has a sense that the NGOC program could benefit from greater contacts with its counterpart organizations in Georgia and/or Azerbaijan. However, any attempts in this direction must take account of the sensibilities of all the parties involved and should be held in a politically-neutral environment where all participants will be safe and comfortable. Perhaps a conference to study NGO development issues in the Caucasus could be held under the auspices of ISAR-Georgia. This would allow both Armenian and Azeri delegates to attend.

Following is a compendium of the recommendations presented throughout the text

Impact

NGOC should identify more specific program objectives and adopt a relevant implementation, monitoring and evaluation plan to achieve them

NGOC should continue to provide core training for selected NGOs, including those recently formed, and should consider exploring some of the training topics in greater depth. These would include building relations with the NGO's constituency, financial and project management and proposal writing.

In order to avoid spreading itself too thin, NGOC should consider limiting the NGO sectors in which it operates. High priority should be given to development and humanitarian organizations, including those dealing with issues of women, youth and the environment. Lower priority should be given to professional associations, such as those for writers and businesses.

NGOC should follow up on its trainings to determine what impact, if any, it has on NGOs' organizational behavior, building relationships with their constituents and beneficiaries and ability to attract donor funding.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The NGO Capacity Assessment Survey should be completed not only by the NGO itself but should include an NGOC site visit that will consider qualitative as well as quantitative factors.

NGOC should update information on NGOs regularly to have a more accurate database on the NGO sector. PVOs and other donor agencies should be included in this database.

NGOC should develop and implement an effective monitoring and evaluation system to address program goals, objectives, activities and resources and to obtain feedback from project stakeholders.

Training

CTC should include a component on how to build a grassroots organization, apply participatory planning and prioritize community needs

NGOC should focus on developing a partnership with The Eurasia Foundation and the Peace Corps (Business Centers) to implement CTC in other regions with a realistic timeframe to gradually transfer the responsibility to a regional or local organization. Goris and Vanadzor are two possible future sites. The details of such an arrangement need to be worked out, but as an example, Peace Corps could supply minimal office space in its regional Business Centers and The Eurasia Foundation could fund NGOC to do training of trainers. These local trainers could then be integrated into the Business Centers when they are indigenized. Thus, the training function of NGOC could be continued in the outlying regions without NGOC's direct involvement.

The seminar strategy should be analyzed in order to define the best method of training for NGOs. Special attention should be paid to specialized courses in finance and taxation for a qualified NGO employee, not only for the NGO's president or director.

ATC should be replicated to a broader number of NGOs. Selection criteria should take into account the participation of representatives from NGO coordination bodies and NGOs with democratic leadership and attitudes. It is important in ATC to continue to offer advocacy and leadership skills.

NGOC should develop and implement a specific curriculum to train trainers in order to contribute to the future process of indigenization of the NGOC. This training should include interchange outside Armenia in countries where the NGO sector is more developed.

Outreach

NGOC should play a more active role in facilitating the creation of NGO coalitions by sector or around certain issues. Taxation is one issue which comes to mind.

NGOC should move as quickly as possible to implement outreach activities which were stipulated in the 1995-1997 approved IME. These include resuming PSAs, airing of the eight-video series and updating information on coverage of NGOC and Armenian NGOs in the Armenian-American media.

The legal handbook should be issued and updated on an annual basis to provide relevant legal advice to NGOs.

Grants

The grants program should be separated from the training courses. This will demonstrate the appeal of the training courses themselves, as well as reduce the allure of the grant as a simple reward for having attended the training courses.

NGOC and USAID should consider awarding larger program grants (up to USD 25,000) to NGOs which have demonstrated the capacity to implement projects in an efficient and accountable manner. However, before this is done, USAID should certify that NGOC has addressed the weaknesses cited in this report and the earlier interim evaluation report. The larger grant program should be planned for 1999.

As part of this recommendation, NGOC should commit sufficient resources to upgrade the monitoring skills of its staff for larger projects.

Management

USAID should ensure that it has sufficient managerial and monitoring resources in place to oversee this large and complex project. The elimination of the role of Save the Children and the reduction of that of AAA add urgency to this recommendation.

In consultation with USAID, NGOC should develop a plan for internal reorganization to include better definition of the strategic plan and staff responsibilities. The roles and responsibilities of one department or staff member should not be confused with those of another.

USAID and AAA/NGOC should cooperate on a plan to gradually and steadily reduce the role of AAA-Washington in the daily management of NGOC.

More decision-making authority should be devolved from the Yerevan office of NGOC to the Gyumri office.

Alternatively, the Gyumri director should be given clear managerial authority so that communications with the Yerevan office are first coordinated through her/him.

The 'NGOC Services Log' information should be better utilized in order to permit the NGOC to provide better service. Instead of providing individual service on demand to NGOs, the Center could organize group trainings on how to write cover letters, draft project profiles, etc. This would be more cost effective and would allow a higher quality training.

NGOC should ensure that progress reports are concise and geared to the approved IME.

Sustainability

NGOC should define precisely what it means by sustainability and develop a strategy for achieving it.

NGOC should move quickly to design and implement a fee-for-service schedule for its Resource Centers in Yerevan and Gyumri. All subsidies for services should be eliminated, and the Resource Centers should establish target dates for financial sustainability. A qualified exception could be made for a few new organizations who have a strong justification for receiving subsidized services for a period not to exceed one year.

NGOC should consult with the ISAR-managed programs in Georgia and Azerbaijan regarding a regional NGO conference. Such a conference should preferably be sponsored by ISAR, as Azeri delegates would be unlikely to attend a conference sponsored by AAA.

VI CONCLUSION

The NGOC has rendered many very valuable services to the Armenian NGO community. Its inability to do more has been hindered by uncertainty as to what its role should be, a top-down management structure, lack of clear responsibilities and training for its own staff and a reluctance to cover substantial program costs on a fee-for-service basis. Many of these weaknesses have been pointed out in an interim evaluation of the project submitted by Ms Virginia Bethe in July 1995.

While the team believes that all of these points can be remedied, this will require a serious commitment on the part of AAA and NGOC. In addition, a close and effective monitoring of

the program by USAID is needed. This will necessitate the allocation of significantly greater USAID management resources to the program than has been the case under the umbrella grant mechanism. Since this is a very important program for the future of the Armenian NGO sector, we believe it will be worth the effort.

VII APPENDICES

APPENDIX A SCOPE OF WORK

DRAFT
Armenian Assembly of America's
NGO Training and Resource Center Project
Evaluation
Scope of Work

I Purpose

It is USAID/Caucasus' desire to fund an independent evaluation of the Armenian Assembly of America's NGO Training and Resource Center (NGOC) project. As outlined in the SCF/USAID approved Year One Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IME), the need was identified for an outside consultant to conduct an evaluation of the project at the end of its first year. Such an evaluation was conducted in June/July 1995. The project is now moving into its third year, and the SCF sub-grant is ending August 31, 1997. If USAID is to consider continued funding under a direct grant mechanism, an independent evaluation is necessary to determine current NGOC progress toward IME approved objectives, as well as potential for progress in achieving intermediate results toward USAID/Caucasus' Strategic Objective 2.1, "Increased, better-informed citizens' participation in public policy decision-making". Finally, the Evaluation Team will assess the current climate for and pace of NGO development in Armenia, and the role that the NGOC can play in insuring the sustainability of the NGO sector.

It is envisioned that the Evaluation Team will include four members. The Evaluation Team will assess the current status of the project and its successes, identify and analyze problems, and make recommendations for improving project implementation.

II Objectives

- A Impact** Assess the achievements to date, measured against the original NGOC proposal and the approved IME, and Strategic Objectives 2.1 Results Frameworks,
- B Monitoring and Evaluation** Assess NGOC's capacity to effectively monitor, account and evaluate the development and achievements of the NGOC-supported indigenous NGOs,
- C Training**
 --What is the present and potential impact of the program's training component?
 --How well has the program utilized existing training resources? What is the status of the Training-of-Trainers element? Are local trainers receiving adequate training to be prepared to continue ongoing training after AAA leaves? Recommendations for improvement?
- D Outreach**
 --How are the activities, seminars, grant programs, publications, information exchanges, technical assistance, etc. a) meeting the needs of the NGO sector, and b) being perceived by the public? How is the media involved? How well does the program address strengthening the relationship/partnership with the government? Recommend improvements in these linkages?

E Grants

- What is the present and potential impact of the NGOC's grants program?
- What is(are) the most effective model(s) for the grants program? How effective, appropriate, and timely is the proposal review process? How open and transparent? Is there a significant impact with a multiplier effect? Does it address grass-roots and local level stake-holders? Is there adequate diversity (e.g., geographic, gender)?
- What is the potential absorptive capacity of the NGO sector in Armenia for significant direct grants (i.e., up to \$50,000)? What is the potential management capacity of the NGOC to administer grants of this size?

F Management

- Are funds being programmed in alignment with the absorptive capacity of the NGO community? Is the funding ratio between training/TA/grants the right mix at this point? Does it need to evolve with time? If yes, how/recommendations?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the management and administrative procedures adopted by NGOC? How/does the placement of the NGOC's directorship in Washington, D.C. affect the overall efficiency of the Center?
- Are NGOC staff roles and responsibilities clear?
- What is the quality of NGOC project reporting? Are workplans detailed, and effective in guiding implementation of the program? How are they being followed, updated, and implemented?

G Sustainability

- How well has the NGOC collaborated with other USAID projects (e.g., Legal Reform, Media Development)? Examples of synergy?
- What is the fundraising capacity of the Armenian NGO community? Examples of efforts to secure non-US funds? Potential for local fundraising?
- To what extent has the NGOC coordinated activities with other donor projects to meld resources in order to multiply the effect of donor assistance?
- What components of the program can be expected to become sustainable (i.e., survive beyond the life of this grant agreement, without continued USAID and/or foreign donor funding)? What attributes have made these particular components more likely to be sustainable?
- Is there an effective NGO network in place, in-country and regionally? What is the nature of Armenian networking efforts? How/can needs be better addressed?

H Lessons Learned and Future Assistance to the NGO Sector

- How/has the NGOC tracked and built upon the successes and lessons learned from the SCF extended sub-grant? If not, why?

--What mechanisms and concepts should continuing USAID NGO assistance programs inherit from the current NGOC project, and what should be changed?
What kind of goals should USAID set for continuing assistance programs?

III Methodology

It is anticipated that the principle methods to be employed in the conduct of this evaluation are (1) review of the sub-grant agreement and monitoring documents, (2) interviews, briefings, and group discussion with stake-holders, (3) site visits and interviews/roundtables with NGOC's sub-grantees and trainees. It is anticipated that rapid appraisal techniques, rather than formal sample surveys will be utilized.

A Prior to commencing on-site activities, the Evaluation Team shall review background documents, including but not limited to

- Strategic Framework documents for SOs 2 1 and 3 1
- NGOC's Proposal
- NGOC's sub-grant agreement with SCF
- NGOC's Quarterly and other Reports
- SCF July 5, 1995 Evaluation Report
- Training strategy and schedule of trainings for 1997

B Interviews, roundtables, and/or briefings to be held with the following, time devoted estimated by percentage

1 NGOC Staff -- 20%

- Country Director
- Deputy Director
- Financial Manager
- Training Coordinator

2 USAID /Caucasus and SCF/Yerevan Staff -- 10%

- Humanitarian Response Team/Yerevan
- Democracy Team/Yerevan
- SCF Current and former program staff as available
- Other USAID/C staff as appropriate

3 NGOC Training Recipients -- 25%

4 NGOC Grant Recipients -- 10%

5 Representatives of the NGO Sector (non-NGOC related) --25%
(Including sampling of non-Yerevan based NGOs)

6 Representatives of other donor programs in Armenia - 5%

7 Representatives from NGO programs in Georgia and/or Azerbaijan -- 5%
(Regional Cooperation opportunities)

IV REPORTS AND DELIVERABLES

A An entry meeting shall be held with the USAID/Caucasus staff on the day following the Evaluation Team's arrival to the country

B The Evaluation Team shall submit draft questionnaires for interviewing NGOC staff, the NGOC grantees, the NGOC training recipients, and other NGOs that USAID/Armenia shall review and approve. No interview shall take place before the questionnaires are finalized and Mission approved.

C A midpoint briefing shall be held with USAID/Caucasus staff 7 days into the evaluation.

D A First draft report shall be presented to USAID/Caucasus one day before the Evaluation Team departs from the country. This report shall contain major findings of the evaluation and recommendations to the mission. The report shall be discussed at the debriefing meeting that shall take place on the day preceding the team's departure.

E Within 7 working days after returning to the States, the Evaluation Team Leader shall submit to USAID/Caucasus the Second draft of the report in an electronic format.

F USAID/Caucasus shall give its comments to the Evaluation Team Leader within one week following receipt of the Second draft of the report. Within three days, following receipt of mission's comments, the Evaluation Team Leader shall prepare and submit to USAID/Caucasus an electronic version (Word Perfect v 5.2 for Windows format or compatible with it) of the Final Report that responds to USAID's comments. The final report should incorporate the following, but not be limited to:

- Analytical data and Findings,
- Conclusions,
- Action plan for improving the performance/impact of the current program,
- Recommendations to USAID for the design of continuing NGO assistance program(s)

The final report is not to exceed 30 pages, plus an Executive Summary of findings and conclusions not to exceed 5 pages. Additional material may be submitted in Annexes, as appropriate (e.g. bibliography of documents analyzed, list of persons and agencies interviewed, list of participants in focus groups, etc.)

G Two hard copies of the Final Report shall be submitted by the Evaluation Team Leader to USAID/Caucasus within ten days after the electronic copy is submitted.

V RELATIONSHIPS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The evaluation team will work under the technical direction of Ms. Melissa Schwartz, SO 2.1 Team Leader, USAID/Caucasus Regional Yerevan, Armenia office.

The Final report shall be approved by the USAID/Caucasus Director after a review and discussions with the SO 2.1 core team.

VI PERFORMANCE PERIOD AND LEVEL OF EFFORT

The Evaluation Team shall be composed of two US-based evaluation experts, one being the designated team leader.

The work shall commence on/a September 1, 1997 for a period not to exceed 22 working days.

Qualifications

Team Leader: Implementation Management Specialist

Qualifications for this position include

- Minimum five years of experience working with NGOs
- Experience in evaluating USAID democracy projects
- Experience in NGO strategy and sustainability issues, institutional development
- Excellent analytic and writing skills

NGO Strategy Development and Sustainability Specialist

Qualifications for this position include

- Minimum five years of experience working with NGOs
- Experience in evaluating USAID democracy projects in Central Europe and/or the NIS
- Experience in and knowledge of the Caucasus region [highly desirable]

APPENDIX B INTERVIEWS AND SITE VISITS**USAID**

Melissa Schwartz	Chief, Regional Democracy Office
Tina Wolfe	Democracy and Governance Program Officer
Gayane Tovmasian	Humanitarian Response Program Officer
Mervyn Farroe	Regional Program Specialist
Artashes Kazakhetsyan	Energy Program Assistant

AAA

Edith Khachatourian	Director, Yerevan Office
Tanya Chichmanian	NGOC Program Officer, Washington, D C (telephone and e-mail communication)

AAA/NGOC-Yerevan

Nouneh Doudoyan	Center Director
Barbara N Hall	Training & Consultancy Coordinator
Margaret Philipossian	Consultancy Services Manager
Karine Baghdasarian	Personnel/Compliance Officer
Gagik Mnatsakanian	Monitor
Knarik Hovhannisian	Advanced Training Associate
Armineh Toukhikian	Information/Social Marketing Coordinator
Aram Akheyan	Resource Center Coordinator

AAA/NGOC-Gyumri Suboffice

Rouzan Hakobian	Director
Vardouhi Mouradian	Technical Assistant

SCF (Yerevan)

Nick Marinacci	Caucasus Area Director
Michele Lipner	Armenia Field Office Director
Maria Hajenian	Manager of Grant Management Unit
Andranik Melikyan	Grant Officer of Grant Management Unit

SCF (Yeghegnadzor)

Tatoul Safarian	Project Manager / Officer
Zara Amirbekian	Financial / Administrative Officer
Sos Amirbekian	Sissian Project Officer

Armenian NGOs*Yerevan***“AFHA” Armenian Family Health Association**

Mery Khachikian	President
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“Aragast”

Nara Pogossian	Assistant Coordinator
Christine Alexanian	Leader of Social Division and Technical Advisor

Armenian Union of Biologists

Azat Yengibarian	Chairman
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Association for Human Sustainable Development

Karine Danielian	President
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Business Women’s NGO

Anahit Sargissian	Director
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League of Women Voters

Aida Topouzian	Director
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“Mission Armenia”

Hripsime Kirakossian	President
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Yerevan Press Club

Boris Navasardian	President
Avet Demourian	Vice -President

Youth for Armenia

Gourgen Hakopian	President
Sergei Kotanjian	Former president, advisor
Nelson Petrossian	Vice- President
Haik Arakelian	Treasurer

Gyumri“FLORA” Ecological Organization

Svetlana Mkrтчian	Chairperson
Makrouhy Poghatian	Secretary

“LIGHT OF HOPE” Psychological NGO

Siranoush Ghoukassian	President
Araksy Khachatourian	

“MEGHVIK” Children’s Educational Center

Vehanoush Hakopian	Director
Armıne Gyouzalian	Business Consultant

“NOAH” Intellectual Creative Center

Avetik Melik-Sargıssian	President
Garnik Sargıssian	Founder and Former President
Lousik Ghoukassian	Board Member and Magazine Editor in Moscow

Shirak Regional Center of Democracy Promotion

Seyran Martırossian	Director
Arthur Gregorian	Lawyer

Shirak Scouts Union

Artashes Mkhitarian	Director
Gourgen Parsamian	Deputy Director

Union of Disabled People

Roudik Rashoyan	President
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Union of NGOs of Shirak Region

Mkrtich Chartarian	President
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Women’s Union of Gyumri

Alvina Markossian	President
Anahit Hakopian	Responsible for Social Issues

*Vanadzor*Business Women Committee

Svetlana Minassian	President
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*Goris*Writers Union

Levon Sahakian	Member
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Yeghegnadzor“ANA HIT” Humanitarian Aid Organization

Karen Babayan	Executive Director
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Organization for Preservation of Historical Monuments

Melanya Dovlatyan	Director
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Young Family Assistance Center

Gayane Haroutiunian	Director
Tigran Poghosian	Member

Women's Union of All Armenia**PVOs and International Organizations**Eurasia Foundation

Levon Arevshatian	Program Director
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Open Society Institute (Soros Foundation)

Elizabeth Winship	Director
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UNDP

Anahit Simonian	Program Officer
David Akopian	

US Government OrganizationsUSIS

Morgan Liddick	Director
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Peace Corps

Brian Tuck	Associate Director
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Armenian Government Officials

Tigran Petrossian	Deputy Minister of Justice
Mayis Khachatourian	Governor, Vanadzor Region
Souren Khachatourian	Mayor, Goris Municipality
Araik Dovountz	Deputy Mayor, Goris Municipality
Avet Martirosian	Mayor, Yeghegnadzor Municipality

APPENDIX C BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 1 USAID Strategic Framework Documents for SO 2 1
- 2 AAA/NGOC Proposal to SCF, October 25, 1995
- 3 AAA/NGOC sub-grant agreement with SCF
- 4 SCF Interim Evaluation Report, July 1995
- 5 NGOC Quarterly Reports 3rd Quarter 96, 4th Quarter 96, 1st Quarter 97, 2nd Quarter 97 and 3rd Quarter 97
- 6 Approved IME, Nov 1995- Aug 1997
- 7 Revised (not approved) IME
- 8 NGOC current organizational chart
- 9 NGOC job descriptions
- 10 Sample NGOC job announcement
- 11 NGOC current staff lists for Yerevan and Gyumri
- 12 NGOC Approved vs Revised Budget, as of June 6, 1997
- 13 AAA/NGOC new project proposal, 1997
- 14 The Law of the Republic of Armenia on Public Organizations
- 15 Who's Who List of Armenian NGOs (registered with NGOC)
- 16 NGOC Registration Form Packet
- 17 NGOC Capacity Assessment Packet
- 18 Application packet for participation in NGOC training courses
- 19 List of NGOs who submitted application form for advanced training
- 20 Information on NGOC training graduates
- 21 Request for Proposals for Outright Grants
- 22 Summaries of the projects of NGOC Training Graduates funded through the NGOC Outright Grants Program
- 23 Criteria for selection of NGOs to participate in Core Training Courses, Advisory Committee, Checklist for Proposal Review
- 24 NGOC training handbook series
- 25 Outright Grant packet, including a sample of Outright Grant Agreement
- 26 Copy of legal handbook in Armenian
- 27 Some issues of NGO Newsletter in English, Russian and Armenian
- 28 Information booklet of NGOC/Gyumri
- 29 Transcripts/texts of 2 publicity videos in English
- 30 List of Gyumri NGOC's organized workshop and roundtable series from April 1996 to December 1997
- 31 Sample of TA weekly status report, 1995
- 32 Sample of Tentative Schedule of seminar and workshop series of NGOC-Yerevan
- 33 Customized training report sample, 1996
- 34 Service codes of NGOC
- 35 Samples of NGOC service log
- 36 Samples of NGOC media log
- 37 Progress toward achieving NGOC program objectives as of November 1995
- 38 Samples of NGO Monthly Profiles
- 39 Sample of financial aid information from Internet provided by NGOC
- 40 NGOC list of donors
- 41 UNHCR/NGOC Small Grants Program, Request for Proposals
- 42 Monitoring and Evaluation Tools and Materials (CRS)
- 43 List of NGOs which received grants from CRS
- 44 List of organizations which received grants from The Eurasia Foundation
- 45 SCF summary of sub-grants to local NGOs
- 46 SCF list of international organizations and local NGOs

47 List of women's organizations which are working with UNDP

48 UNDP -NGOC Project Performance Evaluation Report Summary Sheet

APPENDIX D QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ARMENIAN NGOS

- 1 Describe your own organization
 - a goals and objectives
 - b number of members
 - c organizational structure
 - d beneficiaries
 - e sectors
 - f sources of funding
 - g When was your organization founded?
- 2 How do you first establish and then build on relationships with your constituents?
- 3 What do you see as the main strengths of your organization?
- 4 In what areas do you think your organization needs improvement?
- 5 Do you have a strategy for sustaining your organization in the future? Describe
- 6 What do you see as the role of NGOs in Armenia? How could that role be enhanced?
- 7 What links do you have with other Armenian NGOs?
- 8 Do you coordinate your activities with governmental authorities?
 - a At national level
 - b At regional or local level
- 9 Explain potential as well as possible difficulties in your relationships with these authorities
- 10 Do you try to lobby government officials regarding the needs of your constituents?
- 11 If so, what form does this effort take? (e.g. phone calls, letters, meetings, popular mobilization)
- 12 Are you registered with a) the Government of Armenia b) NGOC? Describe both registration processes. If you are not registered with NGOC, why not?
- 13 Have you received a grant from NGOC or from another donor? What did you do with these funds?
- 14 Following training, do you continue to have contacts with the NGOC? If so, for what reasons?

- 15 Describe process by which you came to be a participant in NGOC program
 - a How did you first learn of the program?
 - b Describe the grant or the type of training Was it useful to you? How might it have been improved?
 - c What steps were required to qualify for a grant/training?
- 16 What, in your opinion, are the strengths of the NGOC program? How have you benefited the most from it?
- 17 In what areas do you think improvements could be made in the NGOC program?
- 18 Do you believe the NGOC plays a useful role in the NGO community today?
- 19 How might that role be enhanced? (Advocate for NGOs to the Government of Armenia, funding source, resource center, other)
- 20 Do you avail yourself of NGOC facilities, e g photocopier, fax, computers? How much or how often? Do you pay any fees for these services?
- 21 How has the project changed the way you operate?
 - a planning
 - b accountability
 - c hiring practices
 - d other
- 22 Do you feel that your organization has had an influence on the program of NGOC?
- 23 What links does your organization have with organizations in CIS or other countries?
- 24 Has the NGOC helped your organization to form linkages with other organizations? If so, how?
- 25 Do you have a strategy for publicizing your activities?
- 26 Has your organization or any of its activities received media coverage? Describe

APPENDIX E NGOC STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE

Name(s) of
Interviewer(s) _____
Name(s) of
Interviewee(s) _____
Date _____

Introduction Institution

- 1 How is NGOC structured? How does it function? Does it have a volunteer staff? How institutionally strong is it? What is its contact with donors? Funding situation? Future prospects?
- 2 Please describe your position (activities) To whom inside of the organization your work is related and in which ways Please give examples (Organizational chart)
- 3 What is your background? How did you started working with the NGOC?
- 4 What kind of training (internal and externally NGOC) have you received to develop your activities?
- 5 What in your personal opinion are your main weakness (what would you like to improve) in your position? What are you main strengths

Process/Methodology/Strategy (Related with Training, Media diffusion, ResourcCenter)

- 6 How were local NGOs (participants) chosen? Did NGO selection criteria change over course of project? Were the criteria always respected in NGO selection? If not, why not? What problems/constraints did you encounter in selecting NGOs?
- 7 How were training themes chosen? What are your observations about their usefulness in promoting project goals? What other training do you think would be helpful for NGOs?
- 8 What has been the level of interest of NGOs in training offered? Has interest differed according to sector/focus of work?
- 9 What problems have you encountered in designing and implementing this project? (NGOC level, AAA level, SCF/USAID level, community level)
- 10 How much has it been a focus of this project to raise awareness about the importance of civic participation? About problem prioritization and proposal generation? About the importance of their involvement in the public policy process? About the importance of open dialogue and collaboration? How has the extensive media attention come about?
- 11 What efforts have you seen made in local NGOs to involve community members (women, men) in their activities? In generating an active grass roots organization? Could you please describe?
- 12 How were SCF/AAA/NGOC/NGOs/Community involved in monitoring the progress of their activities (training, NGO grant implementation)? What has been the follow up after the end of the trainings, TA, grants?
- 13 What have been the greatest challenges of the project? Its greatest weaknesses? Its key accomplishments?
- 14 What lessons do you feel NGOC has learned from implementation of this project? If you could go back and change anything in the project design or implementation, what would it be?

Impact

- 15 What percentage of the NGO community are members of the NGOC? From which sectors? Where are they located? How representative are they? How effective?
- 16 What type /level of cooperation did you observe within the NGOs? Have you seen this project generate leadership within the NGOs? Explain Has formation of NGOC/NGO led to the formation of any other civic groups in the area? What do they do?
- 17 Do you know how do the people in the community feel about them? What type of reputation do NGOC/NGOs have with others in the community?
- 18 Could you attribute changes in civic participation-GOA decision making (economic and political) relations to NGOC work? Please explain
- 19 Have you seen any changes in NGO sector – GOA relations? Have you seen any changes in community participation and decision making? Explain
- 20 Has this project been a success in your opinion? How? Why? What do you feel have been the main contributing factors or the reasons why not? Are you aware of any negative outcomes? Negative impacts at the community or national level?
- 21 What in your opinion are the most important factors for a successful NGOC? (project size, NGO representation/participation in the board, sector focus, independence from AAA?)

Future prospects

- 22 How do you establish contacts with donor agencies? What kind of partnership has been generated and at what level? Give examples
- 23 What role do you think NGOC should play in the future and what do you need to do in order to accomplish that?
- 24 What are the future prospects for relation between NGOC – NGOs, and NGOs once AAA/USAID withdraws? What do you think are the best hopes for low-cost replication?

APPENDIX F LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAA	Armenian Assembly of America
ATC	Advanced Training Courses
AUA	American University of Armenia
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CTC	Core Training Courses
GOA	The Government of Armenia
I&SM	Information and Social Marketing (NGOC)
IME	Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
IOG	International Organization
ISAR	Institute for Soviet-American Relations
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NGOC	Non-Governmental Organization Training and Resource Center
PSA	Public Service Announcements
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
RC	Resource Center (NGOC)
RFP	Request for Proposals
SCF	Save the Children Federation
SOW	Scope of Work
T&CS	Training and Consultancy Services (NGOC)
TA	Technical Assistance
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar