



Concept paper

Name of the project: Promotion of inclusive education in all marzes /regions/ of Armenia through the comprehensive work of the Inter-regional coalition dealing with the problems of children with disabilities / ICCD “

Implementer: Armavir Development Center

Main Partner: “Martuni Women’s Community Council” NGO, “Hope-98” Vayots Dzor Development NGO, and Association of Young Journalists” NGO

Partners: 35 regional CSOs dealing with the issues of PWD and inclusive education

Location: All regions of Armenia and Yerevan

Amount requested: \$ XXX

Summary:

The government of Armenia has committed to making all Primary and secondary Schools inclusive for children with disabilities by 2025, and decreasing the number of special Schools as a result. However, the first few years of the reform have already revealed multiple gaps. Lack of basic accessibility of the Schools, insufficiently specialized staff, along with the prevailing stereotypes around disability are a major hindrance for providing quality education to children with special needs. As a result, studies claims, a large segment of children with disabilities are left out of education.

Although Armenia had its first inclusive school back in 2001, but still perceptions of inclusive education an attitude towards it in general public is twofold, our schools, classrooms, programs an activities need to be developed an designed the way to accommodate the needs of all students, and be conducive for studying and working together. A very important aspect is the quality of education: parents of all children, regardless the needs, express concerns that the quality of education may suffer in inclusive schools. This implies also to professional growth and training opportunities for current and future teachers who have not been prepared to work with children with disabilities.



This project aims at bringing new approach into inclusive education by the efforts of the Coalition parties' cooperation in raising public awareness, development and implementation of the concept of social inclusion, policy development and advocacy in all regions of Armenia. It is a good example of a partnership among regional NGOs on national level.

The Coalition is a driving force that helps to promote the rights of every child with disability in the regions of Armenia to be included in schools and other educational institutions and procedures. Together with "XXX", that has strong sense of corporate social responsibility and a unique vision of development this project will be scaled up in the best way. As a result of this collaboration public awareness on inclusive education will be increased, the quality of the teaching will be improved and the number of children with disabilities attending public schools will be increased.

Background:

The Inter-Regional Coalition to Deal with the Issues of Children with Disabilities is implementing a sub-grant project "For Quality and Accessible Inclusive Education and Social Support" funded by the "Commitment to Constructive Dialogue" project financed by the European Union.

The goal of the coalition is to promote inclusive education in Armenia and the protection of children with disabilities by increasing the impact of CSOs on the development and implementation of public policy in this area.

The lead organization of the coalition is "Armavir Development Center" NGO and founding members are "Martuni Women's Community Council" NGO, "Hope-98" Vayots Dzor Development NGO, and Association of Young Journalists" NGO. Overall there are 33 regional CSOs in the Coalition.

In Armavir region ADC is a key-player in civil society sector and cooperating with a number of state agencies, international and local NGOs, the Government in regard of the recently established „Sunrise“ Children's Support Center and development of institutional framework to better respond to the violations of the rights of children with disability.

The diversified sources of funding for non-governmental organizations in Armenia to carry out their mission are not many. Up until recently, funding opportunities of NGOs were restricted due to deficiencies of respective legislation. The new law on NGOs defines the right of NGOs to generate revenue through commercial activity. In addition, they may get funded through grants, membership fees and donations. The funding opportunities shrink as the competition for funds in the small market of Armenia increases. In this light, the competitive advantage of the Inter-regional Coalition dealing with the problems of children with is its strategic link with 33 Regional NGOs and the experience of its founding members and the impact of their well-performed programs in the country.

Goal of the project: The goal of this project is to promote the rights of children with disabilities and their parents in public schools of Armenia through advocacy campaign on inclusive education and support the Government in advancing reforms in this direction with the help of inter-regional Coalition.

Methodology: The Coalition parties will mainly cooperate in the following areas: Implementation of public oversight programs in inclusive education centers, reveal the existing

issues, publicize results and focus on government agencies' attention, develop the CSO-Government cooperation platform for the development and implementation of the concept of social inclusion, support and cooperation in Armenia around, to implement programs aimed at raising public awareness on inclusive education to develop cooperation between the coalition member organizations, to cooperate with relevant local and international organizations and enhance their own capacities for providing good services in their regions.

Desired Outcome:

1. The awareness level on inclusion is raised and active involvement of parents, teachers, students, and local self-government in the school life, especially of people at a higher risk of marginalization and exclusion is enhanced.
2. The capacities of the members of Inter-regional Coalition working in this field are strengthened.
3. The CSO-Government cooperation platform/mechanism is developed.
4. School development policies and regulations focusing on inclusion are improved and updated.

Target group:

There are around 8,000 children registered with disabilities in Armenia. For a large number, there is no record of any admission to school (a detailed survey is currently promoted by UNICEF to verify the access to services for all these children). Only 500 out of 2,800 students of special schools have certified disability status. Children in special schools are separated from their peers and communities and are more likely to be socially excluded. And when they graduate, not many opportunities are offered to them. A strong discrimination is still evident in Armenia for children with disabilities and their families, and more needs to be done to promote their rights to full inclusion and equal opportunities, according to their needs and abilities. One in five children with disabilities do not attend any kind of school.

Contact information:

Naira Arakelyan
Executive Director
Armavir Development Center
naira@armavirdc.org
www.armavirdc.org
Tel:(0237)2 3034
Mob:(094)50 20 39