



## PRESS RELEASE

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Yerevan

### **108 CSO representatives have graduated from the CSO Capacity Building Certification Program of the American University of Armenia**

As a result of the CSO Capacity Building Certification Program of the American University of Armenia implemented in the framework of “Commitment to Constructive Dialogue” Project, 108 representatives of the Civil Society Organizations obtained fundamental knowledge and skills to make their voice heard and influential in public discussions and decision making process.

CSO representatives from Yerevan and eight marzes of Armenia graduated from the Capacity Building Certification Program of the American University of Armenia, which was conducted in the period of 4 December 2017 to 2 February 2018. The course had 108 graduates of which 66 are women and 42 are men.

“There are matching interests, they can be coordinated and consolidated, and to become a powerful force. In the case of coalitions, our chances are stronger than separate NGOs might have, and this is the way to achieve results in building public policies,” Lilit Chichoyan, representative of the “Association of Accountants of SME of Armenia” said and added that there are already ideas in this direction.

Representative of the “Human Capital Development Center” of Artik region Melsida Kikoyan also spoke about the importance of the knowledge gained. “Now I have the knowledge, which will enable to cooperate more efficiently with local self-government and public administration bodies, participate in the discussions of public policies that they elaborate and even to influence on making decisions.”

Within the framework of the educational programme the participants are trained on the issues of public policy development, monitoring of public budgets and public policies, coalition building and developing constructive CSO-government dialogue

Notably, the educational programme will be implemented for a total of 120 CSO representatives from Yerevan and marzes.

The “*Commitment to Constructive Dialogue*” project is implemented with the financial support of the European Union by a Consortium of civil society organisations, which are the Armenian Lawyers’ Association (lead organisation), Agora Central Europe (NGO based in the Czech Republic), the Armenian Centre for Democratic Education-CIVITAS, the International Centre for Human Development, the SME Cooperation Association and the Union of Communities of Armenia.

The project aims to enhance the influence of civil society organisations (CSOs) and CSO coalitions/networks on public policies in Armenia. This will allow organisations that are already working in sectoral coalitions to access additional resources, new groups of civil society experts to come together and encourage place their causes on the local and national



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The European Commission is the EU’s executive body. The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

policy agenda, to identify common concerns and priorities and approach government bodies with constructive and strategic policy engagement initiatives.

The project will provide sub-grants to CSOs and CSO coalitions for developing public policies and bringing significant changes in the 9 target sectors selected within the project, including those of justice, education and business.

The **Armenian Lawyers' Association** (ALA) was established in 1995 with a mission to promote to the establishment of the rule of law, democracy and formation of the civil society in Armenia, where the people are aware of their rights and where their rights are protected. Before February 2016, ALA used to be called Armenian Young Lawyers Association.

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